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Early Years Policy

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| Date policy last reviewed: | 17.11.21 |

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| Signed by: | | | |
|  | Headteacher | Date: |  |
|  | Chair of governors | Date: |  |

**Contents:**

[Statement of intent](#_Statement_of_intent_1)

1. [Legal framework](#_Legal_framework_1)
2. [Roles and responsibilities](#_Roles_and_responsibilities_1)
3. [Aims](#_Aims)
4. [Learning and development](#_Learning_and_development)
5. [Assessment](#_[Updated]_Assessment)
6. [Inclusion](#_Inclusion)
7. [The learning environment and outdoor spaces](#_The_learning_environment)
8. [Safeguarding and welfare](#_Safeguarding_and_welfare)
9. [Mobile phones and devices](#_Mobile_phones_and)
10. [ICT lessons](#_ICT_lessons)
11. [Health and safety](#_Health_and_safety)
12. [Staff taking medication or other substances](#_Staff_taking_medication)
13. [Staffing](#_Staffing)
14. [Information and records](#_Information_and_records)
15. [Parental involvement](#_Parental_involvement)
16. [Transition periods](#_Transition_periods)
17. [Monitoring and review](#_Monitoring_and_review_1)

**Statement of intent**

At St. Peter’s Church of England Primary School, our aim is to provide our children with a curriculum that encapsulates our Christian mission statement which is:

“The child grew and became strong in body, mind and spirit.” Luke 2:40

The broad and balanced EYFS curriculum is carefully designed to recognise children’s prior learning, knowledge and key skills on baseline, working with parents and previous settings to continue the learning journey and build on the wealth of knowledge that children already have.

We provide first-hand learning experiences, allow children to develop interpersonal skills, build resilience through a positive mind-set, become critical thinkers and develop spiritually. We foster the characteristics of effective learning through our teaching and whole school Growth Mindset approach.

Our Christian ethos is intrinsic to our curriculum design by providing an environment in which the uniqueness of each person, as a child of God is recognised. We support children’s personal, social and emotional development so that they feel safe and ready to learn, focussing on wellbeing. Our aim is to fire interest, provide awe and wonder and ensure learners are engaged in motivating learning opportunities.

At St. Peters, children find out about our rich local history, heritage and geographical community links, throughout a curriculum aimed to stimulate children’s interests and lay the foundations for the next key stage, embed key knowledge and provide skills that will be built upon in Year One and beyond. Children learn all about themselves and their role in the community, the wider community and the world around them.

We celebrate and welcome differences within our school community. Children are taught to respect all cultures and faiths and through the use of growth mind-set, we provide opportunities for children to develop as independent, confident young learners with high aspirations.

Those children with particular needs or barriers, including SEND and disadvantaged, are supported appropriately, allowing all learners in the EYFS to be successful and reach their full potential.

We enhance and adapt the continuous provision on offer to meet the needs of all learners and provide opportunities and memorable learning experiences in order to ignite interest in all areas of learning. The high-quality environment is numerate and literate, and our language rich, engaging curriculum encourages a shared love of learning and embeds a firm foundation for Year One.

We seek to provide:

* **Quality and consistency**, so that every child makes excellent progress and no child is left behind.
* **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
* **Partnership working** between practitioners and parents.
* **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice against the protected characteristics, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

# Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

* Childcare Act 2006
* Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
* Equality Act 2010
* UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
* Data Protection Act 2018
* DfE (2024) ‘Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage’
* DfE (2024) ‘Early years foundation stage profile: 2024 handbook’
* DfE (2023) ‘Development Matters’
* DfE (2023) ‘Keeping children safe in education 2023’
* DfE ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ -Updated Feb 2024
* DfE (2015) ‘The Prevent duty’ -Last updated 2023
* Early Education (2021) ‘Birth to 5 Matters’
* UK Council for Internet Safety (2020) ‘Education for a Connected World’

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

* Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
* Photography consent
* Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
* Complaints Procedures Policy
* Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
* Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
* Online Safety Policy
* Administering Medication Policy
* Health and Safety Policy
* Fire Safety Procedures
* Data Protection Policy
* Subject curriculum policies

# Roles and responsibilities

The governing boardis responsible for:

* Ensuring there is a policy in place to safeguard children that includes an explanation of the action to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child, the use of mobile phones and cameras, and staff safeguarding training requirements. These issues are addressed in part in this policy and in further detail in the school’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Photography Policy.
* Ensuring there is a policy in place in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (including supply staff) or a volunteer. These issues are addressed in the school’s Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.
* Monitoring the implementation of this policy.
* Ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds.
* Handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the school’s Complaints Procedures Policy.

The EYFS lead,in conjunction with the headteacher,has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.

Staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers, are responsible for:

* Familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy.
* Remaining alert to any issues of concern in children.

# Aims

Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:

* Give each child a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.
* Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
* Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
* Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
* Work alongside parents to meet each child’s individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.

Four overarching principles shape our practice:

* Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
* Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
* Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between the school and parents.
* **Learning and development** is important. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

To put these principles into practice, the school:

* Provides a balanced curriculum which takes children’s different stages of development into account.
* Promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
* Works in partnership with parents.
* Plans challenging learning experiences, based on individual needs, which are informed by observation and assessment.
* Assigns each child with a key person to ensure that each child’s learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs.
* Provides a safe and secure learning environment.

**We ensure that we fulfil the seven ‘Key Features of Effective Practice’.**

# Learning and development

In partnership with parents, the school promotes the learning and development of children to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education.

The EYFS provision and practice is based on an observation of children’s needs, interests and stages of development. Learning and development in school are planned to reflect these interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape education programmes in EYFS settings. These are split into two important and interconnected sections – prime and specific:

The ‘prime’ areas of learning and development are:

* Communication and language:
  + Listening, attention and understanding
  + Speaking
* Physical development:
  + Gross motor skills
  + Fine motor skills
* Personal, social and emotional development:
  + Self-regulation
  + Managing self
  + Building relationships

The ‘specific’ areas of learning and development are:

* Literacy:
  + Comprehension
  + Word reading
  + Writing
* Mathematics:
  + Numbers
  + Numerical patterns
* Understanding the world:
  + Past and present
  + People, culture and communities
  + The natural world
* Expressive arts and design:
  + Creating with materials
  + Being imaginative and expressive

In organising and implementing educational programmes, the school will ensure that a broad range of activities and experiences are planned, having regard to three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS:

* Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, use what they know in their play and are willing to try new things.
* Active learning – children concentrate, keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
* Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and use what they already know to learn new things, and develop strategies for doing things.

Further information regarding learning and development, including how these link to and underpin the national curriculum in KS1 and beyond, is set out in the Curriculum overview and Reception long term plan, as well as Reception into Year 1 mapping progression documents.

# Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping the school to recognise children’s progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support.

Parents will be kept up-to-date with their child’s progress and development, and the EYFS leadwill address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents.

Ongoing formative assessments are used to assess the day-to-day learning and development of children in the EYFS. Practitioners interact and observe children to understand their interests and learning needs, and will use this information to inform practice and provision for each child. Personalised provision plans are used to target individual learners.

The EYFS staff will undertake a summative assessment of the level of each child’s development at regular intervals throughout the year on Tapestry and at critical points, to ensure all learners are making excellent progress and to plan for next steps.

We also undertake statutory assessments. These are:

* Reception Baseline Assessment – a short assessment which is taken within the first six weeks of a child starting Reception year.
* The EYFS Profile – a comprehensive assessment completed at the end of the EYFS to provide a well-rounded picture of a child’s knowledge, understanding and abilities, attainment against the 17 early learning goals (ELGs), and their readiness for Year 1.

St Peters ensures that teachers actively engage children, their parents and other adults who have significant interaction with specific children, in their assessment processes to provide a well-rounded picture of their development and attainment. The online learning journey Tapestry is used to show parents a snapshot of their child’s learning and progress.

The school will ensure that assessment processes do not prevent teachers and practitioners from spending as much time as possible interacting with children and directly supporting their learning and development. Teachers will not be required to record or document evidence to prove children’s level of development; however, they may decide to record particularly noteworthy achievements in order to plan teaching and where this is beneficial for building knowledge of children.

The school reports EYFS Profile results to the LA when these are requested. The Local Authority is under a duty to return this data to the relevant government department.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to the assessment process for children with SEND as appropriate.

The EYFS leadwill discuss any cause for concern in a child’s progress with the child’s parents, especially where this concern relates to the prime areas of learning. A strategy of support will be agreed upon and consideration will be taken as to whether the child may have SEND which requires additional support.

The school takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children with EAL to use their home language in play and learning whilst also ensuring that these children have sufficient opportunities to reach a good standard of English. During assessment, if it is found that a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, the EYFS leadwill contact the child’s parents to establish their home language skills to establish whether there is cause for concern about a language delay. Early identification and intervention is key.

All children are valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. The Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy ensures that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy ensures all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible. SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the school’s SENCO.

The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.

# The learning environment and outdoor spaces

The learning environment is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn independently in a safe and interactive environment.

Children have access to an enclosed outdoor environment with all-weather shelter, and daily access to the outdoor environment is planned.

There are male and femaletoilet facilities available to the EYFS, and there are hygienic changing facilities located in the accessible toilet containing a supply of wipes and spare clothes.

# Safeguarding and welfare

All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well. Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.

The DSL is **Michelle Colley**. The deputy DSL are **Paul Robinson and Donna Harrison**.

The DSL is responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children’s services as appropriate. The deputy DSL will undertake the duties of the DSL in their absence, but overall responsibility for safeguarding will remain with the DSL. The DSL and deputy DSL have undertaken child protection training as required.

Staff receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect.

# Mobile phones and devices

For the purposes of this policy, the term ‘mobile phone’ refers to any electronic device that can be used to take images or record videos, including tablets.

Photography policies and procedures are addressed in full in our Photography Policy.

**Use of personal mobile phones by staff members**

Staff members must not use personal mobile phones or cameras when children are present. Staff may use mobile phones on school premises outside of working hours when no children are present. Staff may use mobile phones in the staffroom during breaks and non-contact time. Mobile phones should be safely stored and in silent mode whilst children are present.

Staff may take mobile phones on trips, but they must only be used in emergencies and should not be used when children are present. Mobile phones must not be used to take images or videos at any time during trips.

Staff who do not adhere to this policy will face disciplinary action. Staff must report any concerns about another staff member’s use of mobile phones to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.

Staff may use their professional judgement in emergency situations.

**Use of mobile phones by parents, visitors and contractors**

Parents, visitors and contractors are not permitted to take photographs or record videos without prior permission. Parents may take photographs and videos only containing their own child during school events. Parents may take group photographs at school events but only with the informed consent of the parents of the children involved.

The school strongly advises against the publication of any photographs or videos taken at the school or school events on social media. Staff must report all concerns about parents, visitors and contractors to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

**Use of the school’s mobile phones and cameras**

Staff are provided with a school device to ensure that only school devices are used to take photographs and videos. School devices must have passcode protection.

School devices must only be used for work related matters, for example recording and documenting a child’s learning. School devices must only be used to take photographs in the presence of another staff member and only with the consent of the child’s parent.

Staff must not take photographs of bruising or injuries for child protection reasons. Instead, recording concerns forms and body maps using CPOMS are used to record observations relating to child protection concerns. The DSL and SLT staff are automatically alerted to new CPOMS incident entries.

School devices must not be taken off school premises without prior written permission from the headteacher. Where staff members have concerns over material on a school device, they must report all concerns to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

# ICT

ICT sessions and planned opportunities in provision will be used to give children the opportunity to use technology, equip them for the demands of the developing digital world, and prepare them for the next step in their education.St Peters aims to:

* Help children work more independently.
* Enable children to develop and enhance their work.
* Encourage children to collaborate on projects.
* Give children the skills and tools to access a wide range of information, ideas and cultures.
* Help children develop skills that can be used in other areas of the curriculum.
* Help children develop good control and coordination through using ICT equipment.
* Encourage children to represent their ideas, thoughts and feelings through technology.

In accordance with the DfE’s ‘[Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2)’, all educational programmes offered by the setting, including ICT, will work towards the early learning goals (ELGs). This includes:

* **Communication and language**: ICT helps children to develop their self-expression confidence and skills, and allows them to speak and listen in a range of situations.
* **Physical development**: using interactive programmes, computer mice, keyboards and touch screens helps children develop their coordination, control and movement.
* **Personal, social and emotional development**: technology gives children access to new ways to express their emotions and interact with others.
* **Literacy**: the internet gives children to access a vast range of media and materials.
* **Mathematics**: ICT enhances children’s experiences of learning mathematics and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems, and describing shapes, spaces and measure.
* **Understanding the world**: children will be taught to use the internet to enhance their knowledge of people, places, technology and their physical environment.
* **Expressive arts and design**: interactive games, activities and materials will be used to encourage children to share their creativity and ideas.

Teachers will not use formative assessments for ICT, but will use summative assessments alongside the ‘Rising Stars’ scheme to help track children’s progress. Resources will be shared fairly between children and, where needed, tasks and equipment will be adjusted to suit children’s needs and abilities.

The EYFS lead will be responsible for ensuring all staff and parents are aware of the setting’s policy on using technology. The EYFS lead will hold the ICT Lead, technician, teachers and support staff to account for their delivery and support of the ICT curriculum and offer support where needed.

The ICT Lead will be responsible for:

* Staying aware of new ICT developments and communicating these to staff, including through bespoke training where necessary.
* Attending appropriate in-service training, including safeguarding training.
* Maintaining the upkeep and use of ICT resources.
* Keeping appropriate records of ICT expenditure to review costs and make suggestions for the future.
* Securing and maintaining ICT resources.
* Ensuring ICT resources are up-to-date, fit for purpose and safe for children to use.
* Advising staff on the correct and safe use of digital technologies.

Staff delivering ICT will be responsible for:

* Encouraging children to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding of ICT in other areas of learning.
* Tailoring lesson delivery according to children’s age and respective abilities.
* Working with the ICT technician/Lead to put reasonable adjustments in place to ensure all children can make use of the school’s ICT equipment.
* Undertaking summative assessments in line with Rising stars, to ensure the aims set out in this policy are being met.
* Keeping the EYFS lead informed about how the aims of the setting’s ICT teaching and learning are being achieved.
* Supporting children through play and teaching to recognise how technology is used across their lives, such as in their home and school.

The Online Safety Policy will be adhered to at all times. This includes installing internet filters and antivirus software on all devices and ensuring children are supervised appropriately when using the internet. In the event of children accessing inappropriate content online, safeguarding procedures will be followed in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

# Health and safety

St Peters will promote the good health of children in the EYFS, including the promotion of good oral health.

The EYFS staffwill report any accident or injury involving a child to their parents on the day it occurs, and any first-aid treatment administered to a child will also be reported to their parents. Accidents and injuries will be recorded in an accident book, located in the first aid cupboard. The headteacherwill report any serious accident, illness, injury, or death of a child whilst in the school’s care to Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the incident occurring. Local child protection agencies will also be notified.

A first-aid box is located in the first aid cupboard and lunch time staff carry first aid bags. There is a small kit in exception class.

Only medicine prescribed to a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist will be administered. The school’s Administering Medication Policyoutlines the procedures for administrating medicines.

Any food or drink provided to children is healthy, balanced and nutritious. The headteacherwill notify Ofsted of any incidents of food poisoning affecting two or more children within 14 days of the incident. Information about any dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and any special health requirements a child has will be recorded. Fresh drinking water is available at all times.

Smoking is not permitted on the school premises.

The Health and Safety Policyoutlines the full health and safety policies and procedures.

St Peters has robust Fire Safety Procedures in place.

# Staff taking medication or other substances

The school implements a zero-tolerance approach to drugs and alcohol misuse, as outlined in the Staff Drug and Alcohol Policy.

The use of alcohol or any other substance that may affect the ability to care for children by a member of staff will not be tolerated. If there is a reason to believe a member of staff is under the influence of alcohol or any other substance, they will not be allowed to work directly with children and further action will be taken.

Any member of staff taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children will seek medical advice. Staff will only be allowed to work directly with the children if it is confirmed that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children properly.

Any medication used by staff is securely stored in a classroom locked cupboard or the staffroom fridge.

# Staffing

A robust Safer Recruitment Policyis in place, which aims to ensure that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable.

Upon employment, all EYFS staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection and health and safety.

Staff will be supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience.

All members of staff who have contact with children and families will be supervised by the EYFS lead. The supervision will provide opportunities for staff to:

* Discuss any issues, particularly concerning the development or wellbeing of children, including any child protection concerns.
* Identify solutions to address issues.
* Receive coaching to improve their effectiveness.

The EYFS leadholds at least a full and relevant level 3 qualification alongside at least two years’ experience working in an early years setting. Donna Harrison is a qualified teacher (Bed Hons) with 20 years of EYFS experience. At least half of the other EYFS staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

Ashleigh Bebbington will provide cover for the EYFS lead in her absence and is deemed fully qualified to do so by the EYFS lead and headteacher.

There will be at least one member of staff who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate on the school premises at all times, and will accompany children on any school outings. EYFS Lead and EYFS teaching assistant have had this training to date.

All newly qualified staff with a level 2 or 3 qualification will be PFA trained. The school will organise PFA training to be renewed every three years. The list of staff who hold PFA certificates can be found in the school office.

The school provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the ‘Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage’. 2024.

St Peters adopts the following staffing ratios:

For children in Reception classes:

* + Class sizes will be limited to 30 children per school teacher.

We have a teaching assistant working in Reception and an LSA.

Only under exceptional circumstances, and where the quality of care and safety of children is maintained, will changes be made to the ratios. Parents will be informed about staffing arrangements.

Each child is assigned a key person, whose role it is to help ensure that every child’s care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The EYFS leadwill inform parents of whom their child’s key person is and will explain the role of the key person before their child attends the school.

# Information and records

Information is stored in line with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, and with regard to the school’s Data Protection Policy.

The following information is recorded for each child:

* The child’s name and date of birth
* The name and address of every parent or carer who is known to the school, including information about all persons who have parental responsibility for the child and which parent or carer the child normally lives with
* The emergency contact details of the child’s parent or carer

The following information about the school is recorded:

* The school’s name, address and telephone number
* The school’s certificate of registration
* The name, address and telephone number of anyone who will regularly be in unsupervised contact with the children
* A daily record of the names of the children being cared for in the school, their hours of attendance, and the names of each child’s key person

The following information is made available to parents:

* The school’s privacy notice for parents and children
* How the school delivers the EYFS and how parents can access more information
* The daily routine and the activities offered in the school’s EYFS and how parents can assist their child’s learning at home
* How the school’s EYFS supports children with SEND
* Details of the food and drink provided to the children
* Details of the policies and procedures in place in the school’s EYFS
* Staffing details, including the name of their child’s key person and their role and a telephone number for parents to contact in an emergency

Ofsted will be notified if there are any changes to the following:

* The address of the school
* The school’s contact details
* The hours during which care is provided
* Any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of the school or any person who cares for, or is in regular contact with, children to look after children

# Parental involvement

At St Peters we firmly believe that the EYFS cannot function without the enduring support of parents.

Parents are invited to termlyparents’ evenings; however, the school has an open-door policy and parents are welcome to talk to teachers at the start and end of the school day. The covered outdoor area is utilised for confidential discussions between staff and parents. Parents are welcome to make an appointment to speak in more detail about matters concerning the EYFS and their child. Tapestry acts as a two-way platform of communication and parents can also use the class email.

There are several parent workshops throughout the year to provide parents with information about the curriculum, phonics and how best to support their child at home.

Parents are asked to sign permission slips for any visits out of school, use of photographs of their child and using the internet at school.

Parents are asked to complete admission forms, a medical form and to write a brief synopsis about their child to help the school to understand their character and personality.

# Transition periods

St Peters has a detailed transition plan to aid the process and ensure entry to school and transition to Year One is smooth.

The following process is in place to ensure children’s successful transition to Year One:

* Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and to voice any concerns they may wish to express or ask questions.
* During the Summer term, parents are encouraged to complete activities from a transition booklet, recapping skills from Reception.
* The children are invited to a number of visits to their Year One class. The first visits are with the EYFS teaching assistant or class teacher.
* In the summer term, all children will take part in a ‘moving up’ transition day, spending the whole day as a year one group.
* The Year One teacher will spend time in provision, to become more familiar with the children.
* The Year One teacher will teach phonics lessons in Reception class.
* Year One staff and Reception meet to moderate children’s end of year assessments.
* Any children who may struggle with transition are given more opportunities to spend time in their new classroom and with their teacher.
* In the Summer term, Reception and Year 1 staff will meet to discuss each child’s development in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1.

# Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the governing board and the headteacher.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

All members of staff directly involved with the EYFS are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is 17.11.24