



St Leonard's Church of England Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date reviewed:	September 2025
Policy reviewed by:	Julie Harris
Date of next review:	September 2026





Following in Jesus' Footsteps...

EARLY YEARS POLICY

Purpose

This policy reflects how at St. Leonard's, we value the importance of Early Years education. It provides a framework which gives guidance on Early Years practice. It describes procedures for planning, teaching and learning and monitoring and evaluating the curriculum. The policy supports high educational standards and meets the needs of our youngest children.

Central to the life and work of Early Years is our school's mission statement:

In Jesus' footsteps... we will grow in grace and knowledge.

At St Leonard's, children will understand that God's grace is the gift given freely out of unconditional love and that **all** are precious. By following in Jesus' footsteps, with Pupil Promises at the heart of everything we do, we are shaping confident, thoughtful, courageous advocates of the future and growing God's kingdom on Earth.

By following Christ's example we "[Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.](#)" 2 Peter 3:18

As a school community we...

Sharing Faith and Hope

We provide a holistic learning journey and curriculum that enables reflection and spiritual growth including collective worship, teaching about Christianity and other world faiths.

Love and Value All

Rooted in love with St. Leonard as a model, we develop children's ability to be courageous advocates who act with a strong sense of inclusion, acceptance, justice and equality for all.

Learn, Remember and Do

Through curriculum challenge, enrichment and high expectations we inspire children to love learning deeply, and use their acquired knowledge, skills and talents for the greater good and in service to others.

Aspire, Flourish and Shine

Together we cherish and celebrate children's achievements, giving them the confidence to aspire to be the best they can be and to shine their light on their school and community.





Early Years Curriculum Intent

Our Christian distinctiveness plays a fundamental role in providing a setting where children feel safe, secure and thrive both emotionally and developmentally.

The Early Years Policy covers all aspects of the needs of young children and ensures:

- Early Years is regarded as the foundation for education and the beginning of a continuum of learning.
- Our children experience a curriculum that is appropriate to their age and stages of development.
- Early identification of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is reflected in the provision and learning opportunities we provide.
- The importance of play and first-hand experiences are embedded within planned learning opportunities.
- There is a shared understanding about how our children learn.
- Daily organisation of learning reflects the on-going changing needs of our children.
- Children experience a smooth transition from home, pre-school, nursery or their childminder into our Nursery and/or Reception classes.
- The statutory framework requirements are fulfilled, including the Safeguarding and Welfare requirements.
- Children leave Reception class at the end of the Foundation Stage, ready for Key Stage 1.

Our Curriculum, Pedagogy and Aims

We offer teacher-led, term time Early Years provision for children from the age of three to five within our Early Years phase, comprising Little Lennie's Nursery and our Blackbirds Reception class.

We promote our whole school vision alongside our pedagogy that is rooted in *'Placing language and literacy at the heart of everything we do.'*

We strive for excellence and aim for our youngest learners to:

"be deeply engaged learners, who show perseverance and remember,"

"develop high levels of emotional literacy, underpinned by our Pupil Promises and rich, ambitious language."

Overarching Principles

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years settings.

These are:

- 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 practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See "the characteristics of effective teaching and learning" at paragraph 1.18). The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).





The Early Years curriculum is designed:

- To provide a happy, safe, secure and stimulating environment with opportunities for children to learn, develop confidence and self-esteem, and build positive relationships with others.
- To address the individual needs of all children by enabling them to participate in a broad and balanced curriculum with regard to equal opportunities.
- To provide different starting points from which children develop their learning, building on what they can already achieve.
- To promote the moral, spiritual, cultural, intellectual and physical development of children.
- To value parents and carers as important partners in their children's learning.
- To build positive relationships with practitioners and work effectively as a team.
- To ensure rapid keep up opportunities for children that support them as capable learners.
- To embed a love of language and literacy, in order to equip our youngest learners with the skills they need to communicate effectively, successfully managing their feelings and emotions.

Early Years Curriculum Implementation

Staff

All staff involved in the education of our children will develop good, healthy relationships and provide a secure environment in which children feel able to make mistakes, as well as build confidence and celebrate their successes. The Early Years team work with the school nurse, Speech and Language therapists, SEND support staff, health workers and other family support practitioners to provide a multi-agency network which supports the needs of individual children as and when this is necessary.

Child safety and supervision

Providers must put appropriate arrangements in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families. Effective supervision provides support, coaching and training for all practitioners and promotes the interests of children and highly effective interactions. Supervision should foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement, which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.

Supervision should provide opportunities for staff to:

- discuss any issues – particularly concerning children's development or well-being; including child protection concerns
 - identify solutions to address issues as they arise; and
 - receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness.
- (EYFS Statutory Framework for group and school-based providers, p.29 para 3.34 and 3.35)*

At St. Leonard's, staff regularly discuss and work together to ensure we fulfil our supervisory requirements.

All staff follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and have regard to the most recent 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' documentation.

Staff are aware if there are any concerns regarding children to speak with the design

In addition to this, teaching staff receive an annual appraisal or professional development meeting.





Early Years provision, organisation and the learning environment

Our Early Years provision offers open and accessible classroom settings for up to 24 children per session in Nursery and up to 45 children in Reception.

We benefit from different types of floor surfaces for different activities and easily accessible toilets and cloakroom facilities. Equipment and resources are available to meet the needs of our children and they also have access to other areas and facilities throughout school e.g. hall, class library area, playgrounds, grass and woods.

Mid-day supervisors are kept informed of any relevant issues and liaise with staff accordingly.

Communication with parents is achieved through:

- Notes and information messages
- Whole school newsletters
- Before and After-school drop in opportunities for parents to speak to staff – short discussions
- Pre-arranged meetings – longer discussions
- Stay and Play sessions and informal parent meetings
- Parent's Evening meetings
- Worship
- School website
- FaceBook feeds
- Reading Records / Home-Communication books
- Suggested home-learning activities
- Online Learning Journal Platform 'Tapestry'

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing the seven areas of learning as follows:-

Prime Areas

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication and language
- Physical development

Specific Areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Educational programmes outline the core content of each of these seven areas of learning. Our curriculum is then designed and sequenced in a progressive way, to meet the needs of our youngest learners.

Long-term plans provide a range of overviews that shape our Early Years Curriculum approach.





Short-term plans include the sequenced learning opportunities and experiences through carefully timetabled opportunities that ensure highly effective delivery of learning.

Plans are flexible and take into account the interests and needs of the children, including unplanned events, particularly those that are child-initiated.

Tracking data is used constantly during each term as a reference for planning accurately to meet the needs of the children. Tracking is updated half-termly to show data that supports judgements / predictions for a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD) by the end of a child's Reception year.

Teaching and Learning

Quality teaching and learning is strengthened through:

- Strong partnerships between staff and parents/carers so that children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- High quality and purposeful interactions with children that provides balance between scaffolded and independent practice, including questioning.
- An understanding that practitioners know how children develop and learn, and how this affects the strategies used to deliver highly effective learning experiences.
- Making appropriate interventions to develop play and talk or other means of communication.
- The importance of play through continuous provision. Play helps children explore ideas, roles and relationships. Appropriately planned and structured play supports and develops the child's need to socialise, express ideas, thoughts and feelings, experiment, observe, try things out and develop early learning skills.
- Encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning and to develop independence and self-management.
- Support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor spaces, facilities and equipment.
- Identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations and informal assessments.
- Clear aims for our work and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do. (*Lancashire Quality awards 'Stepping into Quality in the Early Years' and 'Step with Mathematics.' 2016-2019, 'Lancashire Quality Award in Early Years Pedagogy' March 2024 and 'Step Outside' Quality Award December 2024.*)
- An appreciation of how the brain works, cognitive load and memory retrieval.
- A clear plan for the future outlined in our School Improvement Plan priorities and Early Years action planning.





Induction and Parental involvement when starting Nursery

We provide a tailored approach when starting Little Lennie's.

Stage 1: Parent's Tour of the Setting

This is an opportunity to find out more about us, our ethos and pedagogy, meet staff and ask questions. We find out about your child, any individual needs and how Little Lennie's Nursery can best help support these very early stages of development.

Stage 2: Arranging a Start Date / Attending Sessions

This is dependent upon place availability. Our office staff are available to provide help and guidance on the relevant forms for places. A waiting list is in place if places become over-subscribed. Starting Nursery and attending the first sessions is tailored to each child's and family needs.

Stage 3: Regular contact with Nursery staff

Using the key person roles, staff maintain close contact during the settling in period. All Nursery staff are on hand to support all our families during their time in Nursery.

Stage 4: Useful information and Testimonials

Parents/carers are signposted to our school website for further information.

Induction and Parental involvement when starting school

We produce a carefully planned induction programme for our families which is reviewed each year. The design is simple and can be individually tailored to meet individual needs at each stage.

Stage 1: Parent's Induction Meeting

We welcome parents/carers to attend our parent's induction meeting.

Stage 2: A tour of our Setting for you and your child (with the induction meeting)

Children and their families are contacted to come and visit us at school. Induction packs and a gift for every child are provided here.

Stage 3: Transition discussions / visits with pre-school settings

We make contact with every child's current pre-school setting(s) and liaise with key workers to ensure a detailed transition to school conversation takes place, so we can understand specifically everything we need to know for September.

Stage 4: Individual contact with families / bespoke induction

Parents/carers have the opportunity to ask any questions or make individual appointments prior to September, should the need arise.

Stage 5: Useful information and Testimonials

Parents/carers are signposted to our school website for further information.





Mobile phones/Cameras/Electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities

In line with the Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct:

No personal devices are to be used in the classroom during the school day.

All calls should be directed through the school office.

Staff/volunteers are permitted to wear smartwatches however, they should disable the camera function on their device and not take/send calls or messages on them during working hours.

Staff use approved school devices for recording and reporting purposes.

Medicines

Staff follow the school's policy and procedures with regards to both administering medication and when carrying their own medication.

Key person

Children will have a key person(s) during their time in Nursery. In Reception, the child's key person is their class teacher(s).

Assessing, recording and reporting

Regular assessment of children's learning is used to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation stage takes the form of observation and discussion carried out by the practitioners. This also includes:

- Transition documents from pre-school, nursery or childminding setting.
- On-entry assessment – our own in-school assessments and the Reception Baseline Assessment.
- Autumn term parents' meetings.
- Spring term parents' meetings
- Summer term assessment, completion of Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. (EYFSP)
- End of year report summaries to parents/carers, including teacher judgements, Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and Good Levels of Development.
- On-going tracking documentation.
- Pupil Progress meetings.
- Information provided to the Local Authority.
- Stay and Play parents opportunities.
- Open evenings and drop ins for parents.
- Contributions to Learning Journeys, via the Tapestry digital learning platform.





Early Years Impact

As a result of our Early years curriculum children:

- are independent, confident and resilient learners.
- aspire to be the best they can be.
- develop excellent communication skills.
- express themselves effectively and develop skills to support their management of emotions.
- try hard and respond positively to challenges.
- have a positive view of learning.
- share knowledge and understand how they learn.
- are well equipped for their next stages of learning/development.
- read confidently and with fluency by the end of Reception year.
- achieve Good Levels of development significantly above National and Regional averages.
- benefit from a well-designed and highly motivating curriculum which is progressive across the early years phase.
- benefit from learning outdoors, in our own school woodlands.
- have access to a range of high quality texts that promote a broad range of varied learning opportunities, that build the foundations for future Key Stages, particularly readiness for Year 1.
- celebrate cultures and diversity and have a growing appreciation of our wonderful world.
- experience opportunities that develop their Cultural Capital.






Section 3: Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

As required in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for group and school based providers, effective 1st September 2025, we fulfil the following:

Safeguarding policies and procedures	School Designated Safeguarding Leads and current and relevant Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures.
Whistleblowing	School Whistleblowing Policy in place.
Concerns about children's safety and welfare	School Designated Safeguarding Leads and current and relevant Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures.
Suitable People / References / Disqualification	School Safer Recruitment procedures.
Staff taking medication / other substances Smoking and Vaping	Relevant Risk Assessments. School is a non-smoking premises.
Qualifications, training, support and skills including Safeguarding Training and Paediatric First Aid	As a minimum, annual Safeguarding training. Regular and effective supervision for all EYFS staff. PFA qualifications in place. Staff have English language skills. Key Person system in place. Staff:Child ratios met.
Supervision of Staff	School EYFS Policy.
Key Person	School EYFS Policy.
Staff: Child Ratios	Fulfilled as per the EYFS Statutory Framework.
Health: Medicines	School Policy.
Food and Drink	National Fruit Scheme - staff preparing and delivering fruit and milk have appropriate food hygiene training. Fresh water is available all day. Regard is given to the Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance.
Safer Eating	Staff hold PFA qualifications. School holds special dietary requirements, including allergies and intolerance information. If food is prepared, it is done so in a way to prevent choking.





	<p>Children always eat within sight and hearing of children.</p> <p>Any incidents of choking are reported.</p>
<p>Food and Drink Facilities</p> <p>Food Poisoning</p>	<p>The school has areas equipped to provide healthy meals, snacks and drinks for children.</p> <p>If necessary, school would notify OFSTED of any food poisoning affecting two or more children within 14 days.</p>
<p>Supporting and Understanding children's behaviour</p>	<p>School Behaviour Policy and associated training, e.g. Emotion Coaching and Breathing Techniques, trauma informed practice.</p>
<p>SEND</p>	<p>School Policy.</p> <p>Class provision maps.</p> <p>Individual Provision maps.</p> <p>SEND Toolkit / Graduated Response.</p>
<p>Safety and suitability of premises, environment and equipment - Accident or injury</p>	<p>Classroom First Aid Boxes available at all times.</p>
<p>Safety of Premises</p>	<p>Indoor and Outdoor setting Risk Assessments.</p>
<p>Indoor and Outdoor spaces</p>	<p>Areas are well organised and meet the needs of the children.</p> <p>Daily outdoor access available.</p>
<p>Sleeping arrangements</p>	<p>If a child becomes sleepy due to illness, parents / carers are contacted and the child is continually monitored.</p> <p>If a child falls asleep, they are continually watched and in a safe place.</p>
<p>Toilets and intimate hygiene</p>	<p>Intimate Care Policy.</p> 



Organising premises for confidentiality and safeguarding	Space available for confidential talks with parents / carers. Secure school site / external doors.
Safety on outings	Risk Assessments and Evolve system.
Risk assessment	Indoor and outdoor risk assessments for the setting in place and updated as necessary. Dynamic assessments constantly in place.
Information and Record Keeping	School record keeping systems.
Information about the child	SIMs / Office.
Information for parents and carers	Information sheet provided to parents and carers and available on the school website.
Complaints	School Complaints Policy and procedures.
Inspections and quality assurance visit	Parents and Carers informed as and when applicable.
Information about the provider	SIMs / Office / Registers.
Changes that must be notified to Ofsted.	Would be fulfilled at the time if applicable.
Other Legal Duties	School Policies and relevant legislation.

Monitoring and reviewing the Early Years Policy

The Head teacher, Leadership Team, Early Years Phase Leader, staff and governors will review this policy to ensure that it is being implemented appropriately and effectively, taking into account any changing circumstances.

The policy is reviewed annually or sooner, should new legislative changes occur.

