St Mary's Wavendon CofE Primary School

EYFS Policy

June 2025 – September 2026

This is our school. With God's help we care for one another, are curious in our learning, and know we are all loved.
Luke 10:27 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'

As a part of Inspiring Futures Through Learning Trust we adhered to all their policies and our school policies are adopted in conjunction with IFtL policies.

Policy name:		**SMW EYFS policy**
Version:		**V3**
Date relevant from:		**June 2025**
Date to be reviewed		**June 2026** **This policy will be reviewed every year unless legislation dictates otherwise. Recent changes in Legislation will need to be read and used to review this policy**
Role of reviewer:		**SMW Head of School** **SMW Executive Head**
Statutory (Y/N)		**Y**
Published on website*		**Y**

Policy Level **:	**3**
Relevant to:	**All those within SMW school community**
Bodies consulted:	**School/ department governance bodies**
Approved by:	**SMW Governors**
Approval date:	**10th June 2025**

Key:

**** Publication on website:***

IFtL website		School website	
1	Statutory publication	A	Statutory publication
2	Good practice	B	Good practice
3	Not required	C	Not required

***** Policy level:***

1. Trust wide:
   - This one policy is relevant to everyone and consistently applied across all schools and Trust departments with no variations.
     - *Approved by the IFtL Board of Trustees.*
2. Trust core values:
   - This policy defines the values to be incorporated fully in all other policies on this subject across all schools and Trust departments. This policy should therefore from the basis of a localised school / department policy that in addition contains relevant information, procedures and / or processes contextualised to that school / department.
     - *Approved by the IFtL Board of Trustees as a Trust Core Values policy.*
     - *Approved by school / department governance bodies as a relevantly contextualised school / department policy.*
3. School / department policies
   - These are defined independently by schools / departments as appropriate
     - *Approved by school / department governance bodies.*

EYFS Policy

This policy outlines the purposes, nature and management of Foundation Stage education at St Marys Wavendon Primary School. Within this document, the term Foundation is used to describe children who attend school prior to Year 1 and the term Practitioner refers to the adults working alongside your children.

At St Marys Wavendon Primary:

- We aspire to ignite a passion for life-long learning.
- We are committed in our pursuit for excellence.
- We are committed to give our children the best possible future life chances, without limits on learning, attainment and achievement. We have a genuine belief that, given the opportunities, every child can succeed.
- We aspire to develop great thinkers, who are independent, resilient and embrace challenges and new experiences.
- We encourage co-operation and collaboration, everyone taking responsibility for all that they say and do.
- We provide exciting but safe and secure spaces, indoors and outdoors, where children can explore, discover and experiment.
- We value everyone as an individual and encourage respect for others and their opinions.
- We aim to develop a strong community spirit in our children that helps them to become positive, active responsible citizens in the future.
- We celebrate, supp and respect the diverse community in which we live and appreciate ourresponsibilities as global citizens.

We aim to create an ethos where:

- A welcoming atmosphere is created in school, where children, staff, parents and visitors feel valued.
- Our children are happy, feel safe and supported and enjoy coming to school.
- Our children demonstrate good manners and show consideration to and for others.
- Our children are keen, enthusiastic and totally engaged in their learning.
- There is a growth mind-set. We stay positive, we value learning from mistakes and we keep going when things become tough.
- Our children are reflective and thoughtful about their experiences.
- Our children are motivated and have the confidence to challenge themselves as learners.
- Our school environment supports children's learning and values their achievements.
- Teaching is creative, exciting and stimulates and extends children's thinking.

- Our children have a genuine pride in themselves, their efforts and achievements. Talents and creativity are nurtured and encouraged.
- Our staff are committed professionals who demonstrate a love of teaching, a passion for their own, as well as children's learning and development, and genuine care for the children they teach.
- We have high expectations for all within our community to ensure that we demonstrate the very best standards of conduct, moral purpose and integrity.

There is a consistency of expectation that everyone, irrespective of gender, race or culture, should feel safe and secure, have empathy for others, and place a high value upon individual achievement and personal development.

Foundation Stage Education

All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential. (Statutory Framework for the EYFS, DFE 2024)

Aims and principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS) became a statutory framework for all children from birth to five from September 2008. The new framework has been revised and is mandatory from the 4th January 2024.

Standards set by the EYFS state that 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 Curriculum for the Foundation Stage forms the first stage of our whole school curriculum.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- ✦ Quality and consistency throughout the school setting, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
- ✦ A secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly;
- ✦ Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;
- ✦ Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

The learning and development requirements cover:

- The areas of learning and development which must shape activities and experiences (educational programmes) for children in all early year's settings
- The early learning goals that providers must help children work towards (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five)
- Assessment arrangements for measuring progress (and requirements for reporting to parents and/or carers). The **safeguarding and welfare requirements** cover the steps that providers must take to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

Four guiding principles shape practice in early years settings. These are:

1. Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
3. 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.
4. 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 characteristics of effective learning describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and becoming an effective learner. They underpin learning and development across all areas.

    - By **playing and exploring** children find out and explore, use what they know in their play and become willing to have a go;

    - Through **active learning** children are involved and develop their concentration skills, perseverance and gain a sense of enjoyment through achieving what they set out to do;

    - By **creating and thinking critically** children have their own ideas, use what they already know to learn new things and choose ways to do things including finding new skills, strategies and techniques.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

These three areas, the **prime** areas, are:

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

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

The **specific** areas are:

- Literacy.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding the World.
- Expressive Arts and Design

Educational programmes must involve activities and experiences for children as set out under each of the areas of learning.

- **Communication and language development** involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations. The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial.

- **Physical development.** Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults.

- **Personal, social and emotional development.** Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their feelings and those of others.

- **Literacy development** is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy

recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

- **Mathematics.** Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics , look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

- **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world.

Expressive Arts and Design. The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with awide range of media and materials.

At St Mary's Wavendon Primary School…

We believe that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships.

We believe that the learning environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development.

We believe that play based learning is paramount, and we believe that our children should have opportunities to direct their own learning across the areas of learning and development.

We believe that where possible our provision should be based around the interests of our children.

We believe that the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' (CoEL) underpin learning and development across all areas and support children to become effective and motivated learners.

We believe that children's well-being, enjoyment and learning go hand in hand and are at the heart of everything we do.

We believe that successful transitions must consider the children's needs from all angles and involve all key stakeholders.

Our curriculum is planned with the children through a series of themes and topics, each of which offers experiences in all seven areas of learning and focusing on all three of the

characteristics of effective learning. Topics are planned based on what we know and learn about the children and the children are always at the centre of planning. Activities for topics are taken from the children and planned by practitioners, who ensure that the required elements of the EYFS are met. As a week progresses the activities often evolve as children have new ideas and suggestions of what they could do. Planning is displayed and can be shared with parents and carers.

In order for our children to thrive and be independent learners we provide them with a highly stimulating and organised **environment;** children have access to **continuous provision** which provides them with the opportunity to play and explore in all areas of our setting. In addition to this, children will also access learning through directed activities whilst working with an adult.

Key Person
All children within the Foundation Stage are assigned to a key person whose role is to ensure that their individual needs are met. The key person will help the children to settle into our school and become familiar within the setting.

How our day is organised and planned:

FS1 - Nursery Class Available sessions:
Morning Sessions
8.30am-11.30am
(15 hours funded sessions)

Lunchtime sessions
11.30am-12.30pm

Afternoon Sessions
12.30pm – 3.30pm
(15 hours funded sessions)

Full day Session (30 hours funded places)
8.30am-2.30pm

End of Day Session
2.30pm-3.30pm.

Before children join the Nursery we arrange one or two settling in sessions. These sessions at the Nursery allow children to become familiar with the surroundings and help with a smooth transition. We also offer home visits.

FS2 - Reception Classes

Practitioners are in their rooms from 8.30am when the classroom doors open.
The day begins at 8.35 am
Lunchtime is from 11.30-12.30pm
The day ends at 3.10pm

A fruit or vegetable snack is provided by the Government (free entitlement).

Children have access to their water bottles and are able to drink at any time.
Children under five receive a free carton of milk every day; parents have the option to pay for milk when their child reaches five years of age.

Reception age children are entitled to one of our free, hot, healthy school meals.

The children are organised into classes and each class is managed by a teacher and supported by a Teaching Assistant or Nursery Nurse.

Classrooms are used for registration and whole class activities. During independent learning time children have free flow access between their indoor classroom and the outdoor classroom areas.

Small groups working with students or parent helpers are always supervised by members of staff.

Outdoor activities
The outdoor classroom offers further opportunities for children to learn and is an essential part of EYFS Curriculum.
The outdoor classroom is a safe, purpose-built space where children can develop their physical skills and learn through continuous provision and directed activities. All prime and specific areas of learning are catered for within this learning environment.

Resources
Resources are kept in the Foundation Stage area: classrooms, shared area and outdoor storage areas. Equipment is well-organised and where appropriate accessible to the

children. Children are encouraged to be independent when selecting and tidying away resources. We offer the children lots of open-ended resources that can be used to enhance their play and develop their understanding of key concepts, while ensuring learning is not capped.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. On-going assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. In their interactions with children, practitioners should respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share.

For whole school aspects of assessment, recording and reporting, please refer to the school policy on assessment.

Our assessment procedures are:

<u>On entry to Nursery</u>

The assigned Key Person spends time getting to know the child and speaks with parents/carers. They discuss their child's interests, skills, difficulties and any other information they feel useful or relevant. Informal entry level assessment is made by practitioners during the first half term – this is through observation and recorded as a Baseline on our Assessment System 'Arc Pathway'.

<u>On entry to the school – Reception</u>

Records of transfer are received from pre-school settings; these record the developmental stage each child is performing in within the seven areas of learning.
Teachers make home visits in September, where parents can share their child's interests, skills, difficulties and any other information they feel useful or relevant. Informal entry level assessment is made by practitioners during the first 6 weeks of school – this is through observation and recorded as a Baseline on our Assessment System Arc Pathway. It is also now a statutory requirement that we report our baselines to the Local Authority.

<u>Through the year</u>

Practitioners record observations of children's learning which feeds into our continuous assessment and planning cycle.
An Autumn Parents' Evening focuses on how children have settled into school and their Personal, Social, and Emotional development. Parents are invited to share any new information to guide the practitioner's assessment of their child. A Spring Parents' Evening focuses on the progression made from entry. Practitioners continually set next steps for the children ensuring they make maximum progress in all areas of learning

<u>At the end of a child's time in the Foundation stage</u>

A report is sent home at the end of the year which includes an opportunity for parental

feedback. An open afternoon is held at the end of the year. This is an opportunity for parents to look at their child's work and discuss the end of year report if necessary.

Information about a child's Characteristics of Learning is shared with parents and also Year 1 staff.

Parental Involvement

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- ✓ Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school.
- ✓ Arranging, where possible, visits by the teacher to all children in their home setting and childcare provision prior to their starting school.
- ✓ Providing a pack of information about starting school or nursery.
- ✓ Outlining the school's expectations in the Home-School agreement.
- ✓ Inviting children to spend time in school or nursery during induction visits.
- ✓ Providing an induction meeting for parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss nursery and school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.
- ✓ Holding a parent consultation early in the academic year (October) to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- ✓ Operating an open-door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- ✓ Written contact through online communication systems, weekly newsletters, notice boards and school newsletters.
- ✓ Welcoming home learning and achievements to be shared via the interactive Arc Pathway APP.
- ✓ Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading.
- ✓ Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in the Foundation Stage.
- ✓ Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, workshops, stay and plays, whole school events, productions and sports day.

Parents can offer support to their child in a variety of ways such as:

- ✦ Providing opportunities to share books at home
- ✦ Supporting their child when completing any home learning tasks
- ✦ Talking to their child about their day and the activities they have been doing

The School Nurse, Speech Therapist and Educational Psychologist can be called upon to offer advice if needed.

Links with the Community and other Agencies

<u>The Local Community</u>

We use the opportunities offered by the local community in the following ways:

- ✦Visiting local parks, shops and other attractions;
- ✦Visiting local museums;
- ✦Inviting people in the locality who come to talk to the children (Police, Fire-Fighters, Nurses, local charities etc.);
- ✦Involving local interest groups such as the church, women's groups, local historians, hobbies, experts;
- ✦Links with local Residential and Nursing Homes

.Professional and Local Services

We have links with the following services:

- ✦Educational Psychological Service
- ✦School Nurses and Health Visitors
- ✦Speech and Language Therapy
- ✦Education Welfare Officers
- ✦Social Services
- ✦Pediatric and other Hospital Outreach
- ✦ EMASS

Links with local schools and with other settings catering for Early Years

We have links with local schools and other providers of education for Early Years. These include:

- ✓ Schools within the IfTL Multi Academy Trust
- ✓ Other local schools
- ✓ Nurseries, playgroups and pre-schools
- ✓ Child-minders

Equal opportunities

The school has an equal opportunities statement applying to all areas of the curriculum. The EYFS curriculum is:

- ✦ Open to all pupils irrespective of their attainment or aptitude.
- ✦ Fair, unbiased in terms of gender, ethnic or cultural background of pupil.
- ✦ Encouraging and enabling with regard to pupils with special educational needs.

Health and Safety

The Foundation Teachers are responsible for liaising with the Health and Safety Coordinator to ensure that safety and welfare requirements are met. The Foundation Coordinator will also liaise with the Health and Safety Coordinator to make sure that safety and legal requirements are met in the installation and use of all Foundation Stage equipment and resources.

Data Protection

The Headteacher and the Governors are registered under the Data Protection Act.

Policy Review

The Foundation Stage policy will be reviewed annually to reflect changing needs, progress and practice. The Policy is to be used alongside whole school policies with particular reference to the Foundation Stage.

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- School prospectus
- School admissions policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Statements on racism and bullying
- Equal opportunities policy
- Complaints procedure
- Behaviour policy
- Statement on the curriculum for EYFS, Key Stages 1 and 2

Approval: This policy was ratified by St Mary's Wavendon Governing Body.	**Next Review on or before:** **June 2026** This policy will be reviewed annually by the St Mary's Wavendon Strategic Leadership Team and approved by the Governing Body at least on an annual basis (although amendments prior to this may occur to reflect the key changes and proposals within curriculum currently occurring)

Approval: EYFS Policy 2025 This policy was ratified by the Governors Date: 10th June 2025 Signed:	Next Review on or before: September 2026 *This policy will be reviewed annually and approved by the Governors at on an annual basis.*