



South Marston C of E Primary School

Early Years Policy

Reviewed	2026	Next Review	2029
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Introduction

This policy should be read alongside South Marston Church of England Primary School's wider vision, values and curriculum guidance.

Our Early Years provision follows the statutory requirements set out in the Department for Education's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework. The EYFS framework explains how early years settings support children's learning, development and welfare from birth to age five.

Useful documents include:

- [EYFS Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers](#)
- [Development Matters Guidance](#)
- [Reception Baseline Assessment Information](#)

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, our aim is to provide strong foundations for lifelong learning. We create an engaging and nurturing environment where children feel safe, valued and confident to explore, play and learn.

Our practice is guided by the four principles of the EYFS:

- every child is unique and capable of learning
- children learn best through positive relationships
- children thrive in enabling environments
- children develop and learn at different rates

These principles shape our curriculum, learning environment and interactions with children every day.

Context

South Marston CE Primary School's EYFS provision includes Preschool and Reception classes. We welcome children from the term after their third birthday until they reach statutory school age, following the admissions arrangements of the Blue Kite Academies Trust and Swindon Borough Council.

Our EYFS provision is located within the school grounds in a dedicated early years building. The environment has been carefully designed to support high-quality early years practice and includes:

- a Preschool classroom
- a Reception classroom
- an interlinking kitchen area

- toilets and cloakroom facilities
- a spacious outdoor learning environment with regular free-flow access

The Preschool is led by a qualified Preschool Lead, and the Reception class is taught by a qualified teacher. Both are supported by qualified Early Years Teaching Assistants.

The Reception teacher has overall responsibility for the strategic implementation of the EYFS curriculum, assessment processes and safeguarding requirements, in line with the EYFS statutory framework.

We work hard to build strong partnerships with families from the very beginning. Information about our provision is shared through school communications, newsletters, social media, visits and transition opportunities. Early admission through Preschool supports continuity, early identification of needs and smooth transition into Reception.

Planning, Teaching and Learning

The EYFS framework identifies seven areas of learning and development.

The three prime areas are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

These prime areas support children's learning in the four specific areas:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

Our curriculum is carefully planned to support progress across all seven areas through a balance of adult-led teaching and child-initiated play and exploration.

Planning is responsive to children's interests, development and next steps. Staff regularly observe children during play and learning activities and use these observations to adapt teaching and provision.

We place a strong emphasis on learning through play. Play gives children opportunities to explore ideas, develop language, solve problems, build relationships and become confident learners. Adults support and extend learning through modelling, questioning, shared thinking and carefully planned experiences.

Learning themes are often introduced through high-quality texts and stories. These are adapted to reflect the interests and needs of each cohort while ensuring broad curriculum coverage. Some areas of learning, including Religious Education, Physical Education and whole-school celebration events, are taught separately in line with the wider school curriculum.

Strong relationships are central to our practice. In Preschool, children are supported through a key person system. In Reception, the class teacher acts as the key person for all children. This helps children feel secure, known and supported as individuals.

We also work collaboratively across the trust to moderate assessment, share good practice and maintain high-quality provision.

Assessment

Assessment in EYFS is ongoing and forms part of everyday teaching and learning. Staff use observations, discussions and interactions to understand each child's development and identify next steps.

We use information from both home and school to build a full picture of each child's progress. Assessment is informed by the non-statutory guidance in Development Matters.

Within the first six weeks of Reception, children complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). This assessment provides a starting point for measuring progress across primary school.

For children new to the setting, staff gather information through transition meetings, visits and conversations with parents and previous settings.

Throughout the year, progress is monitored to identify strengths, areas for development and any barriers to learning.

At the end of Reception, teachers complete the statutory EYFS Profile for each child. Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals and are judged as either:

- emerging (working towards meeting the required standards)
- expected (have met the required standards)

This information is shared with parents in the end-of-year report and submitted to the local authority in line with statutory requirements.

A child achieves a Good Level of Development (GLD) when they reach the expected level in:

- the prime areas of learning
- literacy
- mathematics

Assessment information is also shared with Year 1 teachers to support a smooth and successful transition.

SEND and Inclusion

We are committed to ensuring that every child feels included, valued and supported within our EYFS provision.

We recognise the importance of identifying additional needs as early as possible and work closely with families, the school SENDCo and external professionals where needed.

All children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Staff adapt teaching, resources and the learning environment to ensure that learning is accessible and meaningful for every child.

We aim to help all children develop confidence, independence and a positive attitude towards learning.

Safeguarding and Welfare

Children's safety and wellbeing are at the heart of everything we do.

We follow all safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the EYFS statutory framework and the school's safeguarding policies. This includes procedures relating to:

- child protection
- safer recruitment
- behaviour management
- intimate care
- administering medication
- mobile phone use
- risk assessment
- safer working practice

At least one paediatric first aid trained member of staff is present at all times when children are on site.

We follow statutory staff-to-child ratios to ensure children are appropriately supervised and supported.

Mealtimes are carefully supervised to ensure children eat safely and develop positive eating habits. Staff are fully aware of allergies, dietary requirements and choking risks.

All staff receive regular safeguarding training and understand their responsibility to recognise and respond to concerns promptly.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We believe that strong partnerships with parents and carers are essential to children's success and wellbeing.

We maintain regular communication through:

- Tapestry (An online learning journal that allows EYFS staff to share photos, observations and updates about children's learning and development)
- parent meetings
- workshops
- newsletters
- informal discussions

Parents and carers are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey through shared observations and ongoing communication.

We also value our links with the wider community, including the academy trust, local church and other local organisations, which help enrich children's experiences and sense of belonging.