

St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School



Early Years Policy

Please note: This policy has been updated in line with the EYFS reforms early adopter version of the 'Early years foundation stage statutory framework'.

Updated: 15.2.2021 J Coakley

Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Aims
4. Learning and development
5. Inclusion
6. The learning environment and outdoor spaces
7. Assessment
8. Safeguarding and welfare
9. Mobile phones and devices
10. Health and safety
11. Staff taking medication or other substances
12. Staffing
13. Information and records
14. Parental involvement
15. Transition periods
16. Monitoring and review

Statement of intent

At **St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School**, we greatly value the importance of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

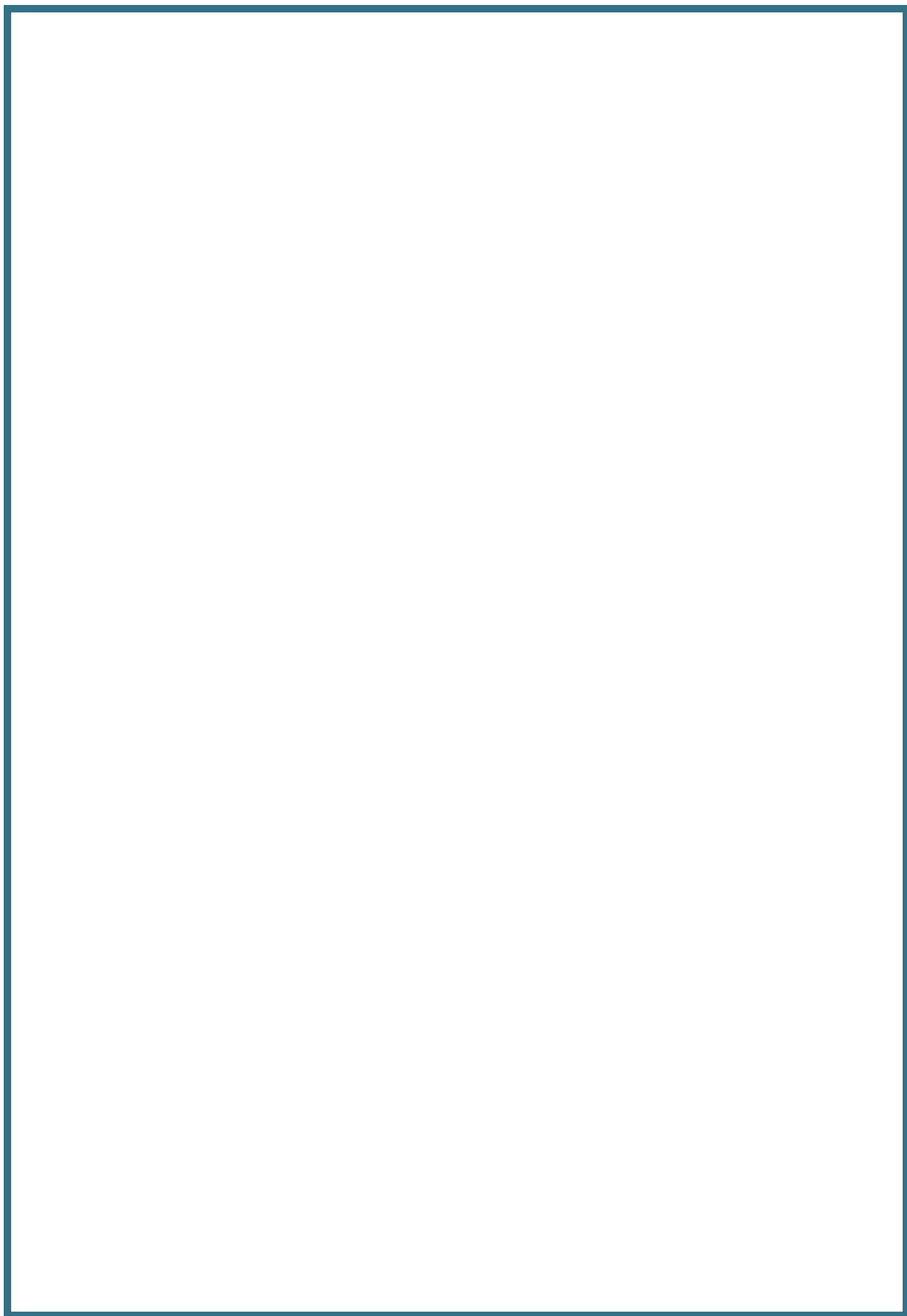
We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's readiness for the next stage of their education and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We seek to provide:

- **Quality and consistency**, 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 child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and parents.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

Signed by:

_____	Headteacher	Date: _____
_____	Chair of governors	Date: _____



1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018

1.2. This policy has due regard to statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2020) 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (EYFS reforms early adopter version)
- DfE (2020) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2015) 'The Prevent Duty'

1.3. This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Assessment Policy
- Early Years Supervision Policy
- Early Years Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Early Years Teaching and Learning Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Whole-School Food Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Administering Medication Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Recruitment Policy

- Data Protection Policy
- Photography Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1. The **Governing Body** has the overall responsibility for ensuring there is a policy in place to safeguard children that includes an explanation of the action to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child and the use of mobile phones and cameras, and staff safeguarding training requirements. These issues are addressed in part in this policy and in further detail in the school's **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** and **Photography Policy**.
- 2.2. The **Governing body** has the overall responsibility for ensuring there is a policy in place in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (including supply staff) or a volunteer. These issues are addressed in the school's **Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy**.
- 2.3. The **Governing Body** has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- 2.4. The **Governing body** has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity, national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 2.5. The **Governing body** has the responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the school's **Complaints Procedures Policy**.
- 2.6. The **EYFS lead, Mrs Joanne Coakley**, in conjunction with the **headteacher, Mr John Hayes**, has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.
- 2.7. Upon direction from the EYFS lead, staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers, are responsible for familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy.
- 2.8. Staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers, are responsible for remaining alert to any issues of concern in children. All concerns should be directed to the EYFS lead and school safeguarding

officers in line with whole school policy. All concerns should be recorded on CPOMS and DSL alerted.

3. Aims

3.1. Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Give each child a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.
- Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills, such as cooperation and sharing.
- Work alongside parents to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.

3.2. Four guiding principles shape our practice:

- 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 overtime. Children benefit from a strong partnership between the school and parents.
- Learning and development is important. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

3.3. To put these principles into practice, the school:

- Provides a balanced curriculum which takes children's different stages of development into account.
- Promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Works in partnership with parents.

- Plans challenging learning experiences, based on individual needs, which are informed by observation and assessment.
- Provides each child with a key person to ensure close relationships are developed.
- Provides a safe and secure learning environment.

4. Learning and development

- 4.1. The EYFS curriculum is based on an observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development.
- 4.2. In partnership with parents, the school promotes the learning and development of pupils to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education.
- 4.3. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape education programmes in EYFS settings. These are split into two sections - prime and specific; however, all the sections are interconnected and important.
- 4.4. The 'prime' areas of learning and development are:
 - Communication and language
 - Listening, attention and understanding
 - Speaking
 - Physical development
 - Gross motor skills
 - Fine motor skills
 - Personal, social and emotional development
 - Self-regulation
 - Managing self
 - Building relationships
- 4.5. The 'specific' areas of learning and development are:
 - Literacy
 - Comprehension
 - Word reading

- Writing
- Mathematics
 - Number
 - Numerical patterns
- Understanding the world
 - Past and present
 - People, culture and communities
 - The natural world
- Expressive arts and design
 - Creating with materials
 - Being imaginative and expressive

- 4.6. The Early Learning Goals (ELGs) above are not used as a curriculum or in any way to limit the wide variety of rich experiences that are crucial to child development. The ELGs are used to support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development and their readiness for Year 1.
- 4.7. Activities are planned alongside our curriculum to reflect children's interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience.
- 4.8. The class teachers are responsible for discussing any cause for concern in a child's progress, especially in the 'prime' areas of learning, with the child's parents. The EYFS lead should also be informed and should support where necessary. A strategy of support is agreed upon and consideration is taken as to whether the child may have SEND which requires additional support.
- 4.9. The school takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children with EAL to use their home language in play and learning whilst also ensuring that these children have sufficient opportunities to reach a good standard of English. During assessment, if a child is found to not have a strong grasp on English, the child's class teacher, alongside the EYFS lead contacts the child's parents to establish their home language skills to assess if there is cause for concern about a language delay.

- 4.10. Each area of learning and development is implemented through activities the teacher believes are the most effective for the children they are teaching.
- 4.11. The school responds to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through friendly and positive interaction.
- 4.12. Activities are planned with regard to the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS:
- Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things
 - Active learning - children concentrate, keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements
 - Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things
- 4.13. Further information regarding learning and development is set out in the school's **Early Years Teaching and Learning Policy**.

5. Inclusion

- 5.1. All children are valued as individuals.
- 5.2. The EYFS curriculum is planned to meet the needs of each individual child and support them at their own pace.
- 5.3. The **Equal Opportunities Policy** ensures that the needs of all children are met.
- 5.4. The **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy** ensures all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible.
- 5.5. Children with SEND in the EYFS setting are monitored and managed by the school's SENCO.

6. The learning environment and outdoor spaces

- 6.1. The **classroom** is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment.

- 6.2. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area, and daily outdoor activities are planned, unless circumstances, such as the weather or staffing ratios would make outdoor activity inappropriate and unsafe.
- 6.3. Reception has their own toilet facilities. We have hygienic changing resources and spare clothes available as required.

7. Assessment

- 7.1. Assessment plays an important part in helping the school to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities and assess the need for support.
- 7.2. Parents are kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development, and the **EYFS lead** addresses any learning and development needs in partnership with EYFS staff and with parents.
- 7.3. Formative assessments are used to assess the learning and development of children in the EYFS. Staff members observe children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. This information is then used to shape learning experiences for each child.
- 7.4. In the final term of the year in which a child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that year, the EYFS profile is completed by the child's class teacher. (EXEMPT 2021 BUT WILL COMPLETE FOR INHOUSE DATA AND TRANSITION PURPOSES)
- 7.5. Reasonable adjustments are made to the assessment process for children with SEND as appropriate.
- 7.6. Assessment procedures are set out in full in the **Early Years Foundation Stage Assessment Policy**.

8. Safeguarding and welfare

- 8.1. All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in the setting safe and well.

- 8.2. Any safeguarding or welfare issues are dealt with in line with the **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.
- 8.3. The DSL is Mr John Hayes (Headteacher).
- 8.4. The deputy DSL is Mr Will Bright (Deputy Headteacher), Mrs Sharon Taggart (Assistant Headteacher) and Mrs Sarah McKay (Welfare Officer).
- 8.5. The DSLs are responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate.
- 8.6. The deputy DSL undertakes the duties of the DSL in their absence, but overall responsibility for safeguarding remains with the DSL.
- 8.7. The DSL and deputy DSL undertake child protection training as required.
- 8.8. Staff receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect.

9. Mobile phones and devices

- 9.1. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'mobile phone' refers to any electronic device that can be used to take images or record videos, including tablets.
- 9.2. Procedures relating to the use of mobile devices are addressed in full in our **Photography Policy**.

Use of mobile phones by staff members:

- 9.3. Staff members do not use personal mobile phones or cameras when children are present.
- 9.4. Staff may use mobile phones on school premises outside of working hours when no children are present.
- 9.5. Staff may use mobile phones in the staffroom during breaks and non-contact time.
- 9.6. Mobile phones are safely stored and in silent mode whilst children are present.

- 9.7. Staff may take mobile phones on trips, but they are only be used in emergencies and are not used when children are present. Mobile phones are not be used to take images or videos at any time during trips.
- 9.8. Staff who do not adhere to this policy face disciplinary action.
- 9.9. Staff use their professional judgement in emergency situations.
- 9.10. Staff report any concerns about another staff member's use of mobile phones to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** and the **Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy**.

Use of mobile phones by parents, visitors and contractors:

- 9.11. Posters are used around the school to indicate that it is a mobile free zone.
- 9.12. Parents, visitors and contractors are not permitted to take photographs or record videos without prior permission.
- 9.13. Parents may take photographs and videos containing their own child during school events. Where the photograph or video would contain other people (e.g. during a school production), parents are only permitted to take photographs and videos with the informed consent of the parents of the children involved.
- 9.14. The school strongly advises against the publication of any photographs or videos taken at the school or school events on social media.
- 9.15. Staff report all concerns about parents, visitors and contractors to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**.

Use of the school's mobile phones and cameras:

- 9.16. If staff need to take photographs or videos as part of a school activity, e.g. for a display, staff are provided with a school device to ensure that only school devices are used to take photographs and videos. (Reception currently have 3 iPads and 2 Samsung Tablet devices.)
- 9.17. School devices have passcode protection.

- 9.18. School devices are only used for work-related matters including photographs of children in the learning environment, observation and teaching resources.
- 9.19. School devices are only used to take photographs in the presence of another staff member and only with the consent of the child's parent.
- 9.20. Staff do not take photographs of bruising or injuries for child protection reasons. All concerns including body maps should be completed on CPOMS.
- 9.21. School devices are not taken off school premises without prior written permission from the **headteacher**.
- 9.22. Where staff members have concerns over material on a school device, they report all concerns to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**.

10. Health and safety

- 10.1. A first-aid box is located between the Reception classrooms.
- 10.2. Only medicine prescribed to a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist is administered. This is stored and administered by office staff. Parental consent is given.
- 10.3. The school's Administering Medication Policy outlines the procedures for administering medicines.
- 10.4. The Reception class teacher or EYFS lead reports any accident or injury involving a child to the parent on the day it occurs, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, and any first-aid treatment administered to a child is reported to the parent.
- 10.5. Accidents and injuries are recorded in an accident book, located in the Year 1/Reception area.
- 10.6. The **headteacher** reports any serious accident, illness, injury, or death of a child whilst in the school's care to Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the incident occurring. Local child protection agencies are also notified.
- 10.7. The school has a **Fire Evacuation Plan** in place.
- 10.8. The headteacher notifies Ofsted of any incidents of food poisoning affecting two or more children within 14 days of the incident.

- 10.9. Information about any dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and any special health requirements a child has are recorded. Kitchen staff are informed, and information is displayed as necessary but in a confidential manner. All staff in EYFS are alerted.
- 10.10. Any food or drink provided to children is healthy, balanced and nutritious as outlined in our Food and Drink Policy. Milk is provided up until the age of 5 and then school provides thereafter until the end of the Reception year.
- 10.11. Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- 10.12. Smoking is not permitted on the school premises.
- 10.13. The **Health and Safety Policy** outlines the full health and safety policies and procedures.

11. Staff taking medication or other substances

- 11.1. The school implements a zero-tolerance approach to drug and alcohol misuse, as outlined in the **Staff Drug and Alcohol Policy**.
- 11.2. The use of alcohol or any other substance that may affect the ability to care for children by a member of staff is not tolerated. If there is a reason to believe a member of staff is under the influence of alcohol or any other substance, they will not be allowed to work directly with children and further action will be taken.
- 11.3. Any member of staff taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children seeks medical advice. Staff are only allowed to work directly with children if it is confirmed that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children properly.
- 11.4. Any medication used by staff is securely stored in the locked **medical cabinet in the Reception classroom**. This is wall mounted, locked and out of reach of our children.

12. Staffing

- 12.1. A robust whole school **Recruitment Policy** is in place, which aims to ensure that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable.
- 12.2. Upon employment, all EYFS staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information

about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection and health and safety.

- 12.3. Staff are supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience.
- 12.4. All members of staff who have contact with children and families are supervised by the **EYFS lead**. The supervision provides opportunities for staff to:
 - Discuss any issues, particularly concerning the development or wellbeing of children, including any child protection concerns.
 - Identify solutions to address issues.
 - Receive coaching to improve their effectiveness.
- 12.5. The **EYFS lead** holds an honours degree and PGCE in Primary Education. There is another two members of staff with teaching degrees and our LSAs hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification and experience working in an early years setting.
- 12.6. **Mrs Hannah Keeling (Maternity leave September 2020) and Mrs Amber Dancey** provide cover for the **EYFS lead** in their absence and is deemed fully qualified to do so by the **EYFS lead** and **headteacher**.
- 12.7. There is at least one member of staff on the school premises at all times who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate. As of November 2020, all EYFS staff hold a PFA certificate.
- 12.8. Any member of staff who has sole responsibility for looking after a group of children also holds a PFA certificate.
- 12.9. All newly qualified staff with a level 2 or 3 qualification are PFA trained.
- 12.10. The school organises PFA training to be renewed every three years. (Due October 2023)
- 12.11. The list of staff who hold PFA certificates can be found in the Reception classrooms.
- 12.12. The school provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.

12.13. Only members of staff with level 2 English and maths qualifications count towards the staffing ratios at level 3.

12.14. The school adopts the following staffing ratios:

- For children aged four and over:
 - Where a staff member with QTS, early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, there is 1 member of staff for every 30 children.
 - Where a member of staff does not hold QTS, early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification, there is 1 member of staff for every 15 children. At least one staff member holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification, and at least half of all other staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

12.15. Changes are only made to the ratios under exceptional circumstances, and where the quality of care and safety of children is maintained.

12.16. Parents are informed about staffing arrangements.

12.17. The school has made the decision that the child's class teacher is responsible for the welfare of each child in their class and holds the responsibility of Key Person. That role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs.

13. Information and records

13.1. Information is stored in line with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, and with regard to the school's **Data Protection Policy**.

13.2. The following information is recorded for each child:

- The child's name and date of birth
- The name and address of every parent who is known to the school, and which parent the child normally lives with
- The emergency contact details of the child's parent

13.3. The following information about the school is recorded:

- The school's name, address and telephone number
- The school's certificate of registration
- The name, address and telephone number of anyone who will regularly be in unsupervised contact with children

- A daily record of the names of the children being cared for in the school, their hours of attendance, and the names of each child's key person
- 13.4. The following information is made available to parents on **the school website**:
- The school's privacy notice for parents and pupils
 - How the school delivers the EYFS and how parents can access more information
 - The daily routine and the activities offered in the school's EYFS and how parents can assist their child's learning at home
 - How the school's EYFS supports children with SEND
 - Details of the food and drink provided to children
 - Information about the policies and procedures in place in the school's EYFS
- 13.5. Ofsted will be notified if there are any changes to the following:
- The address of the school
 - The school's contact details
 - The hours during which care is provided
 - Any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of the school or any person who cares for, or is in regular contact with, children to look after children

14. Parental involvement

- 14.1. Parents are invited to **termly** parents' evenings; however, the school has an open-door policy and parents are welcome to talk to teachers at the start and end of the school day.
- 14.2. The **headteacher's or Deputy Headteacher's office** is utilised for confidential discussions between staff and parents.
- 14.3. Parents are asked to sign permission slips for any visits out of school, use of photographs of their child and use of the internet at school.
- 14.4. Parents are asked to complete admissions forms and a medical form before their child starts Reception. Transition meetings and Stay and Play

sessions are organised to ensure the smooth transition of children into Reception.

- 14.5. Transition meetings between Early Years settings take place in Summer Term to get to know new children.

15. Transition periods

- 15.1. The following process is in place to ensure children's successful transition to **Year 1**:

- During the Summer term, parents are invited into school to meet their child's Year 1 teacher.
- Children visit Year 1 at least once without the support of the Reception practitioners or parents.
- In the Summer term, **Reception** and **Year 1** staff meet to discuss each child's development in order to support a smooth transition to **Year 1**.

16. Monitoring and review

- 16.1. This policy is reviewed **annually** by the **governing body** and the **headteacher**.
- 16.2. Any changes made to this policy are communicated to all members of staff.
- 16.3. All members of staff directly involved with the EYFS are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction.
- 16.4. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **February 2022**.

Joanne Coakley EYFS Leader

February 2021