



St Lawrence College Junior School

Policy for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Introduction

At St Lawrence College Junior School, we believe that every child deserves the opportunity to flourish from the very beginning of their educational journey. We recognise that the early years are a uniquely formative time, laying the foundation for lifelong learning, wellbeing, and personal growth.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provides the framework that ensures high-quality provision for all children during this critical phase. It establishes standards for learning, development, and care, fostering an environment where children feel secure, inspired, and valued. Through a rich blend of purposeful play, adult-led activities, and peer interaction, we create meaningful learning experiences that nurture curiosity, confidence, and independence.

Our EYFS provision is designed to:

- Promote consistent, high-quality practice so every child makes strong progress and is fully supported.
- Provide a secure foundation through tailored planning and regular assessment, recognising each child's unique strengths.
- Encourage close collaboration between educators, parents, and carers to enhance children's development.
- Champion equality of opportunity and inclusive practice, ensuring every child is welcomed, celebrated, and supported.

Together, we aim to give our youngest learners the best possible start, equipping them with the skills, knowledge, and resilience to thrive within our school and beyond.

Section 1: Learning and Development

At St Lawrence College Junior School, we offer a rich and balanced Early Years curriculum that recognises the vital importance of all seven areas of learning and development, as outlined in the EYFS framework. Each area is interwoven and

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collectively nurtures the whole child, supporting their academic, social, physical, and emotional growth.

Prime Areas of Learning

The three prime areas lay the essential foundation for children's learning and relationships. Our provision ensures that these areas are prioritised in planning, interaction, and assessment:

- **Communication and Language**
Children are supported to develop their spoken language, listening skills, and ability to express themselves clearly and confidently across a range of contexts.
- **Physical Development**
We encourage active play and movement while supporting fine and gross motor skills. Self-care and awareness of healthy choices are key components.
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
Through nurturing relationships and thoughtful guidance, children learn to understand their emotions, build positive friendships, and develop independence and resilience.

Specific Areas of Learning

Building upon the prime areas, our curriculum also promotes learning across four specific areas that spark children's creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking:

- **Literacy**
We foster a love of stories, rhyme, and reading, alongside early writing skills, ensuring children have strong foundations in language and communication.
- **Mathematics**
Children explore numbers, patterns, shape, space, and measure through engaging practical experiences that develop problem-solving and reasoning skills.
- **Understanding the World**
With hands-on exploration, children broaden their awareness of people, cultures, nature, and technology, connecting their learning to the wider world.
- **Expressive Arts and Design**
Creative expression is integral to our school. Children are encouraged to explore media, materials, movement, music, and imaginative play in an inspiring environment.

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Educational Programmes

Our curriculum is designed to be broad, balanced, and creative. It builds on what children already know and can do, ensuring that no child is excluded or disadvantaged. We provide a rich and stimulating environment with opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors. Children have access to high-quality resources that support independent exploration. We recognise that children progress at their own pace and bring unique experiences and interests into the classroom. Our approach ensures that each area of learning is adapted to meet individual needs and interests, cultivating confident, inquisitive learners ready to thrive in school and life.

Communication and Language

We recognise that strong spoken language skills underpin every area of learning. Practitioners engage in back-and-forth conversations with children, commenting on their play, echoing their words with new vocabulary, and asking open-ended questions that invite deeper thinking. These daily interactions in a language-rich environment help children build the confidence and vocabulary they need to express themselves clearly. Storytelling and performance offer powerful contexts for vocabulary growth and expressive skill-building. Children enjoy daily story sessions, from picture books and non-fiction to rhymes and poems, and take part in World Book Day celebrations, author visits, and trips to the theatre. Circle Times and opportunities to 'Show-and-Tell' provide structured opportunities to practise speaking and listening, while our annual Poetry Recital gives every child the chance to memorise and perform a poem on stage, boosting confidence and fluency.

By weaving conversation, storytelling, role-play and performance throughout our day, we ensure that every child experiences rich opportunities to hear, use and experiment with language. Practitioners model new phrases, support each child's contributions, and celebrate every attempt, helping learners to become comfortable, curious and articulate communicators.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

We view personal, social and emotional development (PSED) as central to each child's journey through the early years. Warm and trusting relationships with adults provide the secure base from which children begin to explore their feelings, build resilience and develop a confident sense of self. Through everyday interactions, our practitioners model empathy, respect and kindness, setting the tone for a nurturing and emotionally intelligent learning environment.

Children are encouraged to understand and manage their emotions through guided reflection and supportive routines. During Circle Times, stories such as 'The Colour Monster' offer language for feelings and create safe spaces for children to discuss what they are experiencing. With gentle coaching, the children learn how to wait, take turns, set simple goals, and resolve disagreements through respectful conversation and collaborative problem-solving.

Independence is woven into daily life. Children are supported to manage their personal care, washing hands after using the toilet and before meals, putting on coats and shoes, and changing for swimming. Healthy habits are actively promoted: water is always

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available, and children enjoy nutritious snacks and meals, often helping to prepare them in cooking activities such as making vegetable soups and fruit kebabs. They also learn about oral health, and the importance of regular visits to the dentist. The children take part in daily supervised tooth brushing. Celebrating milestones in self-care, kindness and collaboration boosts self-esteem and reinforces positive behaviours. Children contribute to creating a class charter, which helps children feel ownership over their learning environment, promotes shared responsibility, and supports positive behaviour by giving them a clear, collaborative understanding of expectations.

From their first days at school, children become part of our house system, an opportunity to build friendships across age groups, foster teamwork, and feel a sense of pride and belonging.

Our holistic approach aims to ensure that every child develops the emotional literacy, social skills and independence needed to flourish. By nurturing these foundations, we hope to equip our youngest learners with the confidence and resilience to thrive in their school life and beyond.

Physical Development

Physical activity underpins happy, healthy, active lives. Children enjoy weekly PE and Swimming lessons alongside daily movement opportunities, helping to develop core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. In our outdoor classrooms, playground and Forest School, children have opportunities to ride trikes and scooters, negotiate climbing and balancing equipment, build with large scale construction, and explore sand and water play.

Fine motor control and precision are woven into every day. Small-world, construction, loose parts, puzzles, malleable materials and arts and crafts encourage manipulation of small objects and tools. 'Dough Disco' helps strengthen fingers and wrists. Adult guidance helps children refine their pencil grip and control, supporting early mark-making and the first steps toward forming letters and developing handwriting skills.

Literacy

We aim to nurture a life-long love of reading by surrounding children with rich, engaging language experiences. Daily story times, rhymes, poems and songs expose children to a wide range of texts, while practitioners initiate conversations about the world around them and the books they share. These meaningful interactions build vocabulary, spark curiosity and deepen comprehension through questioning, prediction and discussion.

Topics based around quality texts, World Book Day celebrations and visits from children's authors further ignite enthusiasm for reading and broaden literary horizons.

In Nursery, we introduce phonics through engaging listening and sound discrimination activities, including environmental sound games, rhythmic clapping, rhymes, alliteration and oral blending, to sharpen children's auditory awareness. As they grow in confidence, they begin to learn simple letter-sound correspondences (for example, s, a, t, p), embedding these through songs, stories and sound-focused games. We introduce word reading through a structured, systematic phonics programme in Reception, equipping children with the tools to decode unfamiliar words and instantly recognise familiar ones. Daily phonics lessons, supported by decodable books matched to each child's skill level,

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foster confidence and fluency. Daily individual reading sessions allow practitioners to target individual needs and celebrate every reading milestone.

In Nursery, children develop the fine-motor strength and pencil control needed for early writing through activities such as Dough Disco, Squiggle Whilst You Wiggle and a variety of mark-making explorations. They practise drawing simple patterns and begin forming letters, often starting with those in their own names. In Reception, children learn letter formation through daily, structured handwriting sessions where practitioners model correct stroke order, guide practice, and support the transfer of accurate letter shapes into independent writing. Greg Bottrill's Drawing Club brings joy and purpose to our writing curriculum. As children tackle step-by-step drawing challenges, they refine their grip and hand-eye coordination. Then, by narrating their illustrations and sequencing ideas into captions or short sentences, they orally compose before they write, building confidence, creativity and the composition skills central to early writing.

Mathematics

Our EYFS mathematics provision lays the essential foundations for confident, curious, and capable learners. Grounded in the EYFS framework and guided by the pedagogical principles of White Rose Maths, our approach emphasises depth, mastery, and meaningful exploration. Our planning is structured around small, manageable steps that allow children to explore concepts thoroughly before moving on. We use a blend of adult-led activities and continuous provision to embed mathematical thinking across the day.

Number Sense and Mastery

We lay strong foundations by helping children:

- Count confidently and accurately
- Subitise and recognise number patterns
- Explore number composition and decomposition
- Use concrete materials to compare, represent and reason

Concepts are revisited regularly to deepen understanding and build fluency.

Spatial Reasoning and Mathematical Thinking

Children explore shape, space, and measure through hands-on activities and familiar routines:

- Investigating 2D and 3D shapes and spatial relationships
- Exploring weight, capacity, size, and time in everyday contexts
- Spotting patterns, predicting outcomes, and justifying ideas

We model key vocabulary and encourage children to verbalise their thinking, celebrating mistakes as part of the learning journey.

Embedding Maths Throughout the Environment

Mathematics is woven into every corner of our setting, with:

- Sorting and matching tasks using natural and everyday objects
- Practical resources for counting, measuring, and problem-solving
- Prompts and provocations that spark discussion, curiosity, and deeper reasoning

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By making maths engaging, meaningful, and visible across the day, we help each child grow into a confident mathematical thinker.

Understanding the World

We help our youngest learners make sense of the world by immersing them in a wide range of meaningful experiences, conversations and discoveries. Children are encouraged to observe closely, ask questions and explore the people, places and ideas that shape their physical, social and cultural understanding.

They begin to develop a sense of time and place by discussing their families, homes and community, and learning about the roles of others, such as paramedics, firefighters and postal workers, through stories, imaginative play and firsthand encounters. Termly trips out deepen their understanding through real-life exploration, while visits from community helpers inside school encourage curiosity and reflection on how society works. Books and storytelling continue to broaden children's horizons, helping them compare past and present, talk about characters and settings, and engage with historical change in ways that are both relatable and age appropriate.

Understanding cultural diversity is a key part of the EYFS curriculum. Through stories, maps, and shared celebrations, children explore a range of cultural and religious traditions from both local and global communities. These experiences help them identify and discuss similarities and differences in clothing, food, festivals and places of worship. Chapel services at Harvest, Easter and Christmas, alongside the Nativity play, introduce children to shared values and seasonal traditions in meaningful ways. Weekly French lessons add another dimension to their cultural awareness, allowing children to learn new vocabulary, songs and greetings from another language in a joyful and accessible way.

The natural world is an integral part of learning. Through regular Forest School sessions, children explore seasonal changes, investigate plant life and spot mini beasts, using drawing and discussion to record their observations. Indoors and outdoors, they experiment with materials and discover changes like freezing, melting and growth, laying the foundations for early scientific thinking. Children are also introduced to simple ways of caring for the environment, encouraging a sense of responsibility and respect for the world around them.

Expressive Arts and Design

Creativity is celebrated as a vital part of children's development. Children are immersed in artistic and cultural experiences that spark imagination, nurture self-expression, and support communication. Regular access to a broad range of media, materials and creative opportunities helps each child explore freely, make choices and develop their own artistic voice.

Children have opportunities to engage with a rich variety of tools and techniques, including painting, modelling, printing, collage, and construction, safely experimenting with colour, texture, shape and form. Practitioners encourage children to share and reflect on their creations, helping them explain choices and describe their processes

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confidently. Role play is a daily part of provision, with props and costumes supporting narrative play and deepening children's connection to storytelling. Musical expression is nurtured daily through singing, rhymes and musical play, alongside weekly Music lessons and singing assemblies. Children regularly perform familiar nursery rhymes and songs, learning to move in time with the music and collaborate with others. They explore a range of instruments independently, experimenting with rhythm and sound in ways that spark creativity and confidence. Experiences beyond the classroom further enrich their artistic development. Children take part in trips to the theatre, which inspire storytelling, performance and a love of the performing arts. Opportunities to showcase their talents, including the Nativity Play, Poetry Recital, and Sharing and Celebration Assemblies, support self-expression, pride and joyful participation in the creative life of the school.

1.13 Acting on Concerns

If concerns arise about a child's progress, we work in partnership with parents and the SENDCo to provide appropriate support. This may include targeted interventions, additional observations, or referrals to external professionals. (See *St Lawrence College Junior School SEND Policy*).

Language Link screening is carried out during the first half term in Reception or when a child joins the setting. It provides a clear assessment of a child's language understanding, helping identify those who may benefit from extra support. Results guide targeted planning and, where needed, inform discussions with parents and external professionals to ensure every child can access learning confidently.

1.14 English as an Additional Language (EAL)

At St Lawrence College Junior School, we celebrate linguistic diversity and recognise the valuable role that a child's home language plays in their development and identity. Where possible, we incorporate children's first languages into play and learning, creating an inclusive environment that fosters confidence and belonging.

Alongside this, we provide targeted support to help children develop their English language skills through daily interactions, storytelling, songs and structured activities. Our aim is to ensure every child can access the full EYFS curriculum and build the communication foundation needed for a smooth transition into Key Stage 1. (See *St Lawrence College Junior School SEND Policy*).

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1.16 Approach to Teaching and Learning

Our teaching approach is rooted in the understanding that young children learn best through play, exploration and active engagement. We offer a balanced blend of child-led activities and adult-guided learning, enabling children to investigate ideas independently while benefiting from thoughtful, well-planned instruction.

Practitioners model language and behaviour, scaffold children's ideas, guide small-group work, and encourage problem-solving and independence. Planning is responsive to children's interests and developmental needs, and we use a variety of teaching formats, including whole-class, small-group and individual interactions, to meet each child where they are. Warm, supportive relationships and consistent routines foster confidence, curiosity and purposeful learning.

We actively promote the **Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning** throughout the EYFS:

- **Playing and Exploring:** Children investigate, take risks and experience new things with a spirit of curiosity.
- **Active Learning:** Children sustain attention, persevere through challenges and take pride in their accomplishments.
- **Creating and Thinking Critically:** Children express original ideas, make connections and develop strategies for solving problems.

Section 2 – Assessment

2.1 Ongoing Assessment

Assessment is embedded within daily practice and serves as a key tool for understanding each child's progress, interests and developmental needs. Through continuous, formative assessment, practitioners shape learning experiences that reflect each child's capabilities and support their growth across all areas of the EYFS framework.

Observations are a central aspect of our assessment strategy. Practitioners closely monitor children's interactions, responses and achievements, both in spontaneous play and structured activities, to form a holistic picture of their development. Observations are recorded using Tapestry, our secure online learning journal, which enables regular two-way communication between school and home. Parents and carers are encouraged to contribute their own observations, enriching our understanding and deepening the partnership around each child's learning journey.

In Reception, formative assessment is complemented with termly phonics assessments that track progress in early reading and support targeted intervention where necessary, and, at the end of the year, PiRA and PUMA tests. These standardised assessments offer a snapshot of children's attainment in reading and maths, supporting transition planning and identifying next steps.

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To monitor progress systematically, staff complete a termly tracking document for each child, recording whether they are emerging, expected or exceeding in each aspect of learning. This internal tracking informs planning, supports early identification of any concerns and facilitates professional dialogue between staff during pupil progress meetings, including transition conversations with Year 1 teachers to ensure continuity into Key Stage 1.

2.11 Baseline Assessments

Baseline assessments are carried out when children enter the EYFS to provide a clear starting point for their learning journey. In Nursery, this includes informal observations and play-based tasks that help practitioners understand each child's interests, strengths and areas for development.

At the start of Reception, a more detailed baseline is completed comprising:

- Teacher observations across all areas of learning
- Language Link screening to assess receptive language and identify communication needs
- Phonics assessments to gauge early reading readiness
- Informal play-based tasks to observe social interaction, physical development and cognitive skills

This holistic approach ensures staff can tailor planning, provide appropriate support from the outset, and identify children who may benefit from early intervention.

Reporting to Parents

Regular communication with parents is a vital part of our approach in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We provide a structured reporting schedule throughout the year to ensure families are well-informed about their child's progress, development and learning journey.

Parents receive two written reports annually and are invited to three formal meetings with their child's class teacher. These meetings offer opportunities to discuss progress, celebrate achievements and identify next steps for learning. In addition, teachers are available for brief conversations at drop-off and pick-up times. For matters requiring more time or privacy, appointments can be arranged via the school office.

The reporting timetable is as follows:

- **October** – Parent–Teacher Meeting
- **December** – Written Progress Report
- **February** – Parent–Teacher Meeting
- **May/June** – Parent–Teacher Meeting
- **July** – Full End-of-Year Report

Reports are written as personalised narratives, offering a holistic view of each child's development across the EYFS areas of learning. Children are assessed as entering, expected, or exceeding age-related expectations at the time of reporting. Reports also include commentary on the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning, providing insight into how children approach tasks,

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explore ideas and engage with others—supporting smooth transitions and future planning.

This structured approach ensures that parents remain active partners in their child's education and that each child's progress is celebrated and supported with care.

2.13 Assessment at the end of the EYFS – the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) is completed for each Reception child during the final term of Reception. This statutory assessment provides a comprehensive picture of each child's attainment in relation to the 17 *Early Learning Goals (ELGs)*, identifying whether they are:

- **Emerging** – not yet reaching expected levels
- **Expected** – meeting the expected levels

Teachers use their professional judgement, supported by ongoing observations, formative assessments and deep knowledge of the child, to reach each judgement. A copy of the completed Profile is shared with parents, who are offered opportunities to discuss the outcomes with the Reception teacher. Profile reports are also passed to Year 1 teachers to support continuity and appropriate challenge. The EYFS Profile includes commentary on the child's *Characteristics of Effective Learning*, offering insight into how they engage with learning and informing transition planning for Year 1. Profile results are submitted to the local authority, in accordance with national data reporting requirements.

Section 3 – The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

3.1 Introduction

Safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do. We are fully committed to creating a safe, nurturing and inclusive environment where children feel secure, valued and respected. All staff share a collective responsibility to protect children from harm and to promote their welfare, both within our setting and beyond.

We follow statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures rigorously and ensure that all staff receive regular training to recognise signs of abuse, respond appropriately, and act swiftly when concerns arise. Our safeguarding culture is proactive, reflective and rooted in strong partnerships with families and external agencies.

Children's safety, wellbeing and voice are central to our practice. We aim to build trusting relationships with children and families, so that every child feels confident to speak up and every parent knows they will be listened to with care and professionalism.

3.4 Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

St Lawrence College has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs, including one with specific responsibility for the Early Years Foundation Stage. These

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staff members are trained to manage safeguarding concerns and work closely with external agencies when needed.

All staff working in the EYFS receive annual safeguarding training and are fully familiar with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Safeguarding is embedded in our daily practice and underpinned by the latest statutory guidance, including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused

This ensures that all staff are equipped to recognise, respond to and report concerns promptly and appropriately, maintaining a safe and protective environment for every child.

3.5 The *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* contains information on the following:

Action for safeguarding concerns - EYFS staff must report any concerns immediately to the DSL or DDSL. Clear steps are outlined for disclosures, referrals, and emergency responses, ensuring swift and appropriate action.

Allegations against staff - The policy details procedures for handling allegations, including reporting to the Head, notifying the LADO within one working day, and safeguarding both children and staff throughout the process.

Use of mobile phones and devices – EYFS-specific guidance restricts personal device use, outlines safe image capture protocols, and ensures signage and supervision to protect children's privacy and wellbeing. Personal devices (phones, smartwatches, tablets) must not be used to photograph children. Approved devices are provided for educational use. Staff may only use personal devices during breaks and must ensure no inappropriate content is present. All images must be justifiable and available for scrutiny. See Also *Mobile Phone, Electronic Device and Cameras (MPED&C) Policy*.

Recruitment checks - Safer recruitment procedures are followed, All new staff undergo suitability checks including references, DBS clearance, and compliance with the Safer Recruitment Policy. Staff must not be left unsupervised until deemed suitable. See also *Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy and Procedure*.

Training and practitioner support - EYFS staff receive annual safeguarding training, with induction support and ongoing mentoring. The DSL provides supervision and ensures staff can confidently apply safeguarding procedures in practice.

3.7 Whistleblowing

All staff, including students and volunteers, are encouraged to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in our setting's safeguarding provision. Our whistleblowing procedures clearly outline when and how concerns should be reported, and the steps that will be taken following a disclosure. These procedures are shared with all staff during induction

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and revisited regularly to ensure confidence and clarity. We foster a culture where staff feel safe, supported, and empowered to speak up, knowing that concerns will be taken seriously and addressed promptly by the senior leadership team. If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue internally, or believes their concerns have not been adequately addressed, they are advised to use alternative channels such as the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline, 0800 028 0285 or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

3.9 Concerns About Children's Safety and Welfare

If any member of staff, student, or volunteer has concerns about a child's safety or welfare, they must report these immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will notify the local authority children's social care team in line with Kent's reporting procedures. In emergency situations, the police will be contacted. Our safeguarding practice is guided by the government's statutory documents: *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, *Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales*, and *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, which we have due regard for in all decision-making and policy development. These documents inform our training, procedures, and response protocols.

3.11 Child Absences and Attendance Monitoring

We recognise that regular attendance is vital to children's wellbeing, development, and safeguarding. We ask parents and carers to inform us promptly of any absence, and we follow up on unexplained or prolonged absences in a timely and sensitive manner. If a child is absent without notification, we will attempt to contact parents and carers directly, followed by alternative emergency contacts if necessary. Staff use professional judgement to assess whether an absence is prolonged, taking into account the child's personal circumstances, patterns of absence, and any known vulnerabilities within the family. Where concerns arise, we will refer to local children's social care services and, if appropriate, request a police welfare check. Our attendance policy, shared with all families, outlines expectations for reporting absences and the steps we will take to safeguard children when attendance issues occur.

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3.13 Suitable People and Safer Recruitment

All staff, volunteers, and anyone aged 16 or over who lives or works on the premises where early years care is provided must undergo an enhanced criminal records check before having unsupervised contact with children. This includes supervised volunteers who provide personal care. Where individuals have lived or worked abroad, additional overseas checks are carried out to ensure full safeguarding compliance. We verify all qualifications rigorously, even where physical evidence is unavailable, and maintain detailed records of identity checks, references, vetting processes, and criminal records checks—including reference numbers, dates obtained, and the staff member responsible for completing the check. All staff are informed of their duty to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands, or warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children, whether received before or during their employment. No individual whose suitability has not been confirmed will be permitted unsupervised access to children under any circumstances. In accordance with statutory safeguarding duties, St Lawrence College will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a member of staff is dismissed—or would have been dismissed had they not resigned—because they have harmed a child or placed a child at risk of harm. See also *Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy and Procedure*.

3.20 References

Before any appointment is confirmed, we obtain references from the applicant's current employer, training provider, or education setting, completed by a senior person with appropriate authority. We do not accept open references, references provided directly by the applicant, or those from family members. Where applicants are not currently employed, we verify their most recent relevant period of employment and seek a reference from their last role involving children. If they have never worked with children, we ensure a reference is obtained from their current professional setting. All electronic references must originate from a legitimate source, and we contact referees to clarify vague or incomplete information. We compare reference content with the application form and follow up on any discrepancies, including establishing the reason for leaving previous posts. When providing references for former staff, we include factual information about any substantiated safeguarding concerns that meet the harm threshold, and we exclude any unsubstantiated, unfounded, false, or malicious allegations. See also *Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy and Procedure*.

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In line with statutory requirements, we carry out thorough checks to identify any disqualifications under the Childcare Act 2006, including those related to criminal convictions, court orders, or inclusion on the barred list. Staff are required to disclose any circumstances that may lead to disqualification, both prior to and during their employment. Where disqualification is identified, appropriate action will be taken in accordance with legal guidance. See also *Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy and Procedure*.

3.27 Staff taking medication/other substances

Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or any substance that could impair their ability to care for children. If taking medication that may affect performance, staff must seek medical advice and only work directly with children if confirmed safe to do so. All medication on site must be securely stored and kept out of children's reach at all times.

3.28 Smoking and Vaping

St Lawrence College is a smoke-free environment. Smoking (including e-cigarettes) is not permitted in any enclosed or substantially enclosed areas, including College vehicles. An area has been designated where staff & visitors may smoke outside, away from children. Smoking in other areas of the College's grounds or buildings is strictly prohibited. See also *Smoking (including electronic cigarettes)*

3.29 Qualifications, Training, Support and Skills

St Lawrence College is committed to upholding the Equality Act 2010 and ensuring all practitioners are treated fairly and with respect. We do not tolerate discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. Our inclusive culture values diversity and promotes equal opportunities for all staff

3.30 Safeguarding Training The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) undertakes comprehensive training every two years, covering child protection, inter-agency working, case conferences, supporting children in need, record keeping, and promoting a culture of listening to children. The DSL also receives regular updates and provides ongoing support, advice, and guidance to all staff. All practitioners receive annual child protection training in line with Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP) guidance, and may be trained by the DSL if suitably qualified. Training is aligned with the criteria in Annex C of the EYFS framework, and staff are supported to confidently implement safeguarding policies and procedures. See also *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*.

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3.33 Training and Skills See also *Teachers, Teaching Assistants and Pastoral Staff Induction Policy*. St Lawrence College ensures that all staff receive thorough induction training to understand their roles and responsibilities. This includes safeguarding, child protection, emergency evacuation procedures, and health and safety. Through the appraisal system staff are supported to access ongoing professional development so they can deliver high-quality learning experiences and continuously improve their practice.

3.27 Supervision of Staff See also *Supervision of EYFS Staff Policy*

Staff receive half-termly supervision meetings with the Head of Pre-Prep (who will have a supervision with the Deputy Head). These meetings provide opportunities to discuss:

- Children's progress and welfare
- Concerns or safeguarding issues
- Professional development and training needs

3.36 Paediatric First Aid All Pre-Prep staff complete full paediatric first aid (PFA) training, refreshed every three years. A PFA-trained staff member is always present on site and during trips. A current list of certified staff is displayed within the Pre-Prep setting.

3.41 Key Person Each child in the EYFS at St Lawrence College is assigned a key person, usually their class teacher, who builds a secure, trusting relationship with the child and their family. The key person is responsible for monitoring the child's progress, supporting their emotional wellbeing, and maintaining regular communication with parents and carers. The **key person** ensures that care is tailored to each child's individual needs, helps them settle confidently into the setting, and supports family engagement with specialist services when needed.

3.35 Staff: Child Ratios St Lawrence College adheres to all statutory staffing ratios for children aged three and over. Our EYFS classes (Nursery and Reception) are staffed with one teacher (QTS) and one teaching assistant (Level 3) in each class. Where a suitably qualified teacher is working directly with children, classes in which most children will turn five within the school year require one member of staff per 30 children; all other classes require one additional member of staff per 13 children. During lunch, playtimes, and wraparound care, ratios are maintained at one adult per eight children when a teacher is not present. At least one staff member must hold an approved level 3 qualification, and at least half of the remaining staff must hold an approved level 2 qualification. Children are always within sight or hearing of staff, and usually both, to ensure safe and responsive supervision throughout the day.

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3.58 Health

We actively promote children's health and wellbeing through daily routines, rich learning experiences, and a nurturing environment. Children are supported to manage their personal care by washing hands, dressing independently, and changing for swimming. Healthy habits are actively promoted: water is always available, and children enjoy nutritious snacks and meals, often helping to prepare them in cooking activities such as making vegetable soups and fruit kebabs. They also learn about oral health and the importance of regular visits to the dentist. Children also take part in daily supervised tooth brushing. (See also *Early Years Foundation Stage Toothbrushing Policy*). Physical activity is embedded throughout the day, from weekly PE and swimming lessons to outdoor play in our classrooms, playground, and Forest School. Here, children build strength, coordination, and confidence through climbing, balancing, riding scooters, and exploring natural materials.

Medicines

St Lawrence College is committed to promoting and protecting the health and wellbeing of all children in our care. Procedures for taking appropriate action if children are ill or infectious are communicated to parents via the handbook. Children who are clearly unwell, including those who have recently started a course of antibiotics, should remain at home until they are fit to return. In line with public health guidance, children who have experienced vomiting or diarrhea must remain at home for 48 hours after the last episode to prevent the spread of infection. Parents must inform the school immediately if a child is suspected to have, or has been exposed to, an infectious disease. Children must remain at home until medical clearance has been obtained.

Medical Records

Parents and carers must complete and return the Confidential Medical Form prior to a child joining the school. All relevant medical history must be disclosed to ensure appropriate care and support. Any changes to a child's medical needs must be communicated to the school without delay.

Administration of Medicines

Medication required during the school day must be handed directly to the nurse on duty in the Medical Centre by a parent or guardian. All medication must be in its original packaging and clearly labelled with the child's name, medication name, dosage, and administration time. Teaching staff are not authorised to administer medication. In accordance with EYFS statutory guidance, a Medication Request Form must be completed and signed by a parent or guardian for each instance of administration. Medication cannot be given without this form. All EYFS also complete Administration of Medicines training. See also *Supply, Storage and administration of medicines policy*.

Accidents and Injuries

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Written notification of any accidents or injuries, including first aid administered, will be provided. Parents are asked to sign and return this documentation for school records. In the event of a medical emergency, the school will contact parents or carers by phone as soon as possible. If contact cannot be made, appropriate treatment will be sought without delay.

Sun Protection

During warmer months, parents are asked to apply sun cream to their child before arrival. For children attending full-day sessions, a clearly named bottle of sun cream should be provided for reapplication. Children wear school sunhats during outdoor play; these are available from the school shop.

Food and Drink See also *Early Years Foundation Stage Food and Nutrition Policy*
We are committed to promoting children's health, development, and well-being through the provision of nutritious, balanced, and age-appropriate food and drink. In line with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2025) and the latest Nutrition Guidance for Early Years Providers, we ensure that all food and drink provided meets the highest standards of safety, inclusivity, and nutritional value.

We provide:

- Freshly prepared, healthy meals and snacks that reflect the four key food groups: fruit and vegetables, starchy foods, proteins, and dairy.
- Age-appropriate portion sizes and a rotating three-week menu that is regularly reviewed.
- Access to fresh drinking water throughout the day and milk at designated snack times.

We avoid:

- Foods high in sugar, salt, or saturated fats.
- Artificial sweeteners and sugary drinks.

Mealtimes are:

- Supervised by trained staff who sit with children to model positive eating behaviours and ensure safety.
- Inclusive, social, and calm, with opportunities for children to develop independence, try new foods, and learn about healthy choices.
- Used as a learning opportunity to support children's understanding of hygiene, nutrition, and table manners.

Allergies and dietary needs:

- We maintain up-to-date records of children's allergies, intolerances, and cultural or religious dietary requirements.
- Allergen information is clearly displayed and followed in food preparation areas.
- Staff receive training in allergy awareness and emergency procedures, and individual care plans are developed in partnership with families and healthcare professionals.

We work closely with parents and carers to:

- Share menus and welcome feedback.
- Support healthy eating at home, including guidance on snacks for After School Club.

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- Respect and accommodate cultural, religious, and ethical food preferences.

All EYFS staff hold paediatric first aid certification, and those involved in food preparation are trained in food hygiene. Our approach to food and drink supports children's health, safety, and learning, laying the foundation for lifelong healthy habits.

Safer Eating

Supporting and Understanding Children's Behaviour

See also *Good Behaviour Policy*

St Lawrence College Junior School is committed to promoting positive behaviour through a supportive, nurturing and inclusive approach. In the EYFS, children's behaviour is understood as a form of communication, and practitioners respond with warmth, consistency and developmentally appropriate guidance. Children are taught and encouraged to follow our three whole-school expectations: **Ready, Respectful, Safe**, which underpin all interactions and routines across Nursery and Reception. Children are also involved in creating a class charter which helps children feel ownership over their learning environment, promotes shared responsibility, and supports positive behaviour by giving them a clear, collaborative understanding of expectations.

EYFS staff model positive behaviour at all times, reinforcing pro-social actions through praise, encouragement and age-appropriate rewards. Positive reinforcement may include verbal praise, celebration of effort, stickers, certificates, or class-based incentives. The emphasis is on helping children recognise and take pride in constructive choices, and on building early skills in empathy, turn-taking, listening and problem-solving.

Responding to Behaviour

When behaviour falls below expectations, staff respond calmly and proportionately, helping the child to understand their actions and to repair relationships where appropriate. Strategies may include gentle redirection, a brief conversation about rules, time to regulate alongside an adult, or completing an age-appropriate reflective activity. For younger children, interventions occur immediately after the behaviour to support understanding. Where behaviour is persistent, disruptive or concerning, practitioners will work closely with parents and the SENDCo to identify appropriate support, including possible adjustments, targeted strategies or an individual behaviour plan. Close partnership with families is essential in ensuring consistency between home and school.

Statutory Requirements for Behaviour and Physical Intervention

3.74 In line with the EYFS Statutory Framework, **corporal punishment must never be used or threatened** in any circumstances. This prohibition applies to all staff, volunteers, and any person living or working on the premises where EYFS care is provided. Physical intervention may only be used where it is necessary to avert immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to prevent serious damage to property. Any such intervention must be reasonable, proportionate and used only when essential, in accordance with the school's Restraint Policy.

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3.75 Providers must keep a written record of any occasion where physical intervention is used and must inform parents on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Promoting Emotional Regulation and Wellbeing

EYFS staff recognise that young children are developing early emotional regulation skills. Practitioners create safe, predictable routines, use visual prompts, and provide calm spaces where children can regulate with adult support. Curriculum areas such as PSED reinforce turn-taking, empathy, understanding feelings, and respecting others.

Staff remain alert to factors that may influence behaviour, including SEND, developmental needs, family circumstances, fatigue, or changes in routine. Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure all children can meet expectations and access support that reflects their individual needs.

Partnership with Families

Positive relationships with parents and carers are central to effective behaviour support. Practitioners will communicate concerns promptly, share successes regularly, and work collaboratively to ensure continuity. Parents are encouraged to discuss behavioural expectations at home and to support the school's approach in helping their child develop self-regulation and pro-social behaviour.

Serious or Ongoing Concerns

Persistent challenging behaviour, behaviour posing a risk to safety, or behaviour suggesting unmet needs will be discussed with the Head of Pre-Prep, Deputy Head, and SENDCo.

Patterns of concern will be logged, monitored and addressed in partnership with parents. Where safeguarding concerns arise, procedures in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed.

In rare cases where significant behaviour concerns persist despite support, senior leaders may consider further steps in line with the Junior School's Good Behaviour Policy.

Exclusions are extremely rare for EYFS children and would only be considered in exceptional circumstances that threaten the safety or wellbeing of others.

Special Educational Needs

Special Educational Needs

(See *St Lawrence College Junior School SEND Policy*).

- St Lawrence College Junior School is committed to early identification and effective support for children in the EYFS with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We follow the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and meet all statutory duties outlined in the EYFS Framework, ensuring that arrangements are in place to identify and support children with SEND.
- Children may have needs in one or more areas: communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social, emotional and mental health, or sensory/physical development. Identification is based on practitioner observations, developmental milestones, parental concerns, and screening tools such as Language Link.
- We use a graduated approach—assess, plan, do, review. Quality First Teaching is the first step, followed by targeted small-group or individual interventions if further

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support is needed. Where progress remains limited, personalised plans are created with the SENDCo and parents, and external specialists may be consulted.

- The SENDCo oversees SEND provision across the EYFS, advises staff, monitors progress and liaises with external agencies. EYFS teachers are responsible for implementing strategies, differentiating learning and communicating regularly with parents.
- Partnership with parents is central. Concerns are shared early, and parents contribute to planning and reviewing support. The SENDCo maintains regular contact and offers guidance throughout the process.
- Where needed, the school works with external professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists and Early Years Inclusion Teams to ensure accurate assessment and provision. Recommendations are integrated into daily practice.
- We are fully inclusive and ensure equal access to the EYFS curriculum, clubs and trips. Adaptations may include visual timetables, differentiated resources, sensory breaks or specialist aids. No child is discriminated against based on SEND or disability.
- Transition into, within and out of the EYFS is carefully planned. Additional visits, social stories and individual plans are provided where necessary. Information is shared with new teachers and external settings to ensure continuity.
- Children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPlans) receive support in line with their statutory requirements, reviewed annually with parents and professionals. The school admits children with EHCPlans where their needs can be safely and effectively met.
- We recognise that children with SEND may face additional safeguarding vulnerabilities. Staff receive training to recognise and respond to these needs and ensure children receive enhanced pastoral support.

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