



DIOCESE OF SOUTHWELL
& NOTTINGHAM
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

St Peter's Cross Keys CofE Academy

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Summer 2026 For review Summer 2027



Our Vision

'Rooted in love we flourish and grow'

'Jesus said that the kingdom of God is like a little mustard seed. This seed is very tiny at first but this is just the beginning of something. When this little seed is planted it grows into a huge tree, a tree so big that birds come and sit on its branches!'

Matthew 13: 31-33

Jesus teaches us that all good things must start with small beginnings.

At St. Peter's we believe that learning continues throughout life and that we should develop the skills that enable life-long learning to take place. We believe that all children should be inspired and enthused by the challenges we present to them, and feel secure and supported so that they can try new and difficult experiences. We believe that through our teaching, we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. Central to this is the commitment that inclusion for all children is at the heart of our vision with the belief that removing barriers to participation and learning allows everyone to benefit fully from the educational opportunities we provide.

Our Mission

As a school, we have a strong focus on supporting children to develop an understanding of themselves, and crucially, an understanding of how they operate and develop as learners. All staff have a key role to play in nurturing self-esteem to support children in developing:

- A clear sense of belonging.
- Ambition for their future.
- The attributes of Critical Thinkers, Problems Solvers, Team Players and Resilient Learners.
- The knowledge and understanding to be a champion for change in our local community and to be a positive influence in the community and for themselves.
- Their personal, moral and spiritual development within a Christian framework

Our Core Values

Community

Peace

Hope

Wisdom

Dignity

Joy

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- that children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life;
- quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
- close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;
- every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2025 Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Structure of the EYFS

St Peter's Cross Keys C of E Primary Academy Years Foundation Stage caters for children aged between 3 and 5 years. Children between the ages of 3 and 4 attend our school nursery. Many of these join our Reception class in the September following their fourth birthday.

Our nursery is open five days a week and have two sessions each day; a morning session and an afternoon session. We offer additional sold sessions and the option of staying for lunch. All 3-year-olds are eligible for 15 hours of free childcare, and in addition we provide several 30 hours places to eligible families. Parents and carers who need flexible childcare are encouraged to come and discuss their requirements with the staff team, who will always do their best to accommodate their needs.

A strong transition plan is in place to ensure children make the move into full-time education smoothly. Our nursery team liaise closely with the Reception team, and staff in any other schools that have offered places to our nursery children. Our Transition Policy provides further detail on how we support our children through some of their earliest transition experiences.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the Statutory Framework for the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

Communication and language

Physical development

Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the world

Expressive arts and design

In addition to this, we support children to develop the characteristics of effective learning, which are a key element in the EYFS. They detail the ways in which children should be learning from their environment, experiences and activities. Children up to the age of seven should display the characteristics of effective learning every day.

5. Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

6. Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

Children learn through their senses and through powerful interaction with their environment. There is a strong focus on play-based and outdoor learning together with a combination of structured play, first-hand experience and some directed teaching. The development of the whole child is considered crucial.

Active exploration and autonomy are encouraged. Opportunities for investigation and discovery in both the indoor and outdoor environment are provided and adults play a key role in enriching and extending learning potential. A wide range of resources is provided to stimulate interest and nurture curiosity. We plan a learning environment both indoors and outdoors that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use resources that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to select resources and make choices to develop independent learning.

In order to achieve our stated aims the children are given opportunities to enjoy activities which address all seven areas of learning along with the key concepts of the Characteristics of Effective Learning:

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

One activity can develop skills and competencies across several areas of learning and address many learning outcomes.

In addition on a weekly basis:

- Music and singing is taught weekly
- P.E. is undertaken both indoors and outdoors each week
- Children participate in a weekly Forest School day.
- Challenge books are in place in order to encourage children to be motivated to learn throughout times of continuous provision – Spring term onwards
- Music and movement sessions are undertaken daily
- Dough Gym and Funky Fingers sessions are undertaken daily – moving onto handwriting throughout spring and summer terms

Adult-led, adult-initiated and child-initiated learning:

We believe that there are many different approaches to teaching in the early years. Our staff carefully judge the extent of their involvement in children's play. They consider how formal or informal, structured or unstructured, dependent or independent each learning.

7. Provision

Our classrooms and outdoor spaces are organised into learning areas, with each area containing core continuous provision. This is always available to children and is stored on open shelves. Shelves and storage units are shadowed so that children can easily put resources away themselves. Enhanced provision is additional to continuous provision and is available for a specified period of time. It supports the development of a theme or the teaching of a specific skill or concept.

- **Continuous provision** – resources linked to expected ages and stages of development, National Curriculum objectives, historical knowledge of cohorts or assessment information linked to current cohort;
- **Enhanced provision (could be an object or prompt)** – areas that have been enhanced with objects or prompts that support an interest or encourage investigation and questioning;
- **Enhanced provision (skill)** – areas that have been enhanced with resources to support the teaching of a specific skill or concept.

8. Assessment

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes and helps practitioners to identify children's progress in the different areas of learning.

Observational assessment

Staff observe children to find out what they can do (skills), what they know and understand (knowledge and concepts) and how they approach learning (attitudes). **These** observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and carers.

We believe that:

- ✓ effective observation systems ensure that children's needs and interests are being met;
- ✓ observations should be discussed with children and next steps of learning shared with parents and carers;
- ✓ practitioners should make good use of planned and targeted observation to ensure that children make good progress;
- ✓ learning journeys should be individual records of children's interests, learning styles and progress.

Observations are both spontaneous and planned:

- ✓ **Magic moments** – 'micro moments' in children's activity, when they do, say or show something that, as the practitioner who knows them recognises, is significant for that child.
- ✓ **Extended or detached observations** – prolonged opportunities that practitioners take to explore a child's learning in more critical depth (could be narrative observations).
- ✓ **Focus child** – one or two children are identified to be observed; every practitioner/ staff member makes observational notes.
- ✓ **Time samples** – making an observational at specific intervals noting (e.g.) where the child is playing, the type of play they are engaged in, who or what they are playing with.
- ✓ **Tracking** – making observations of where the child goes, which areas they visit and for approximately how long.

When making spontaneous observations, staff will record and document:

- what enables them to fully understand the child as a learner;
- what they consider to be significant;
- what they are going to forget.

Every child will have at least two long observations each term, which will be recorded using the long observation form.

All observations will be used to formulate each child's next steps in learning and development:

- **Child development** – observations and assessments should determine whereabouts the child is currently in their development. Development Matters/ school progression documents can then be used to identify the next stage of development (may need fine-tuning).

- **Extending an interest** – by providing activities that encourage the child to access different curriculum areas via their interest.
- **Embedding a learning point** – embedding learning that may just be emerging. 'More of the same' is ok – repetition is important.
- **Personal, social and emotional development** – children who are secure, can self-regulate and are resilient have a good base from which to learn. In embedding PSED, practitioners enable many other sorts of learning to take place as well.

Learning journeys:

We use the Tapestry platform to create a record of children's progress through the Foundation Stage. These are established as soon as a child joins our nursery and document the child's progress to the end of the EYFS.

The EYFS profile:

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Children are assessed against the early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- meeting expected levels of development;
- not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and carers.

9. Working with parents and carers

We recognise that children have two main educators in their lives – their parents/ carers and their teachers. Parents are the prime educators until the child attends nursery or starts school and remain a major influence on their children's learning through school and beyond. There is no clear line to show where the parents' input stops and the teachers' input begins. The school and the parents all have crucial roles to play, and the impact is greater if parents and schools work in partnership.

We are also aware that evidence suggests that parental involvement in early learning has a greater impact on children's well-being and achievement than any other factor, such as family income, parental education or school environment.

Parents and carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

We collect parent/carers feedback in a variety of ways:

- informal conversation at the start/end of the day;
- a carefully managed start to the session so that staff are available to talk to parents/carers;
- open-evenings, including questionnaires where appropriate;
- comments left on Seesaw learning journey entries;
- the use of structured conversations.

10. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our Child Protection Policy.

11. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved annually.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Policy reviewed: June 2026

Next renewal: June 2027

Signed: Chair of Governors:



Date: 6/2026

Headteacher:



Date: 6/2026

Appendices

1. Nursery Attendance Policy
2. Whole School Food and Safer Eating Policy
3. Early Years Safer Sleeping Policy

Appendix 1

Nursery Attendance Policy

Introduction

At St Peter's Cross Keys nursery, we believe regular attendance is crucial for young children's development, learning and well-being. This policy sets out our approach to managing attendance and punctuality, ensuring all children receive the best possible start in their early education.

1. Attendance Expectations

- The morning session starts promptly at 8.45am and finishes at 11.45am. The afternoon session starts at 12.20pm and finishes at 3.20pm. Full day sessions start at 8.45am and finish at 3.20pm.
- Parents/carers are expected to bring their child to nursery on time and collect them promptly.
- Regular attendance supports children's learning, social development and emotional well-being.

2. Registration and Monitoring

- The nursery registers attendance at the start of each session.
- Registers close thirty minutes after the start of each session.
- Staff will monitor attendance daily and follow up on any unexplained absences.

3. Reporting Absences

- Parents/carers must inform the nursery by telephone 01636 680360 on the first day of absence, stating the reason and expected duration.
- If no reason is received, nursery staff will contact parents/carers on the first day of absence to ensure the child's safety and well-being.
- If absence continues without explanation, further contact will be made and, if necessary, a home visit will be made to ensure the child is well or referrals to appropriate support services may be initiated.

4. Managing Lateness

- Persistent lateness disrupts the child's routine and learning.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to ensure their child arrives on time for all sessions.
- Staff will discuss concerns about lateness with parents/carers to offer support where needed.

5. Supporting Attendance

- We recognise some families face barriers to regular attendance and will work with parents/carers to provide support and advice.
- Where appropriate, nursery staff may liaise with external agencies to ensure families receive the help they need.

6. Holidays and Leave of Absence

- Nursery places are funded based on attendance; therefore, holidays during term time are discouraged.
- Requests for leave must be made in advance and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

7. Safeguarding and Welfare

- Attendance monitoring is part of our safeguarding procedures.
- Any concerns about a child's attendance or welfare will be discussed with the designated safeguarding lead and appropriate action taken.

8. Communication

- This policy is shared with all parents/carers upon admission and is available on the school website.
- Parents/carers will be reminded of attendance expectations at the start of each term.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

- The nursery staff are responsible for overseeing attendance and punctuality.
- Nursery staff are responsible for accurate registration and following up on absences.
- Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their child attends regularly and on time.

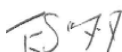
10. Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary, incorporating feedback from parents, staff, and relevant guidance.

Policy reviewed: June 2026

Next renewal: June 2027

Signed: Chair of Governors:



Date: 6/2026

Headteacher:



Date: 6/2026

Appendix 2

Whole-School Food and Safer Eating Policy

1. Introduction

The school is committed to promoting healthy eating and ensuring that all food and drink provided to pupils is nutritious, safe, and of high quality. We aim to support pupils' health and wellbeing by:

- Promoting good nutritional health.
- Protecting those who are nutritionally vulnerable.
- Encouraging positive eating behaviours and lifelong healthy choices.
- Ensuring food safety, allergy management, and choking prevention, especially in the Early Years.

This policy complies with:

- **School Food Regulations 2014** (revised standards effective from 1 January 2015)
- **Food Information Regulations 2014** (including allergen labelling requirements, PPDS from October 2021)
- **Education Act 1996, s.512ZB** (free school meals entitlement)
- **Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework** (from 1 September 2025)
- **Food Safety – GOV.UK guidance**

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All school-provided food and drink (school lunches, breakfast clubs, tuck shops, vending, snacks, after-school clubs).
- Packed lunches and food brought in by pupils.
- Food provided on school trips lasting at least 7 days (before 6pm).
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) pupils, with additional safety and allergy procedures.

3. School Food Provision

3.1 School Meals

- All meals and snacks provided will meet the **national school food standards**.
- Hot meals will be offered wherever possible to ensure that every pupil can access one hot meal daily.
- Free school meals will be provided to all eligible pupils, including all pupils in Reception, Year 1, and Year 2.

3.2 Water and Milk

- Fresh drinking water will always be available free of charge.
- Lower-fat or lactose-reduced milk will be available daily.
- Free milk will be provided to:
 - Infant pupils when included in their school meal.
 - Benefits-based free school meals pupils.
- Whole milk may be given up to the end of the school year in which a child turns 5.

3.3 Fruit and Vegetables

- Pupils aged 4–6 are entitled to free daily fruit or vegetables under the **School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme**.

3.4 Facilities for Packed Lunches

- Safe, supervised eating spaces will be provided for pupils who bring food from home.

3.5 Special Dietary Needs

- Reasonable adjustments will be made for medical, dietary, and cultural requirements.
- Parents/carers must provide full details of any:
 - Special dietary needs
 - Allergies or intolerances
 - Health needs related to food
- Allergy information will be shared with relevant staff and checked at every meal or snack.
- **Allergy Action Plans** will be developed in consultation with parents and health professionals, following **BSACI** and **NHS guidance**.

4. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – Safer Eating and Food Safety

4.1 First Aid and Supervision

- A paediatric first aider (as per EYFS Annex A) must always be present during meals and snacks.
- Children will always be within sight and hearing of staff during eating.
- Staff will sit facing children where possible to observe, prevent food sharing, and identify choking or allergic reactions.
- Staff always remain alert as choking can be silent.

4.2 Preventing Choking

- Food will be prepared to reduce choking risk (per GOV.UK guidance).
- Children will eat in safe seating
- Mealtimes will take place in designated eating areas with minimal distractions.
- Any choking incident requiring intervention will be:
 - Recorded in detail
 - Reported to parents/carers
 - Reviewed to reduce future risk

4.3 Food Safety Standards

Staff must ensure food is:

- Safe, uncontaminated, and compliant with standards.
- Free from misleading or harmful labelling.
- Traceable to its source (records kept on request).

Unsafe food must be immediately withdrawn, logged, and reported to parents.

Food safety controls include:

- **Approved additives only** within permitted limits.
- **HACCP principles** to prevent hazards (biological, chemical, physical).
- Safe food contact materials (packaging, utensils, surfaces).
- Risk management for bacteria such as **E. coli O157, Salmonella, Campylobacter**.

4.4 Food Hygiene

- All food-handling staff must receive hygiene training.
- Staff must follow safe preparation, storage, and cleaning practices, including:
 - Handwashing before handling food
 - Sanitising surfaces and equipment
 - Maintaining safe storage temperatures

4.5 Food Poisoning Incidents

- If two or more children are affected by food poisoning, **Ofsted (or CMA)** must be notified within 14 days.
- Failure to notify without reasonable excuse is a legal offence.

4.6 Facilities and Equipment

- Adequately equipped areas must be provided for safe preparation and eating.
- Sterilisation equipment will be available for babies' food.
- Staff will be competent and confident in applying food safety practices.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

- Ensure compliance with national food standards.
- Specify compliance in catering contracts and request evidence.
- Monitor compliance, meal take-up, and financial aspects.
- Review reports on food provision regularly.
- Work with senior leaders to develop a whole-school food culture.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

- Oversee coordination of food provision across school settings.
- Support food education and practical cooking.
- Promote take-up of healthy school lunches.
- Integrate catering staff into the wider school team.

Catering and EYFS Staff

- Provide food and drink that meet standards and EYFS safety requirements.
- Follow allergy, hygiene, and food safety protocols.
- Monitor children during meals, responding quickly to choking or allergic reactions.

6. Exemptions

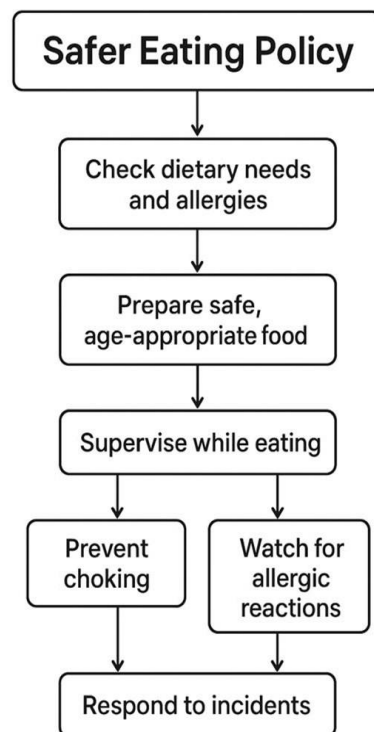
The school food standards do not apply to food provided:

- At cultural or religious celebrations.
- At fundraising events.
- As rewards for achievement or behaviour.
- During teaching of food preparation and cooking.
- Occasionally by parents or pupils.
- As part of an evening meal at maintained boarding schools before 6pm.

7. Monitoring and Review

- The governing body will review compliance annually.
- SLT will report regularly on meal provision, take-up, and safety.
- Feedback will be gathered from pupils, staff, and families.
- The policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if statutory requirements change.

All staff must read, understand, and follow this policy.



Policy reviewed: June 2026

Next renewal: June 2027

Signed: Chair of Governors:

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Date: 6/2026

Headteacher:

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Date: 6/2026

Appendix 3

Early Years Safer Sleep Policy

1. Policy Statement

The safety and wellbeing of children during rest and sleep times is of the highest importance. This policy sets out the procedures that staff must follow to ensure that all children sleep in a safe, supervised environment, in line with statutory guidance and NHS safer sleep advice, including reducing the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

2. Principles

- All children will have a safe, clean, and age-appropriate sleeping environment.
- Children will be supervised and checked regularly throughout sleep times.
- Staff will follow NHS safer sleep guidance to minimise risks, including SIDS.
- Parents/carers will be kept informed and consulted about their child's individual sleep needs and routines.

3. Age-Appropriate Equipment

- Nursery and Reception children will sleep on age-appropriate sleep mats or beds.
- Equipment will be regularly checked for wear and replaced as necessary.
- The nursery temperature will be kept at a level that reduces the need for bedding. Pillows will not be used.

4. Supervision and Checks

- Sleeping children must always be within sight or hearing of staff.
- Children on sleep mats must be spaced safely apart to reduce risks.
- Staff will check each sleeping child at least every **10 minutes**, observing and recording breathing, positioning and wellbeing.

5. Safe Sleep Environment

- Children will not sleep in car seats, pushchairs, bouncers, or swings.
- Thick outer clothing (e.g., coats, cardigans) will be removed before sleep.
- Sleep areas will be kept clear of hazards such as cords, blinds, or loose objects.
- Cots and mats will always be placed in a safe position, away from risks such as heaters or direct sunlight.

6. Hygiene and Bedding

- Sleep equipment (mats, cots, mattresses) will be cleaned frequently.

7. Partnership with Parents/Carers

- Staff will communicate daily with parents/carers about their child's sleep routines, preferences, and any changes.
- Parents/carers will be provided with information about safer sleep practices and encouraged to follow similar routines at home.

- Any specific sleep arrangements (e.g., due to medical needs) will be agreed in writing and supported with professional advice.

8. Staff Responsibilities

- All practitioners must read and understand this policy.
- Practitioners must be familiar with the latest NHS safer sleep advice, especially in relation to reducing SIDS risk.
- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will ensure safer sleep practices are included in staff training and regularly reviewed.

9. Monitoring and Review

- Compliance with this policy will be monitored by senior staff through regular checks.
- Any incidents relating to sleep safety will be recorded, reported, and reviewed.
- The policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if guidance or legislation changes.

All staff must read, understand, and implement this policy.

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Signed: Chair of Governors:



Date: 6/2026

Headteacher:



Date: 6/2026