

# St John's Church of England Academy



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy June 2022

*" God has planted greatness in you. Let today be the beginning of a great adventure as you step into the gifts he's given you."*

*Nishan Panwar*



BELONG BELIEVE ACHIEVE

*Love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*

*John 13: 34-35*

RESPECT · KINDNESS – GENEROSITY · TRUST · PATIENCE · PEACE · TRUTH  
UNDERSTANDING · LOVE · JOY

## Intent

At St John's C of E Academy, we aim to build upon each child's prior knowledge and experience. We value parent's views and knowledge of their children and strive to develop a family feel throughout the children's early experiences of school life.



Our curriculum is underpinned by the school's Christian Values which run through all our interactions with the children. This allows us to support personal, social and emotional development, creating learners who feel valued and confident to take risks, whilst knowing that they can ask for help when needed.

We celebrate the unique child whilst developing them physically, emotionally, verbally, and cognitively to ensure they develop a positive attitude to school and learning. Through the 7 areas of learning we aim to provide a wealth of experiences, providing topics that excite and engage, broadening their knowledge of the diverse world around. Through developing a sense of 'awe and wonder' and drawing on the natural sense of inquisitiveness and creativity within every child, we aim to broaden the cultural capital of our young learners.

At the core of what we do is fun – we believe learning for a young child should inspire excitement and joy as they begin the journey into education, helping them understand their place in the community and wider world.

### The 3 priorities within Early Years are:

To provide the children with the tools to blossom into confident, resilient, critical learners taking risks and applying skills and knowledge across subjects.

To provide a stimulating and engaging environment both inside and outdoors to promote independence allowing them to achieve regardless of where they are in their learning journey.

To foster and develop strong relationships with parents and the wider community.

## Aims

Every child at St John's Academy is entitled to the best possible start in their school life, being supported to achieve to their full potential.

As a school we aim to support each child's welfare and their developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special.
- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a 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.
- Understanding that children develop at different rates.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where all children feel happy and valued.
- Encouraging children's independence both physically and within decision making.
- Developing the children's understanding of values and behaviour expectations for people to work together in harmony.
- Support children in developing care and respect for others, which includes those with beliefs and cultures that are different than their own.
- By providing learning experiences through play that encourage children's curiosity and develop their desire and motivation to learn.
- Providing experiences that build on the children's interests and their existing knowledge and understanding, in order to challenge and stimulate the children's development.
- Giving children the opportunities to engage in a range of environments both inside and outside.

## Structure of the EYFS

At St John's Academy, children enter our 26 place nursery in the term after they turn 3. Our waiting list has grown significantly over the years and our largest intake is September but we may have spaces left for January and Easter Starters too. The children who begin FS1 with us in the autumn term, will enter Reception in September, the beginning of the school year in which they are five and leave at the end of the year to move into Key Stage One. We do however also have many children who enter our Reception who have attended other settings.

## FS1 - Nursery Provision at St John's Academy

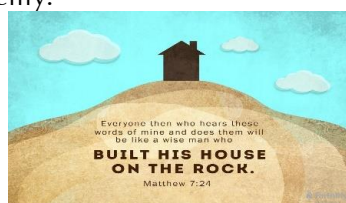
We are able to provide the 15 hours nursery entitlement for all 3 year olds and in addition we can accommodate the additional 15 hours if parents qualify for funding should parents require this.

We have a 26 place provision with morning, afternoon and full time options available.

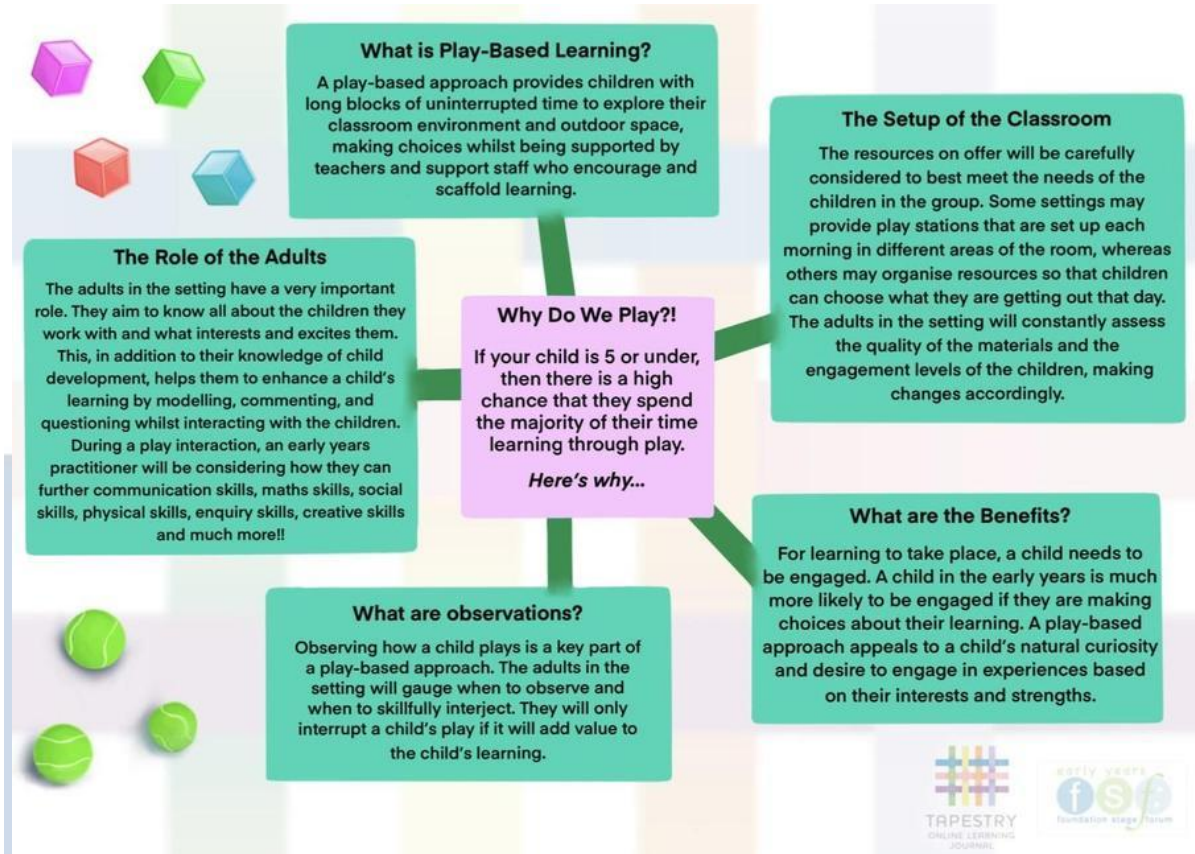
Nursery is split into 2 sessions, morning sessions run from 8.30am until 11.30am and afternoon sessions 12.10pm until 3.10pm. Children who are full time within the provision bring packed lunches from home and eat in the setting where they are comfortable and familiar.

## FS2 - Reception at St John's Academy

Our Reception intake consists of up to 60 children. Parents need to apply to the Local Authority for a place, details of when and how to apply are publicised by the local authority. In order to ensure continuity and to enable each child to reach their full potential, we make a clear commitment to ensuring that the transition between pre-school or nursery and our Reception Class is made smoothly, so laying secure, solid foundations for which future learning can be built on in our Church of England Academy.



Reception children start the day at 8.45am and finish at 3pm.  
 All our children begin school with a variety of learning experiences from home and other settings. In their early years how children learn is as important as what children learn. Our principles are very similar to Nursery settings as much of the learning takes place through structured purposeful play. The children experience daily Literacy, Maths and phonics input which runs alongside our themes.



**Wraparound Care** - Parents and careers who need flexible childcare are encouraged to talk to staff about the excellent breakfast club and afterschool club facilities available for all children.

### Staffing in Foundation Stage

Our dedicated staff team is made up of:

In FS2  
 Foundation Stage Leader – Inquisitors Class  
 Class Teacher (full time equivalent) – Enquirers Class  
 Two Teaching Assistants

In FS1- Curious Creators  
 Foundation One Leader  
 Two Teaching Assistants

There will be other staff supporting the children, who work within the whole EYFS unit.



## Organisation of the day

In both FS1 and FS2, children have a mix of teacher led activities, child initiated activities and child initiated play throughout the day. The classroom environment is designed to encourage the children to explore learning through play and we strive to build on the children's prior knowledge and experiences to enhance their learning.

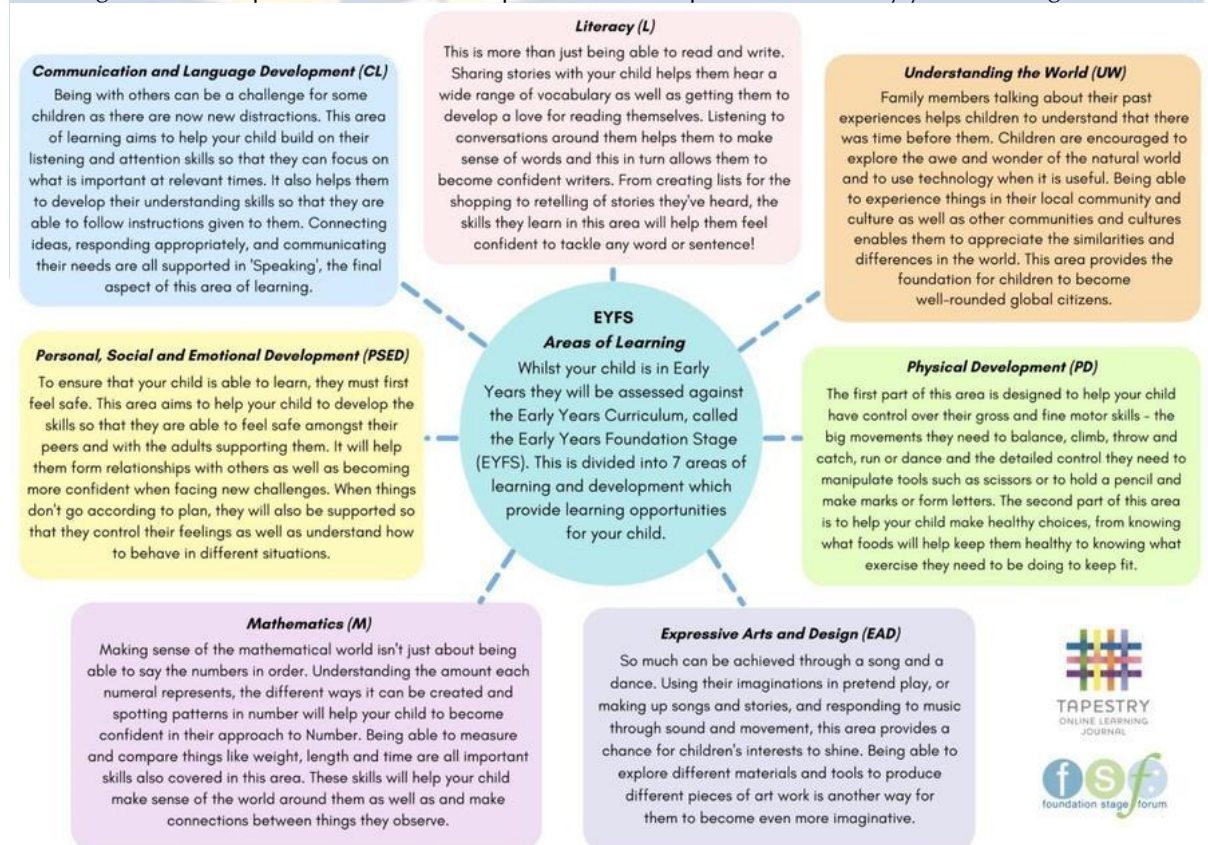


All classes have focused group sessions to develop maths, phonics and literacy skills. We have an open door policy and staff are regularly available to speak to parents at the beginning and end of the day.

## EYFS curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 statutory framework.

The EYFS framework consists of 7 areas of learning and development as set out in the EYFS profile 2021. These areas are further broken down into the prime and specific areas. These seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years settings.



## Areas of Learning

The prime areas have been identified as being particularly important for children's early learning. They give children a foundation for building their learning upon. Our Practitioners working with our youngest children are expected to focus strongly on these.

### Prime Areas

**Personal, Social and Emotional Development** - we will help children develop a positive sense of themselves and others. They will learn to form positive relationships and develop respect for others. They will develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings and understand appropriate behaviour. We will help children to become confident in their own abilities.

**Communication and Language** - children will be given lots of opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; to speak and listen in a range of situations.

**Physical Development** - children will be provided with lots of opportunities to be active and interactive; to develop their co-ordination, control and movement in both gross and fine motor activities. Children will be taught the importance of physical activity and make healthy choices in relation to food.

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

### Specific Areas

**Literacy** - children will be taught comprehension, to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest.

**Mathematics** – children will have lots of opportunities to develop and improve their skills of counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating addition and subtraction problems. They will continue to be taught to describe shapes, spaces and measures even though this has been removed from current guidance.

**Understanding the World** – children will be guided to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about the past and present, people, places, technology and the environment.

**Expressive Arts and Design** – children will explore and play with a wide range of media and materials as well as being provided with opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.

## Teaching and Learning

### Characteristics of Effective Learning

Another key element of learning in EYFS is the development of the characteristics of effective learning that are set out in Development Matters 2021. These characteristics underpin learning in the early years ensuring children learn from the environment, experiences and activities.

#### 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 achieving.

#### Creating and Thinking Critically

- Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

## Planning for the Unique Child

At St John's Academy we want every child to develop into an independent learner who can be resilient, confident, self-motivated and successful. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by their early experiences at school. We use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

## Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the EYFS. All children at St John's Academy are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds and children of different ethnic groups. All children will receive quality first teaching on a daily basis and activities will be differentiated accordingly.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests.
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- promoting independence.
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- continually monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.
- encouraging children to read with their parents/carers during the week and we value comments from parents within their reading record. (We have a reward system for children who read regularly). We also use the reading record to pass on information about children's learning.
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that parents/carers can join in.
- encouraging contributions to the children's 'Learning Journeys' from parents/carers. The children each have an online learning journey on which parents/carers can record events which are then shared in school to show what they are doing at home with their family as well as seeing and commenting on the learning happening at school. This is through an online portal called 'Tapestry.'



All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children and their families, interacting positively and taking time to listen to them. The teachers act as 'Key Workers' to the children in their class, supported by the Teaching Assistants.

We aim to meet all our children's needs by;

- Developing partnerships between teachers, teaching assistants and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- Having an understanding of how children develop and learn.
- Providing a range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication.
- Providing a carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS.
- Making provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities.
- Encouraging children to communicate and talk about their learning and to develop independence and self-management.
- Supporting learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.
- Identifying progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents.
- Developing good relationships between the school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining us.

### 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 experience should be to meet the needs of each child most effectively. Each day, children will experience adult-led, adult-initiated and child-initiated learning.

*Adult-led activities are those which adults initiate. The activities are not play, and children are likely not to see them as play, but they should be playful – with activities presented to children which are as open-ended as possible, with elements of imagination and active exploration that will increase the interest and motivation for children. As well as focused activities with groups of children, adult-led activities can include greeting times, story times, songs and even tidying up.*  
*Learning, Playing and Interacting, 2009*

*Adult-initiated activities arise from planning and are sufficiently open-ended for children to work on independently until the adult is ready to support.*  
*Julie Fisher*

*Child-initiated activity has many characteristics in common with play, as it is wholly decided upon by the child, based on the child's own motivation, and remains under the child's control. It may involve play of many types, or it may be seen by the child as an activity with a serious purpose to explore a project or express an idea which the child may not see as pure play. It is guided by certain expectations within an Early Years setting regarding responsible use of space, time and purposes.*  
*Learning, Playing and Interacting, 2009*



Enabling Environment

At St John's Academy we recognise that the learning environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning. From this we plan challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Our learning environment is organised into learning areas each containing continuous provision resources. These resources are available to children at all times to allow children to return to familiar resources and hone skills or revisit learning. We also enhance our provision with resources which can be linked to a particular theme, skill or concept which can be derived from children's interests or a linked to a story being studied. These enhanced resources are generally available for a specific length of time.

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. We audit our indoor and outdoor provision against Early Excellence.



Enhanced provision or provocation (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.

## Positive Relationships

At St John's Academy we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

## Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents / carers are children's first educators and it is with them they spend the majority of their time. We value the contribution they make.

We develop these links through:

- Talking to parents / carers about their child before their child starts in our school through nursery visits and transition sessions
- Parents/carers are invited to 'stay and play' sessions within our setting in the term before they start school to ensure a smooth transition.
- Giving children and parents/carers the opportunity to spend time with our staff before starting Foundation Stage.
- Offering an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries.
- Providing two meetings per year, for parents/carers to discuss their child's achievements.
- Parents/carers receive a mid-year report on their child's attainment and progress.
- Parents/carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Using Dojo to communicate both ways through photographs, messages personally and via class pages.
- Using Tapestry online learning platform to share 'wow moments.'

## Observation and Assessment

Planning in Foundation Stage is taken from the children's needs and interests as much as possible, which are based around themes which we derive from quality texts. We have a long term plan which shows when major festivals and seasons will be covered.

Within EYFS we make regular assessments of children's learning and this is the information that we use to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs and interests. Photos are also taken to show learning. These observations are recorded electronically in the children's individual 'Learning Journeys'. In addition each child has a book in which work supported by the teacher is compiled.

We track the children's progress throughout the year to identify where children are on track or not on track to meet early learning goals. From this we plan to further to ensure we are meeting the needs of all learners.

### Statutory Assessment

In the autumn term reception children are assessed against the Reception Baseline (RBA).

The RBA will be an activity-based assessment of pupils' starting points in:

Language,  
Communication and literacy  
Mathematics

"The RBA is a short task-based assessment. Pupils will use practical resources to complete these tasks and teachers will record the results on a laptop, computer or tablet. It will not be used to label or track individual pupils. Schools will be required to carry out the assessment within the first 6 weeks of pupils starting reception. No numerical score will be shared and the data will only be used at the end of year 6 to form the 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 can be used to inform teaching within the first term."

From Government guidance on RBA

Further information can be found at  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reception-baseline-assessment>

In the summer term Reception children are also assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

Again these are statutory assessments these are based on teacher knowledge of your child and will be reported to you with your child's end of year report.

More information can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/early-years-foundation-stage>

### Transition

It is important to ensure that children new to St John's Foundation Stage will be comfortable and familiar with our setting, staff and routines. Forming early links with parents starts the open communication between school and home, ensuring that this initial transition is as seamless as possible. We also engage and visit at prior settings to gather information to further support the transition. These visits are essential in allowing us to meet with children and staff who know them well which allows the transition process to begin strongly, so that is as seamless as possible.

Our transition programme where both children and parents can attend the setting for educationally themed activities allows the children to meet peers and staff and contributes to them feeling safe and secure in their new environment. This also allows staff to begin the process of formative assessment.

Transition into Nursery begins with a stay and play session in the term before your child begins nursery. For children starting in the autumn term, our largest intake point, you will be given a

specific date for your child to start their placement. We welcome our children in on the first day of term but along with parental wishes, will use a staggered start to enable any insecure children to settle as quickly and calmly as possible.

Transition into Reception begins with a stay and play session in the summer term in which children can become familiar with staff and the setting. Parents are also given the opportunity to meet the Principal and talk with staff about expectations and school routines. In September we take a slightly staggered start with pupils coming to us from other settings, to enable all children to settle in life in Reception in a calm and supportive way. Children who attended our Nursery and who are already familiar with our school, will begin from the first day of the autumn term.

Transition from Foundation Stage 2 to Key Stage 1 begins with informal visits from Foundation Stage 2 to Year 1 classroom with familiar staff and Year 1 staff taking regular opportunities to come into Reception and meet the children. A more formal day at the end of the summer term will enable the transitioning children to develop links, friendship groups and an awareness of their new environment in preparation for the new school year.

## Moderation

The EYFS Profile provides a holistic picture of a child's attainment at the end of the EYFS in relation to the ELGs. Everyone needs to feel confident that the recorded judgements are fair and consistent for all children so that judgements made for any one child are comparable with those made for all children. The starting point for the agreement of judgements should be the ELGs illustrating the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS for each ELG and their exemplification. The purpose of moderation is to: secure the consistency and accuracy of judgements made by different practitioners.

Thus reassuring practitioners that their judgements are accurate, valid and consistent with national standards; and moderators are confident that an acceptable level of accuracy and validity has been achieved for assessments recorded and reported by the settings for which they have responsibility.

## Internal Moderation

The moderation of the EYFS Profile assessments begins in each individual setting. Within our own settings we, as practitioners, can agree assessment judgements with each other. At St John's Primary School this involves the teachers and TAs collaboratively working together.

-FS1 with FS2

-FS2 alongside the Year 1 Teachers.

## Moderation within the Worksop Family of Schools

As a family of schools we believe it is important for practitioners to build a shared understanding of the ELGs and national exemplification of standards and to discuss the assessment of children's attainment with colleagues from other settings. Therefore, we meet as a group to share knowledge, good practice and support with moderation.

Date Policy agreed and approved: June 2022

Policy to be reviewed: September 2023