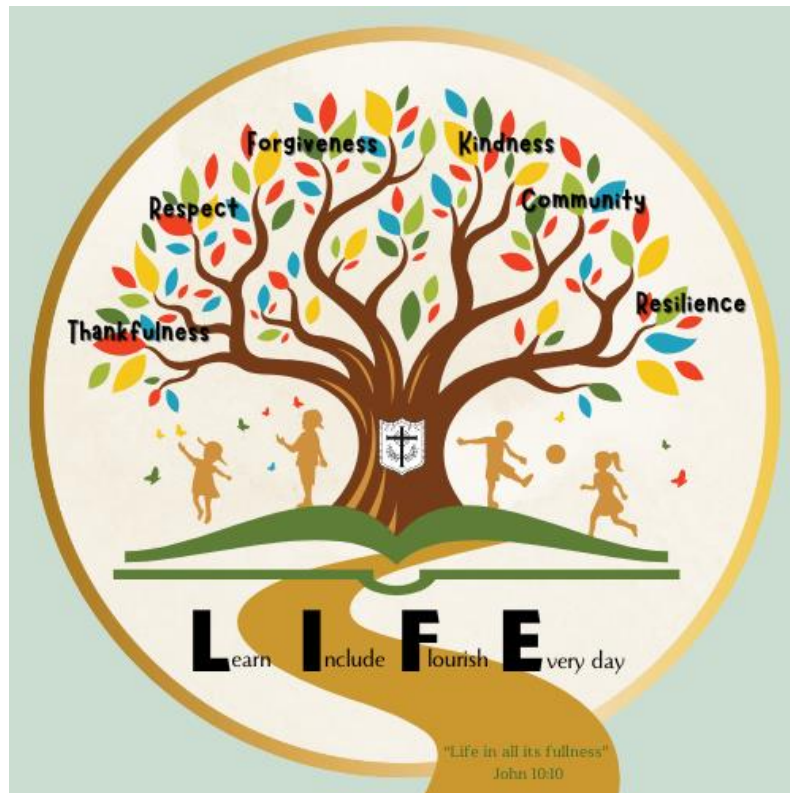


Cotgrave Church of England Primary School



FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Reviewed	Summer 2011	Spring 2023		
	Summer 2013	Spring 2026		
	Summer 2016			
	Summer 2019			
	Autumn 2021			



Introduction – ‘Learning for Life – Life in all its fullness’

At Cotgrave Church of England Primary School, we offer a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum that helps every child grow in confidence, faith and independence. We support children to develop academically, personally, physically and spiritually so that they become caring, capable and responsible members of society.

In the Foundation Stage, children learn through a rich, play-based curriculum that encourages exploration, investigation, creativity and discovery. We help each child settle quickly, make friends, learn new skills and feel part of our school family.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) covers children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At our school:

- Children start in the September of the year they turn five (Reception/F2).
- Our Foundation 1 (F1) 15-hour provision (growing to 30 hours) begins in the school year a child turns four (up to 8 places).

The EYFS is built on four key principles:

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and Development

A Unique Child – ‘Striving to be all that we can be’

We believe every child is precious, unique and made in the image of God. We celebrate individuality and diversity, and support each child’s personal and academic development.

We provide a joyful, creative learning environment where children can thrive. Learning is tailored to meet individual needs, ensuring challenge, support and success for all. We promote a Christian ethos focused on taking care of ourselves, each other, our community and God’s creation.

We follow our legal responsibilities under the EYFS Statutory Framework by ensuring:

- Children’s welfare is prioritised.
- Good health is promoted and illness/infection is managed appropriately.
- Behaviour is managed in a way that reflects each child’s age and needs.
- All adults working with children are suitable and appropriately checked.
- The environment, furniture and equipment are safe and appropriate.
- Learning is enjoyable, challenging and matched to individual needs.
- Records, policies and procedures are maintained for safe and effective provision.

Positive Relationships – ‘Growing within our community’

Positive, trusting relationships are central to our work. We create a warm, family-like atmosphere built on security, respect, care, responsibility, forgiveness and reconciliation.

We value strong partnerships with parents, local churches and the wider community. Education is seen as a shared responsibility, strengthened through:

- Homework
- Parents’ meetings
- PTA activities
- Our open-door policy

In the EYFS, children are supported by staff who take time to listen, interact and model positive relationships. Each child has a key person—their Class Teacher or Teaching Assistant.

Transition into school

We begin building relationships before children start school through:

- Home-visits in the summer term before the children start
- Communication with parents
- Familiarisation visits
- A transition booklet with labelled photos

Enabling Environments – ‘Seizing every opportunity’

A safe, secure and well-resourced environment underpins learning. We ensure children feel at home in school and take pride in their surroundings.

Curriculum Design

Our EYFS curriculum:

- Reflects excellent early years practice
- Aligns with the wider school curriculum
- Is based on half-termly themes
- Encourages exploration, creativity, curiosity and investigation

We use a *knowledge-rich*, cross-curricular approach, focusing on:

- “Sticky knowledge” (key ideas children revisit and build on)
- Systematic vocabulary development
- Topics that are meaningful, relevant and engaging for our children
- Shared learning across year groups

Learning is deepened through:

- Visits and visitors
- Themed days
- Whole-school exhibitions
- “Wow” moments

Observation and Assessment

We use ongoing observations and assessments to inform planning and track progress. Evidence includes:

- Informal observations
- Formal assessments
- Information from parents and previous settings

Children are assessed against the 17 EYFS Early Learning Goals (ELGs) as either Emerging or Expected at the end of Reception. Progress is shared through:

- Informal conversations
- Parents’ evenings
- End-of-year reports

Learning Environment

Our indoor and outdoor areas allow children to:

- Explore
- Be active or calm
- Rest when needed
- Access resources independently

The outdoor classroom encourages sensory exploration, physical activity and creativity.

The Role of Play

Play underpins all EYFS learning. Through play, children:

- Explore ideas
- Develop social skills
- Learn rules and routines
- Build confidence
- Solve problems
- Express worries safely

Adults enhance play through encouragement, questioning, modelling and challenge.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is organised into seven areas:

Prime Areas

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

Specific Areas

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

All areas are interconnected and taught through a balance of child-initiated and adult-led learning.

Expectation – ‘Building a culture of ambition’

The Foundation Stage marks the beginning of every child’s learning journey. We set high expectations from the start, supporting children to meet (and exceed) end-of-year goals and preparing them thoroughly for Year 1.

Year 1 continues to build on EYFS principles through the use of continuous provision, ensuring a smooth, supportive transition.

Review

All policies are subject to periodic evaluation and update.

Reviewed Spring Term 2026