

Sir John Offley CE (VC) Primary School

'With God all things are possible.'

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Key Details

Date written/updated: Jan, 2026

Date of next review: Jan, 2027

Sir John Offley CE (VC) Primary school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people/vulnerable adults and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

At Sir John Offley we live each day through our motto, 'With God all things are possible' and the core Christian Values of Love, Forgiveness and Aspiration. This creates a foundation for our children to develop a love of learning, be motivated and fully prepared for each stage of their life. This journey starts in our Early Years.

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years' providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2021)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Sir John Offley (VC) CE primary school all children join us, part time, at the beginning of the school year in which they are three. They begin attending school full time at the beginning of the school year in which they turn five.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At Sir John Offley School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Sir John Offley School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every

opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs and disabilities children who are more able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that are challenging and an enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development. Opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs and learning styles;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.
- working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See whole School Safeguarding Policy)

Welfare

'Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.'

(Statutory Framework for EYFS)

At Sir John Offley School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for EYFS 2025.

We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children;
- to provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill;

- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- to ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

At Sir John Offley School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognise the role that parents/carers have played, and their future, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during 'move up' sessions;
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress through parent's evenings and sharing their learning journey's during termly open mornings.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: class assemblies, open mornings, themed events etc.
- Encouraging parents to share children's achievements, using the WOW moments which are added to their Learning Journey.
- Sending half termly planning and regular updates using Google classroom to keep parents updated on the activities and themes being covered in school and sending home/school learning books which encourage the parents to join in with and share learning supported at home.

All staff in the Foundation Stage aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school Early Years Foundation Stage has one class teacher who is then supported by TA's. We actively promote a caring and supportive ethos which allows children and parents to share any worries and concerns with all EYFS staff.

Staff meet regularly to discuss issues, concerns, planning and attainment of all children.

Enabling Environments

At Sir John Offley School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS follows the schools Long Term Plan and Medium Term Plans which are based around themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning and to ensure curriculum coverage; however the teacher may alter plans in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This will be indicated on annotated weekly planning.

At Sir John Offley, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child. The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

The Learning Environment

EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. EYFS classrooms have enclosed outdoor areas. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At Sir John Offley School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. In the EYFS we have;

- A working partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- A good understanding of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching which we have used to develop our pedagogy.
- A range of approaches to provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication.
- A carefully planned curriculum using the revised framework that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS.
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities.
- Planned opportunities and give encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management.
- The support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

Playing and exploring - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

'Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.'

(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2025)

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Active learning - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

'Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.'
(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2025)

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions."
(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2025)

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

Three Prime Areas are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

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

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy.

Termly class reports are sent out to governors.

The Head Teacher and subject coordinator will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.