



**Ivington C of E  
Primary and  
Pre-school**

*Reaching together with the Fruit of the  
Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)*

# **Early Years Policy**

## **Approval of the Governing Body**

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for:

### **Early Years Policy**

at

### **Ivington C.E. (VA) Primary School.**

It was developed/revised during the:

**Spring Term 2025**

It has been agreed and is supported by the teaching staff and the governing body

We aim to review this policy during the:

**Spring Term 2027**

Or sooner if necessary



## **Linking with our Vision – Reaching together with Love, Joy and Peace (Galatians 5:22-23)**

**To provide a caring, Christian ethos for the school, which inspires and excites a shared enthusiasm for life and learning.**

At Ivington CE Primary and Pre-school, through our strong Christian ethos and focus on nine important Christian values, we are committed to providing a deeply nourishing, spiritual, ambitious, and broad curriculum.

Our motto, 'Reaching together' underpins our belief in equality of opportunity for all, where we actively endeavour to promote understanding and appreciation of our diverse society and give each child a special place in the world where they feel valued, essential to our community and equipped with the necessary skills to make a positive contribution.

We perceive our role to be opening a 'Window on the World', through which our pupils are actively encouraged to develop respect for the beliefs and cultures which enrich their everyday lives and encourage others to do likewise.

We strive to eliminate inequality through our deep Christian ethos of respect and understanding of all groups in society, which ensures that everyone at Ivington will be treated fairly despite his or her creed, colour, disability, or gender.

More details are available in our [Inclusion, Racial Equality and Equal Opportunities policies](#).

The health, safety, and welfare of all the people who work or learn at our school are therefore of fundamental importance. We aim to provide a safe, secure, and pleasant working environment for everyone. The governing body, along with the LA, takes responsibility for protecting the health, safety and welfare of all children and members of staff.

## Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is for children from birth to five years of age. Planning will consider the emotional, social, physical, creative and intellectual development of the children and will be based upon what the children can do. Learning will be active and involve first hand experiences using cross-curricular topics – holistic learning - set in meaningful contexts. It will value the children's own interests. Planning and provision guidance is given in Development Matters in the EYFS: [www.earlyeducation.org.uk](http://www.earlyeducation.org.uk).

Children are involved in making choices and decisions. Self-discipline and respect for self and others are strongly encouraged. There will be a balance of child initiated and adult initiated activities with focused teaching and independent learning. Purposeful play situations are planned and are valuable for observing, supporting and extending the children's learning. Open ended questioning is used to encourage investigation and problem solving. The Governor with responsibility for Early Years, Mrs Polly Minton will be involved through visits and discussions in the decisions concerning practice and policies.

The EYFS expects practitioners to:

- Recognise children as competent and influential individuals who need to be involved in their own assessment
- Work with parents and other adults who are important to the child
- Recognise each child's individual route to learning
- Build a broad picture of the child which ranges widely, incorporating and interconnecting all the areas of Learning and Development 3 The EYFS states that practitioners must:
  - Undertake systematic observations and assessments in order to plan to meet young children's individual needs
  - Plan and provide experiences which are appropriate to each child's stage of development as they progress towards the early learning goals (*Statutory Framework, Welfare Requirements: p37*) The Characteristics of Effective Learning and the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning and Development are all interconnected.

- 1.1. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the children are all made to feel safe and valued, a quality which is fostered throughout the rest of the school. The children are encouraged to eat healthily, take part in exercise and respect each other and their surroundings. We aim to create a safe environment where the children are made to feel confident to express themselves and therefore to explore, achieve and develop not only academically but also in their personal, social and emotional wellbeing.
- 1.2. The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, children attend the Pre-school from the age of 2. Then all children join us in Reception at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday.) Key Stage 1 begins for our children at the beginning of Year 1. The Early Years Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- 1.3. Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been to one of a range of settings that exist in our community. The early years' education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- it is a child centred approach
- it builds on what our children already know and can do.
- it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged.
- it offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors.
- it provides a rich and stimulating environment.

## **2. Staffing and Organisation**

At Ivington Primary School, we have a sessional Pre-School and one Reception class that can admit up to 25 children.

The Pre-School is run by a fully qualified Nursery Supervisor and the Reception class is run by a CRB cleared teacher. They are supported by a variety of fully qualified Teaching Assistants, Nursery Assistants, students and parent helpers. Staff work as a team and meet formally at least once a fortnight in order to plan effective provision, prepare resources and review assessments.

At Ivington Primary School we engage in ongoing professional development to improve our teaching skills, knowledge and understanding. All practitioners are encouraged to participate in local authority courses, in-service and local cluster group training. Practitioners also conduct and attend in-house training and disseminate new initiatives, ideas and teaching methods to colleagues

## **3. Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

3.1 The curriculum of the Early Years Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

- personal, social and emotional well-being.
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning.
- social skills.
- attention skills and persistence.
- language and communication.
- reading and writing.
- mathematics.
- understanding of the world.
- physical development.
- creative development.

## **4. Teaching and learning style**

4.1 Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These feature in the Early Years Foundation Stage just as much as they do in Key Stages 1 & 2.

4.2 The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Early Years Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between staff and parents, so that our children feel secure at our school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- the understanding that staff have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching.
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication.
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children to move their learning forward.
- 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.
- the 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 regularly shared with parents.
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.
- the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do.
- the regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## 5. Play in the Early Years Foundation Stage

5.1 Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas and 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. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

## 6. Inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.1 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 (see our policy on school inclusion).

6.2 In the Early Years Foundation Stage, 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, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

6.3 We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning 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.
- 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.
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary. This may involve speech therapy, motor skills groups and small intervention groups.

## 7. The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

7.1 The Early Years Foundation Stage is a curriculum from birth to five years old; we follow the strands set by this curriculum and concentrate the learning opportunities on the seven areas of learning (3 Prime and 4 Specific) and the Characteristics of Learning. The Characteristics of Effective Learning and the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning and Development are all interconnected. The classroom is 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 room is set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Learning and Development is categorised into **three prime areas** of learning:

- Communication and Language

- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Additionally, there are **four specific areas** of learning:

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

Achievement of these prime and specific areas of learning is underpinned by the Characteristics of Effective Learning

- Playing and exploring - engagement
- Active learning - motivation
- Creating and thinking critically - thinking

7.2 We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS (March 2021) and the principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

### **A unique child**

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

### **Positive relationships**

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

### **Enabling environments**

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

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. Through play and practical experiences children learn about the world and their place in it. They learn through first-hand experiences, talk, books and equipment. We set realistic yet 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, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

## **7.3 Personal, social and emotional development**

The school fosters and develops relationships between home, school, children's centres and places of worship in order to make links stronger for the good of the community as a whole. Children are encouraged to learn to work, share, take turns and co-operate with others. They are encouraged to be independent and make choices for themselves. They are also encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of others and to respect other cultures and beliefs. Children are enabled to become confident and develop a positive self-image.

## **7.4 Physical development**

Children are given opportunities to move to music, use equipment, develop and practice their fine and gross motor skills. They develop an increasing understanding of how their body works and what is needed to be healthy. This is done in both indoors and outdoors and by working with a wide range of resources.

## **7.5 Communication and language**

This covers all aspects of language development and provides the foundation for literacy skills. We focus on developing children's competency in speaking and listening. We aim to extend and enrich the children's vocabulary through story time, rhymes, role-play and group discussions. Children are encouraged to share their own experiences through speaking and acting out events in imaginative play and talking about their own ideas. They are encouraged to take part in class activities such as working with puppets, participating in music sessions and saying rhymes and singing songs together.

## **7.6 Literacy**

We have a variety of resources for the children to use to help them develop early literacy skills. Children are encouraged to use the mark-making areas indoors and outdoors independently, but they also take part in teacher-led activities. These activities include whole class shared reading, Read, Write, Inc sessions and small group writing. Children have the opportunity to develop their writing skills in accordance with their age, ability and competence. We encourage children to treat books and other resources with respect and they are given many opportunities to listen to stories told by the staff.

## **7.7 Mathematics**

We aim for children to achieve mathematical understanding and a firm foundation for numeracy through practical activities and using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas. Pre-number work is covered through nursery rhymes and number activities. Children are given the opportunity to learn about number, shape, space, position, pattern and measurement. Towards the end of the Foundation Stage children start learning to tell the time and are given opportunities to learn about money and simple calculations.

## **7.8 Understanding the world**

All children are given opportunities to solve problems, investigate, and make decisions and experiment. They will learn about living things, their environment, the world around them and the people who are important in their lives. Children are also given opportunities to develop computing skills and to work with and use modern technology.

## **7.9 Expressive arts and design**

We provide opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design, technology, music, drama, movement, dance and imaginative play activities. Children are given opportunities to make paintings, drawings, collages, models and use basic musical instruments. Children also learn new songs and rhymes and enjoy singing them with each other. Colour recognition is taught, naming colours, mixing paints, sorting and matching. At various times during the year children are given the opportunity to participate in school productions and assemblies.

## **8. Assessment**

8.1 We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. There are 3 main forms of assessment in the Early Years settings:

- Day-to-day formative assessment – to inform teaching on an ongoing basis
- In-setting summative assessment – to understand a child's performance at the end of a teaching period
- National statutory summative assessment – to understand a child's performance in relation to national expectations and comparisons



- 8.2 During the children's time in Pre-school, regular observations of their learning takes place to help inform future planning and identify their needs. The children's progress will be reviewed when they're between 2 and 3 by an early year's practitioner or health visitor.
- 8.3 During the children's first half-term in the reception class, a member of staff will complete a baseline assessment set by the government, the aim being to provide an assessment at entry to be used as a starting point from which a cohort-level progress measure to the end of key stage 2 (KS2) can be created.
- 8.4 During the children's first half term in reception class staff will also assess the ability of each child using a mixture of observations, assessments and information from previous settings to form a baseline for the start of their Reception year. This information is used to modify the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.
- 8.5 The teacher will complete an assessment again at the end of the child's reception year and record each child's attainment level. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information with parents at the parental consultation meeting in July.
- 8.6 The staff uses an online Learning Journey called 'Tapestry'. The Learning Journeys contain a wide range of evidence that parents can access and contribute to at home. If internet access is not available, we will share the child's Learning Journey with parents at each parental consultation meeting.
- 8.7 Parents receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June and send them to parents in early July each year.

## **9. The role of parents**

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.
- the teacher visiting children in their home setting or pre-school prior to their starting school.
- the children having the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school.
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class.
- offering formal meeting for parents each term at which parents can discuss their 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.
- having flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parents to become secure, and by allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances.
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents.
- offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents. There is regular communication with home through the child's school diary. We invite parents to curriculum evenings to discuss the kind of work that the children undertake in the reception class.

## **10. Resources**

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

For a copy of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage visit:

[Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/272075/Statutory_framework_for_the_early_years_foundation_stage.pdf)

Also for a copy of Development Matters visit:

[Development Matters - Non-statutory curriculum guidance for the early years foundation stage \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/272075/Development_Matters_-_Non-statutory_curriculum_guidance_for_the_early_years_foundation_stage.pdf)