Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Inspire ● Enrich ● Enjoy ● Succeed

Approved by:	Governing Body	**Date:** September 2026
Next review due by:	September 2027	

At the Federation of Snape Community & Thornton Watlass CE Primary Schools, we understand that the Early Years of childhood are precious.

"My Promise To You"

I promise you every day your child will learn something.
Some days they will bring it home in their hands.
Some days they will bring it home in their heads,
And some days they will bring it home in their hearts.
– Valerie Welk

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year and is based upon our principles:

- Unique child – We recognise that every child is unique and is continually learning, resilient and capable, confident and self-assured;
- Positive Relationships – We recognise that children learn to be strong, secure and independent through positive relationships;
- Enabling Environments – Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and carers;
- Learning and Development – Children develop and learn in different ways. The EYFS Statutory Framework (updated September 2025) covers the education and care of all children in Early Years provision, including children with additional needs.

Through our Christian vision to *Inspire, Enrich, Enjoy and Succeed*, we provide an environment where every child is valued as a unique individual created in God's image. Our core values of **compassion, love, hope, respect, justice, honesty and forgiveness** underpin relationships, behaviour, learning and wellbeing throughout the Early Years.

Learning through Play

At the Federation of STW, our children learn through a wide range of carefully planned play activities. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practice 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. In their play children learn at their highest level. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. Our curriculum is planned across the 7 Areas of Learning and promote the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning are:

- ***Playing and exploring*** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- ***Active learning*** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- ***Creating and thinking critically*** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

These characteristics underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

Continuous Provision

Continuous Provision refers to the carefully selected toys and resources that are always available for the children.

At the Federation of STW we aim to ensure:

- Our continuous provision provides a learning environment designed to encourage children to extend and deepen their understanding of the EYFS curriculum;

- Our environment facilitates independence, curiosity and hands on play-based learning;
- Our provision enables children to explore recent learning, practise new skills and follow their own interests;
- All our staff enhance Continuous Provision through careful intervention and questioning and 'chatter that matters'.

Outdoor Learning

The environment, both indoors and outdoors, plays a key role in enabling and extending children's learning and development.

At the Federation of STW we aim to ensure:

- Children are encouraged to find and use equipment and resources independently and these are organised to allow all children including those with a disability and/or SEND to explore and learn in a secure and safe space during the day.
- Children are able to free flow between indoor and outdoor areas whilst remaining in ratio following statutory guidance for the EYFS.
- Focused teaching occurs outdoors and indoors and children have opportunities to interact with all members of staff.

Phonics and Early Reading

Reading is prioritised from the start of Reception. Staff deliver daily phonics lessons using the validated Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme. Children are provided with a fully decodable reading book matched to their phonic knowledge and a reading-for-pleasure book to share at home. Regular assessment ensures that children who require additional support receive timely keep-up interventions.

Safeguarding and Welfare

We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the EYFS Statutory Framework (2026), Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and all school safeguarding, child protection, attendance, behaviour, online safety, health and safety and SEND policies.

We promote a strong safeguarding culture where the welfare of children is paramount. All adults are expected to maintain professional curiosity, share concerns promptly and act in the best interests of every child.

Safer Recruitment and Volunteers: All staff, volunteers and regular visitors are recruited and vetted in line with safer recruitment requirements. Volunteers working with children are subject to enhanced DBS checks and appropriate safeguarding induction.

Child on Child Behaviour: Staff understand that harmful behaviours can occur between children, even in the Early Years. Any behaviour causing harm or distress will be addressed promptly, proportionately and developmentally appropriately. Children are supported to develop kindness, respect, empathy and positive relationships.

Allergies and Medical Conditions: Individual healthcare plans are implemented where required. Staff are informed of medical needs and allergies, and appropriate control measures, training and emergency procedures are in place to keep children safe.

Safer sleep: Where children sleep or rest, arrangements follow current safer sleep guidance, ensuring children's safety and wellbeing are promoted at all times.

Screen use: We have regard to national guidance on children's screen use and prioritise high-quality interactions, play, communication and physical activity throughout the day.

We ensure:

- Children enjoy daily fruit and are encouraged to drink water throughout the day.
- Free school lunch is available to children.
- Risk assessments are carried out and when children go on a school visit in line with our Educational Visits Policy.
- Transition is carefully planned for the children from Nursery to Reception and Reception to Year 1

Capturing and Sharing Children's Learning Experiences

Seesaw is the online learning platform which we use to capture the children's learning experiences through photographs and videos. It allows learning that takes place at school to be shared with parents. This shows a broader picture of a child's development. It allows parents/ carers to share developments and achievements at home/ outside school.

Partnership with Parents

We value open and honest partnerships with parents and carers, recognising that children achieve their best when home and school work together in a spirit of mutual respect and trust.

Planning and Assessing Children's Attainment and Progress

Practitioners use formative assessment through observation, interaction and knowledge of the child. Assessment informs planning and next steps in learning. In Reception, the Reception Baseline Assessment is completed within the first six weeks of the Autumn Term. The EYFS Profile is completed at the end of the academic year and reported to parents/carers. Moderation activities are undertaken to ensure assessment judgements are accurate and consistent.

Inclusion and SEND

We are committed to providing an inclusive environment where all children can achieve their full potential. Children with SEND are identified early and supported through personalised provision in partnership with parents/carers and external agencies where appropriate. Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure access to all aspects of the curriculum and school life.

Attendance

Good attendance is essential for effective learning and development. The school works in partnership with families to promote excellent attendance and punctuality from the start of

a child's educational journey. Unexplained or prolonged absences are followed up promptly in line with the Federation's attendance and safeguarding procedures, recognising that attendance patterns can be an indicator of safeguarding concerns.

British Values

Through our Christian vision and values and the EYFS curriculum, children develop an understanding of democracy, individual liberty, mutual respect and the rule of law. They learn to show compassion, respect differences, value others and contribute positively to their community.

Role of the EYFS Leader

The EYFS Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in Nursery and Reception through:

- Monitoring the implementation and impact of the EYFS curriculum.
- Leading moderation and assessment activities.
- Supporting staff wellbeing and professional development.
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of vulnerable groups, including disadvantaged pupils and children with SEND.

Monitoring and Accountability

The policy will be reviewed annually by the EYFS Lead, Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body to ensure continued compliance with statutory requirements and best practice guidance.