

We are an ambitious and inclusive Trust of schools
strengthening communities through excellent education.



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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1.0 Policy Statement

1.1 Our mission is to transform lives and strengthen our communities to make the world a better place. We begin that mission within our Early Years. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their Reception year. Children join our Nursery as soon as they reach two years old and join our Pre-School the term after their third birthday. Children then join our Reception class in the year that they turn five. In partnership with Parents/Carers, we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life. In the EYFS, teaching and learning are informed by the best available evidence on how children learn and promotes the broad range of skills, knowledge and attitudes children need as foundations for good future progress. We recognise that every child is special and that they will bring with them a range of unique experiences. We believe that children deserve the opportunity to reach their full potential and as such, we are proud to provide a friendly and safe environment, that will enable them to do this in a stimulating and challenging way. In Nursery and Pre-School, enjoyment and fun are linked with exploration, discovery and learning; the staff are sensitive and responsive to the individual needs of each child and planning for learning is based on these needs.

2.0 Scope and purpose

2.1 We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. Our intent is 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 staff and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- That caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families are developed.

2.2 The EYFS is based upon four principles:

1. A Unique Child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
2. Positive Relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
3. Enabling Environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between staff, parents/carers and the child.
4. Learning and Developing – an acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates (see Characteristics of Effective Learning)

2.3.1 A Unique Child

All children and their families are valued and children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential SEND is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of SEND is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with Parents/Carers at an early stage. Please see our SEND Policy and SEND Information Report for further information.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Considering the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in our care, and using this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.
- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning and development needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

2.3.2 Positive Relationships

We recognise that Parents/Carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that Parents/Carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- An information evening for parents in June where they receive the Reception Information booklet and the School Prospectus which highlights school start and finish times, uniform and informs the Parents/Carers of the schools vision and aims.
- Asking Parents/Carers to complete admission forms, medical form, disability form etc. (please see induction pack).
- Asking Parents/Carers to sign permission slips for visits out of school, photographs of their child for assessment purposes and using the internet at school, prior to their children starting in Reception.
- Asking Parents/Carers to complete an 'All About Me' activity with their child over the Summer, where they will write a synopsis about their child including their likes and dislikes. This will form a display and the basis for our topic learning at the start of the Autumn Term.
- Inviting children to three 'Stay and Play' sessions prior to joining the Academy so that they can spend time with their new teacher and the other adults within the class.
- Inviting Parents/Carers, along with their child, to an initial consultation with the class teachers where they can discuss all of the little things which make their child unique and which will help the transition into the Academy to be a positive one.
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings providing information about other areas of the curriculum, e.g. Early Reading, Maths and Phonics.
- Parents/Carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Parents/Carers are provided with access to their child's electronic Learning Journey so that they can contribute and share special moments in their child's learning.
- Organising a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and Parents/Carers: Open afternoons, Art Exhibitions, Christmas Performances, Sports Day etc.
- Parents/Carers are made aware of the curriculum and ongoing activities through the 'Learning Together at Home' weekly sheet which explains what the children have done that week, what they are due to do the next week and also provides guidance on a task to complete with their families at home to consolidate their learning.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. In Reception and Pre-School, the EYFS teachers act as 'Key Workers' to all children in EYFS and we do not have a separate system, however our TAs also contribute to this information. In our Turtle class, Nursery Staff act as Key Workers to a small group of children and it is their responsibility to help ensure that learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs.

The key worker also supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home.

2.3.3 Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. A mix of play based learning and direct teaching is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning. The Learning Environment The EYFS classrooms and learning spaces are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active or take things more quietly. The classrooms cover all learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS classes have their own large enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the ability to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning. Children are encouraged to learn independently during free flow times but are also guided by Independent Learning Challenges which ensure focus and engagement. Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interests. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual Learning Journeys.

2.3.4 Learning and Development

We follow the Educational Programmes as outlined in the EYFS Statutory Framework. This includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, three 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 four specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by Parents/Carers and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. If a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's Parents/Carers and Inclusion Leader to agree how to support the child. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of direct teaching and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. This is particularly important in developing language and extending vocabulary. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

We support children in using the three Characteristics of Effective Teaching and learning. These are;

- ★ 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 achievements;
- ★ Creating and Thinking Critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Assessment

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff carefully observe children to identify their level of achievement and interests. These observations, as well as observations shared by parents and/or carers are used to shape future planning.

When a child is aged between 2 and 3, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 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/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child and Year 1 teachers. The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

3.0 Welfare

3.1 It is important to us that all children in our school are 'safe'. In the EYFS, we aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all our children. There are clear procedures for assessing risk which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment.

3.2 Staff Requirements: We are committed to ensuring that all staff are suitably qualified, trained, competent and experienced to fulfil their roles and responsibilities effectively. We meet the requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework regarding staff qualifications, training and staffing ratios. All practitioners hold, or are working towards, qualifications appropriate to their role, and we ensure that at least one person with a current paediatric first aid qualification is available at all times when children are present, in accordance with EYFS requirements. Staff receive a thorough induction and ongoing professional development opportunities to maintain and enhance their knowledge, skills and understanding of safeguarding, child development, health and safety and inclusive practice. Through regular supervision, support and training, we ensure that all staff remain competent and capable of meeting the needs of every child in our care.

3.3 Sleeping Arrangements: We are committed to providing a safe sleeping environment for all children in our care and comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework. Sleeping children are frequently checked to ensure their safety and wellbeing. All mattresses and bedding are maintained in good condition, are suitable for the age and stage of development of the child and meet current safety standards. Staff work in partnership with parents to meet children's individual sleep needs while ensuring their safety at all times.

- 3.4 **Suncream:** During periods of warm weather and increased UV exposure, parents are encouraged to apply a long-lasting sun cream to their child before arrival. With written parental consent, staff will support children to reapply sun cream as required throughout the day, following the manufacturer's instructions. Children are encouraged to wear suitable clothing, including sun hats that protect the face, neck and ears and access to shaded areas and drinking water is provided at all times. Outdoor activities may be adapted during periods of extreme heat to ensure children remain safe, comfortable and protected from overexposure to the sun.
- 3.5 **Nutritious Meals:** We are committed to promoting children's health and wellbeing by providing healthy, balanced and nutritious meals, snacks and drinks in accordance with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework and EYFS Nutrition Guidance. We take account of each child's individual dietary requirements, cultural needs, intolerances and allergies, working closely with parents and carers to ensure these are met safely. Fresh drinking water is available and accessible to children at all times. Food is prepared, stored and served in a hygienic manner, following current food safety legislation and best practice guidance. Staff involved in the preparation and handling of food are appropriately trained and competent in food hygiene procedures. Whilst children are eating there will always be a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate for a full course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework and children will always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating.
- 3.6 **Packed Lunches:** Families may wish to provide food from home and we will work with them to support an understanding of our regulatory obligation to provide healthy, balanced and nutritious food to children and encourage healthier food choices for packed lunches. All foods brought from home will be checked for potential allergens so that the risk of cross contamination is reduced and that food has been prepared in a way to prevent choking. We will communicate with parents and/or carers about best practices for packing lunches and include tips on keeping food safe and fresh. Many families like to celebrate their child's birthday and other special events by bringing in food to share with peers. Any food shared in our setting will be checked for potential allergens.
- 3.7 **Attendance:** We recognise that regular attendance is important for children's wellbeing, development and safeguarding. Parents and carers are expected to notify us as soon as possible if their child will be absent and provide a reason for the absence. All absences are recorded and monitored. Where a child is absent without notification, or where an absence is considered prolonged, staff will make timely attempts to contact parents and carers and, where necessary, the child's emergency contacts. We will consider patterns and trends in attendance, alongside the child's individual circumstances, vulnerability and family situation, when assessing any concerns. If we are unable to establish the child's whereabouts or if an absence gives rise to safeguarding concerns, we will follow our safeguarding procedures. Our attendance procedures are shared with parents and carers and form part of our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children.
- 3.8 **Toilets and Intimate Hygiene:** We ensure that there are an adequate number of toilets and hand basins available and there are separate toilet facilities for adults. We have suitable hygienic changing facilities for changing any children who are in nappies. If appropriate, an intimate health care plan will be created alongside the Parents/Carer. Children's privacy is considered and balanced with safeguarding and support needs when changing nappies and toileting. We have an adequate supply of clean bedding, towels, spare clothes, and any other necessary items.
- 3.9 **Medicines:** In line with the EYFS statutory framework, we have a whole school medicines policy. There are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Further information on the administration of medicines can be found in our 'Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy'.

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4.0 Legislation

This Policy will be published on our website and will be included in the Trust's Policy Monitoring Schedule. We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements and as such this policy is based on requirements set out in the Early Years Foundations Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework. When creating this policy, we have also taken into account:

- Development Matters
- EYFS Nutrition Guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Health and Safety Policy
- Photographic and Digital Images Policy
- Trust Safer Recruitment Statement
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

5.0 Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, special educational needs, disability and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

6.0 Health and Safety

There are clear procedures for assessing risk which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In line with the EYFS Statutory Framework, we undertake a whole school medicines policy ensuring that;

- There are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date.
- Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge.
- Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer.

- A written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and informs the child's parents and/or carers on the same day.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required.
- Milk and fruit are available during the morning session.
- A first aider is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept.
- A safeguarding policy stating how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff own personal use.

7.0 Transition from the EYFS to KS1

Reception and Year 1 teachers work closely together to ensure that a children's transition between the EYFS and Year 1 is seamless. Reception teachers make sure that children's experiences in the final year of the EYFS are valuable in themselves, and prepare the ground for Year 1. EYFS and Year 1 teachers are given time to discuss and expand on the information presented in the EYFS profile. In particular, the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and any gaps in foundational knowledge which will give teachers significant details about each child's learning and development. This enables the Year 1 teachers to have a fully rounded picture of the attainment of each child in order to plan how to best support learning and plan their curriculum.

8.0 Use of screens

- Staff ensure that children are not exposed to screens in a passive or sedentary way without interaction, communication or purposeful engagement from educators.
- Screens are used only for short, planned periods to support learning, helping to protect children's developing attention, focus, and concentration.
- We aim to maintain screen-free areas within the setting to promote social interaction, active play, communication and hands-on learning experiences.
- Screens are not used during mealtimes or within one hour of a child's sleep or rest period, as screen use may affect sleep quality.
- Screens are never left on in the background, as they can distract children from play, learning and meaningful social interaction.
- Screens are not used as a routine management tool or to calm children, as this may limit opportunities for children to develop self-regulation and emotional resilience.
- Within our EYFS classrooms, screens are not used to occupy children, including during transitions throughout the day or as a means of managing behaviour.
- Any use of digital technology is purposeful, age-appropriate and supports the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Screen use complements, rather than replaces, high-quality interactions between adults and children, active play, exploration and hands-on experiences.