



ST MARGARET'S
SCHOOL

EYFS Policy

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EYFS Policy Review:

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About This Policy

We are committed to delivering an outstanding Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision for children aged 2–5, which includes Nursery and Reception. Our approach aligns with the *EYFS Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers (November 2024)* and our school aims.

This policy is guided by:

- the EYFS statutory requirements
- the Independent School Standards (ISSR)
- the DfE’s *Nutrition Guidance for Early Years Providers (April 2025)*
- the St Margaret’s Nursery and Reception Handbook for parents

Aims and Vision

Our EYFS provision lays strong foundations for children’s cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development through high-quality care, a nurturing environment, and a stimulating curriculum.

At St Margaret’s School, we aim to:

- Inspire and engage through a modern and relevant curriculum
- Lean in and support our families and community
- Reach out to make the most of our networks whilst serving our many communities

The Nursery and Pre-Reception

The Nursery at St Margaret’s welcomes children from the age of 2, operating during term time. Children engage in rich, play-based learning in a light-filled, purpose-designed setting.

Children follow the EYFS curriculum across all seven areas of learning. They also enjoy sessions in:

- Little Linguists
- Music
- Gymnastics and PE sessions
- Outdoor learning and exploration

In Pre-Reception (the year before Reception), children build further readiness for formal learning, developing communication, independence and personal confidence.

Reception

Reception is the final year of EYFS and continues the same curriculum focus while gently increasing structure. Children learn through high-quality adult-led and child-initiated activities, with a focus on language, early reading and number sense.

Reception children benefit from our wider school resources, including:

- specialist teaching in music, PE and languages
- swimming lessons

Curriculum

Our curriculum covers the seven areas of learning as outlined in the statutory EYFS framework:

Prime Areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Specific Areas:

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

We ensure planning is ambitious, engaging, and personalised. Practitioners plan responsively using high-quality observations and reflections on each child's journey.

Teaching and Learning

Children learn best through hands-on, meaningful play and real experiences. We provide:

- a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities
- enabling indoor and outdoor environments
- language-rich interactions and guided play

We promote the Characteristics of Effective Learning:

- playing and exploring
- active learning
- creating and thinking critically

Each child has a key worker, who is typically the class teacher, unless parents are notified of a different key worker.

Our children in The Nursery (2-4) typically start in the Caterpillar Class, which is our entry class for our 2-year-olds. Older children will develop in one of our mixed-age classes (either the Butterfly Class or the Bumblebee Class).

Research from successful early years settings shows that mixed-age learning helps children thrive by:

Boosting Social & Emotional Growth – Younger children learn from older role models, while older children develop confidence and leadership skills.

Supporting Individual Development – Children progress at their own pace, rather than being restricted by age-based expectations.

Building Independence & Resilience – Mixed groups encourage teamwork, communication, and real-world problem-solving.

Creating a Stable & Nurturing Environment – Longer relationships with key adults support emotional security and smooth transitions.

Children typically start reception (also known as Year R) in the September after they turn four.

Our Head of Nursery, Head of Reception and Head of Y1&Y2 work together to ensure children are happy and safe at all times.

Transitions into Nursery, Pre-Reception, Reception and Year 1 are supported with care and planning to ensure emotional and academic continuity.

Assessment

Assessment is purposeful and used to inform teaching. We follow:

- Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) – within first 6 weeks
- Progress Check at Age 2 – for children aged 2–3
- EYFS Profile – completed at the end of Reception

In line with EYFS guidance, no excessive data tracking or written evidence is required. However, we work using 'Development Matters' and children's next steps. We work closely with parents to share progress and next steps.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We provide inclusive education that reflects and celebrates diversity. We:

- identify and support children with SEND through early intervention and external partnerships
- support children with EAL through visual aids, modelling and language scaffolds
- respect and embrace all cultures and religious practices within our curriculum

Safeguarding and Welfare

We uphold the highest standards for safeguarding and well-being. In line with the EYFS and KCSIE 2024, we ensure:

- all staff are DBS-checked and trained in child protection
- we follow safer recruitment, whistleblowing and health and safety procedures robustly
- we regularly train and ensure adequate numbers of staff with Paediatric First Aid
- children are supervised at all times
- toileting, nappy changing and mealtime routines prioritise dignity and safety
- two emergency contacts are maintained for each child

Nutrition and Mealtimes

We adhere to the *DfE Nutrition Guidance for Early Years Providers (April 2025)*. From September 2025, this guidance becomes part of the statutory welfare requirements.

We provide:

- healthy, balanced meals and snacks
- menus based on four food groups: starchy carbs, fruits/vegetables, proteins, and dairy
- portion sizes appropriate to age and activity level
- safe food preparation practices and allergy management
- opportunities to model and teach healthy choices

Parental Engagement

We recognise parents as partners and communicate regularly through:

- daily updates via a secure app for Nursery and Pre-Reception
 - these updates include food eaten, nappy changes (if applicable) and activities they have enjoyed.
- Reception children each have a home-school planner where key messages are shared between home and school, and reading and learning activities are recorded
- termly meetings and reports, twice-yearly are shared with families
- curriculum information and home learning ideas
- celebration of learning events, including stay-and-play sessions, workshops and open-door access are in place to foster the relationship between home and school

If at any time parents have cause for concern or occasion for complaint, they are encouraged to raise the matter with the school as soon as possible. All concerns or complaints will be taken seriously and treated with respect, following the guidance in the complaints policy. Families with children in EYFS are also welcome to contact OFSTED directly via enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk or 03001234666

Risk Assessment and Safety

We conduct robust and proportionate risk assessments for:

- daily premises checks
- off-site visits and external providers
- activities with physical or environmental risk (e.g. outdoor education)
- fire, hygiene, food safety and evacuation

All risks are reviewed termly or after any incident. Dynamic risk assessment is part of staff decision-making at all times.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The EYFS provision is evaluated regularly through:

- observations and audits by the Head of Junior School, EYFS Leaders (Head of Reception and Nursery Manager)
- staff training and supervision
- pupil progress data and wellbeing reviews
- parent and child feedback
- external review and ISI Framework 23 inspection preparation

Legal Framework and References

This policy is informed by:

- [EYFS Statutory](#) Framework
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- ISSR
- [DfE Nutrition Guidance](#)



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