

SPEEN CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

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Next Review: January 2026

THEN CHRIST WILL MAKE HIS HOME IN YOUR HEARTS
AS YOU TRUST IN HIM. YOUR ROOTS WILL GROW
DOWN INTO GOD'S LOVE AND KEEP YOU STRONG.

-EPHESIANS 3:17 (NLT)

INTENT

The intent of our whole school curriculum is to ensure our pupils develop the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitude to achieve our school's vision for our pupils, to reach their full potential. Little Apples Pre-School is the start of many of our pupils' school journey towards achieving this important purpose. We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school.

We promote the unique child, by considering our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning, and build on what they know and can do, offering extended periods of play within our Little Apples pre-school setting and then more sustained thinking within our Reception class. In doing this, we foster our school vision of seeking knowledge about the amazing world in which we live.

Within Early Years, our work is centered on the school's Christian values. We aim to

- provide a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support the children to learn effectively and provide a safe and supportive learning environment for them to be able to do so.
- to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.
- teach boundaries to enable the children to make appropriate choices and to safeguard their physical and mental wellbeing.

At Speen School we recognise that we have a responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference. Not only so that every child is included and not disadvantaged, but also so that they learn from the earliest age to value diversity in others and grow up making a positive contribution to society. We are always mindful of eliminating discrimination, fostering equality and supporting good relationships.

By the end of Early Years (end of Reception), our intent is that all children make good progress from their starting points and are equipped with both the skills and knowledge needed to make a smooth transition into Year 1.

Implementation

Little Apples and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in The Early years Foundation Stage Framework 2021 which influences what we teach. We also use non-statutory guidance from Working with the Revised Early Years Foundation Stage Principles into Practice (Julian Grenier). This includes the 7 features of effective practice which guides our holistic exploration and investigations. Our long-term plan of the curriculum maximises opportunities for engaging cross-curriculum links and learning experiences within all seven areas of learning and development and are supported by the characteristics of learning. Topics within these themes are flexible to enable opportunities to follow the children's interests. Planning is linked with Speen School's Key Stage 1 curriculum. Visitors and educational visits enhance and enrich the EYFS curriculum and the children's learning and extend the cultural capital of the cohort.

Across Early Years in Little Apples Pre-School and the Reception class, we ensure there is a balance of adult led, adult supported and child-initiated activities. Within Little Apples, although much time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children in Early Years builds understanding and guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and ask the child about their play. Through exploration, play and experiences, children are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning at their own level and pace. Provision is such that children can securely build on and extend their interests as well as develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities. Children are always encouraged to communicate and talk about their learning and to develop independence and self-regulation.

Our curriculum is designed to recognise children's prior learning, both from previous settings and their experiences at home. provide the best possible start at Speen School, ensuring each individual reaches their full potential from their various starting points. It has been designed to enable children to succeed. There is a strong emphasis on the Prime Areas of learning; Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Communication and Language.

We provide a language-rich environment which fulfils our school vision for our children to achieve their full potential. Dialogues with the children develop children's thinking and understanding, which in turn promote our school values eg respect and responsibility. Our skilful adult interactions support the children to begin to link their learning to their play and exploration as they start in Little Apples and continue on into the Reception class.

Our Literacy activities promote a love of reading, story-telling and writing, seeking to extend the children's vocabulary and use of language. (Please see the school's English documentation which state the school's Intent, Implementation and Impact and the planned progression of skills and knowledge, with identified end points for the end of Year 2.) Speen School follow the Little Wandle scheme which provides a structured and systematic approach to teaching phonics (beginning with Phase 1 in Little Apples which concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills, and lays the foundation for Phase 2 in Reception). We look to create fluent readers, confident speakers and willing writers. Children take library books to share at home from the minute they start in Little Apples, to the week they leave at the end of Year 2. As they start to read for themselves, Speen children are heard read regularly, being given Little Wandle books which match their phonics knowledge, to enable them to become confident and successful readers.

In Little Apples Pre-School, children develop a love of Maths through games, songs, rhymes and play using concrete manipulatives. There is a focus on the following counting principles: 1 to 1 correspondence, stable order and cardinal principles. Our Maths mastery approach is continued within the Reception class, where a combination of direct teaching and play based learning activities (using concrete and pictorial structures and representations) embed the concepts begun within Little Apples. We teach by breaking down maths objectives into small steps, so that each child is secure in each new concept before moving on. We focus upon teaching for fluency, reasoning and problem solving.

In Speen School EYFS we believe play and exploration is an essential part of the children's development and supports them to make sense of the world. This is fostered within class learning activities but also in **Forest School** sessions where the children have the opportunity to think creatively, investigate and solve problems, build emotional resilience as well as self-regulation skills.

Impact

At Speen Church of England School EYFS we recognise that a rich and stimulating environment plays a key role in supporting and extending a child's development. Ongoing assessment of the **impact** of our curriculum is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers shared through Tapestry or meetings.

On entry to their Reception year, pupils undertake a 'Reception baseline assessment' (RBA)¹. The RBA is statutory in schools and assesses pupils' starting points in:

- language, communication and literacy
- mathematics

through an activity-based assessment. Schools are required to carry out this assessment within the first 6 weeks of pupils starting reception. The data is used at the end of Year 6 to form a school-level progress

measure. However, teachers will receive a series of short, narrative statements that tell them how their pupils performed in the assessment. These statements inform the intent and implementation of the EYFS orders within the first term.

In the final term of Reception (no later than 30th June), staff will complete the EYFS profile for each child with reference to the characteristics of effective learning. When forming a judgement about whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, teachers will draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. This is sufficient evidence to assess a child's individual level of development in relation to 'end points' as expressed in each of the Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Not yet reaching expected levels or **Emerging**
- Meeting expected levels of development or **Expected**

Assessments are also recorded on the EYFS Profile and are then used to report children's progress against the 17 Early Learning Goals in the summer term. A written summary is given to parents as to whether children are meeting expected levels of development or not yet reaching expected levels (emerging). In addition, parents are given a description of how the individual child is learning- Characteristics of Effective Learning. These assessments are used as a basis for discussion about each child, with the Year 1 class teacher and the LA on request.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and will continue to play in educating their children and so we involve parents as fully as possible in our setting. Speen School is clear that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

We do this through:

- Having families attend a 'Stay and Play' initial session, where the pre-school leader can get to know the child and their interests.
- Arranging an optional home visit to meet parents and children in their home environment
- Operating an open-door policy so that parents can discuss any worries or concerns
- Induction meeting for parents in July
- Termly meetings for parents through the year
- Termly curriculum information and guidance which is shared on our website and parent information evenings
- Using Tapestry Online Journals to keep parents informed of their child's development and learning, and encouraging parental contribution to these
- Summer picnic for families and staff to meet before the autumn term

All children and their families are valued within our setting, with staff touching base with parents on a daily basis. We believe that all children matter.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility for all EYFS staff to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher and EYFS leads will carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

