



# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>CEO</b>

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## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

### **1 Aims and rationale**

We believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and appropriate support to fulfil their potential. All children deserve to have an equal chance of success. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

This policy ensures that;

- Children access a broad and balanced curriculum with specialist input
- Children access quality and consistency in learning
- There are close working relationships with parents and carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity

#### **1.1 Rationale**

Children develop rapidly during the Early Years; socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually, and each child is entitled to provision that supports and extends their knowledge, skills, understanding and confidence.

- The Early Years Foundation Stage is a valid stage of learning, not simply a preparation for the next stage of education.
- Personal, social and emotional well-being is the basis for successful learning and development.
- The whole child is important; social, emotional, physical and intellectual developments are inter-related.
- Learning is holistic.
- Children develop individually and at their own rates and need to be given time to move through the developmental stages at their own pace.
- Children learn best when they are in control and therefore need to be given the opportunity to be responsible for their own learning.
- Children need a stimulating and challenging environment, both indoors and outdoors, in which to develop. It promotes personal and social skills and supports the acquisition and development of communication and language skills.
- Children find abstract learning difficult. They need experience of doing things, handling objects and exploring the physical and social world before they are ready to understand abstract concepts.
- Adults display positive attitudes to all the children and to each other to promote high self-esteem and make children feel valued.

## **2. Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)) September 2023. This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

### 3. EYFS in our Trust

Transition starts as early as possible, once places in school have been confirmed, with visits made by staff, to see the children in their current or home setting.

This together with several 'stay and play' sessions, ensures that colleagues begin to build those crucial relationships with children and share information with parents which helps to support a smooth transition into school.

Once in school, teachers use a range of different approaches. Children learn through planned play, by adults modelling, by observing each other and through guided learning and direct teaching. Children's learning is often driven by their interests and so learning and planned activities are designed with that in mind. Depth in learning is important as are opportunities to revisit and generalise learning.

Teachers create enabling environments for high-quality play, with care given to resources that match the children's interests, level of development and are accessible for all.

Planning across a week, ensures curriculum coverage as well as encompassing children's specialist programmes, for example physio or sensory programmes. Careful sequencing from individual starting points helps children to build their learning over time.

### 4 The Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined below.

#### EYFS

INTENT	Our Curriculum	Is developmental in nature		Is non-subject specific		Starts with the child –their interests and development		
	Aims	Confident communicators who can have their needs and wants met		Children who are as safe and healthy as possible		Children who are able to move independently to explore their environment		
	Our Ethos	Encourages play and exploration	Develops active learners	Develops independence	Recognises each unique child	Makes use of enabling environments	Develops positive relationships	
IMPLEMENTATION	Attributes	Children who are willing to try new things		Happiness, confidence and trust		Curiosity & interaction		
	Areas of learning	Communication & language		Cognition		Physical development		Personal, independence, social and health education including CEIAG
	Contexts for learning	Sensory based experiences & understanding of the world	School environment and local community	Themes or topics (incl. SMSC and British values)	Structured and free play	Technology, apps & environments	Expressive arts	Outdoors and nature
	Programmes	Therapeutic input & sensory integration	Language development programmes	Intensive interaction	Autism specific programmes e.g. SCERTS, TEACCH, AET	Developmental motor programmes	Forest school	
	Strategies	Repetition & revisiting	Identifying small steps progression	Objects /sounds / symbols of reference-managing transitions	Continuous provision-modelled and scaffolded play	Switch/symbols & signs(augmentative communication)	Clear routines and structures with visual timetables	Reduced keyword teacher language & processing time
IMPACT	Formative	Progress against individual learning targets		Progress against therapeutic (MDT) targets		Observations & next steps in development in learning journal		
	Summative	EHCP & ILP progress summary		EYFS profile		EQUALS skills map		
	Recording	Footsteps or stepping out	Key skills record keeping	Evidence for learning		Development matters	Autism frameworks	

The Ascent Curriculum framework for EYFS includes the 3 prime areas found within the EYFS curriculum, and also includes cognition. These areas of learning are interconnected and are particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. The areas for learning are:

- Communication and language
- Cognition
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The areas for learning are strengthened and applied through;

- Expressive arts and design
- Themes and topics
- Outdoor learning technology and immersive environments
- Access to the local community
- Sensory based experiences
- Understanding of the world

As our children arrive with diverse range of strengths and needs we assess each individual and work with them from their individual starting points.

Our Ascent curriculum has 4 pathways. It is usual that children starting EYFS provision will have the curriculum planned from pathway 1 or pathway 2 documents below.

### Pathway 1 Curriculum – Informal

INTENT	Our Curriculum	is developmental in nature		is non-subject specific		Starts with the young person - their interests and development		
	Aims	Confident communicators who can get their own basic needs met		Young people who are as safe and healthy as possible		Young people who can move independently to explore their immediate environment		
	Our Ethos	Builds a sense of belonging and well-being	Challenges expectations	Fosters independence and develops skills for learning and adult life	Encompasses spiritual and creative engagement	Is inclusive		
IMPLEMENTATION	Attributes	Persistence and resilience		Happiness, confidence and trust		Curiosity & interaction		
	Areas of learning	Communication & language		Cognition		Physical development		
	Contexts for learning	Self & familiar adults	School environment & local community	Themes or topics (incl. SMSC, cultural capital and British values)	Sensory based experiences	Technology and immersive environments	Expressive arts	Outdoors and nature
	Programmes	Speech and language & feeding	Physiotherapy hydrotherapy & rebound	Intensive interaction	Switch programmes	Move & body awareness programmes	Forest school	Sensory integration programmes
	Strategies	Repetition & revisiting	Very small steps progression	Objects / symbols / sounds of reference	Positioning	Switch / eye gaze technology (augmentative communication)	Allow processing time	Identification of preferred sensory channels
IMPACT	Formative	Progress against individual learning targets		Progress against therapeutic (MDT) targets		Observations & next steps in development (engagement profile)		
	Summative	EHCP summary reports		Footsteps/stepping out		Engagement profile (statutory in primary)		
	Recording	Footsteps/stepping out		Key skills record keeping		Evidence for learning		

## Pathway 2: Pre-formal Curriculum

INTENT	Our Curriculum	Is developmental in nature		Is non-subject specific		Starts with the young person – their interests and development		
	Aims	Confident communicators who have a growing vocabulary	Young people who can manage their immediate needs with support	Young people who can play their fullest part in their school and class community	Young people who can move with increasing agility and independence in order to stay fit and healthy	Young people who are developing basic functional numeracy and literacy		
	Our Ethos	Builds a sense of belonging and well being	Challenges expectations, encouraging curiosity and engagement	Encompasses spirituality and creative engagement	Is inclusive	Encourages independence and a sense of identity	Builds relationships & social interaction	
IMPLEMENTATION	Attributes	Persistence and Resilience		Happiness, confidence and trust		Curiosity & interaction		
	Areas of learning	Communication and language		Cognition	Physical development		Personal, independence, social and health education including CEIAG	
	Contexts for learning	Sensory based experiences & understanding of the world	School environment and local community and world of work	Themes or topics (incl. SMSC, cultural capital and British values)	Structured and free play	Technology, apps & environments	Expressive arts	Outdoors and nature
	Programmes	Therapeutic input & sensory integration	Language development programmes	Intensive interaction	SCERTS / TEACCH and autism specific programmes	Developmental motor programmes	Forest school	
	Strategies	Repetition & revisiting	Identifying small steps progression	Objects / sounds / symbols of reference – managing transitions	Continuous provision modelled and scaffolded play	Switch/symbols & sign/argumentative communication	Clear routines and structures with visual timetables	Reduced keyword teacher language & processing time
IMPACT	Formative	Progress against individual learning targets		Progress against therapeutic (MDT) targets		Observations & next steps in development		
	Summative	EHCP & ILP progress summary		Stepping out & Ascent assessment scheme		Statutory attainment in primary		Accredited outcomes in secondary
	Recording	Stepping out	Key skills record keeping	Evidence for learning	Derbyshire language scheme	Ascent record keeping documents	SCERTS	

### 4.1 Planning

Teachers plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. To do this, colleagues working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas and cognition.

Teachers also consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. As all our children have special educational needs and/or disability, staff consider what specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, to deliver the outcomes of the Education Health Care Plan (EHCP).

In planning and guiding children's activities, they reflect on the diverse ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

### 4.2 Teaching

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

As children's development of focus and attention allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for their next stage in learning.

### 4.3 Assessment

Formative assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Adults observe children to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. They also consider observations shared by parents and/or carers on our digital evidence platforms.

Teachers review each child's progress termly and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas and cognition. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing as expected and the areas in which additional support is needed.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, teachers will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) if they feel a child may access it. At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 7 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. 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.

## **5. Working with Parents and Carers**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development.

The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

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

Our parent partnership is developed by;

- Home visits where appropriate
- Keeping parents informed - prior to admission into EYFS, a meeting is held to explain procedures and routines and our philosophy on Early Education.
- Making parents/carers feel welcome in school.
- Ensuring excellent communication between parents and school
- Involving parents/carers in discussions on their child's progress during formal and informal meetings.

## **6 Safeguarding and Health and Safety**

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe, and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2021) and there is a section in our school Safeguarding Policy that directly refers to practice in the EYFS.

It is important to note that colleagues do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. School based equipment should be always used.

This is in line with our Safeguarding Policy. These photographs are used in children's portfolios, in class displays and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

We take all accidents seriously and they are always logged onto a CPOMs system, and a phone call home is always made immediately if a child bangs their head. We have cold compresses if needed.

We encourage all children to start school without nappies but will assist and care for any children who require support with this. We acknowledge that young children often have 'accidents' (i.e., wet or soil themselves) and encourage parents to provide spare clothes. Children are changed in the toileting area.

All large play equipment is checked by our site officer and fire alarm tests are held regularly in line with Trust policy.

## **7 Inclusion**

As part of the larger school community, we adopt the whole school policy for Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and Race Equality.

The core values of our school emphasise the need to value and respect everyone in our community.

### **Aims:**

- To be an inclusive school making equality of opportunity a reality for all our children in their everyday lives.
- To develop the children's awareness of the diverse society in which we live. We will help them to learn positive attitudes and equip them to take their place within this society.
- To educate our children so that where possible they have a good understanding of what equal opportunities means.
- To provide children with differing and appropriate levels of support for them to succeed.
- To eliminate any actions, words or practices that contribute to inequality whether they intend to or not.
- To develop children's appreciation of the positive and enriching experiences that can be gained from living and working in a multi-faith, multi-race and multi-cultural society.

To be inclusive, we will have due regard to the needs of distinct groups within our school:

- Girls and boys.
- Minority ethnic and faith groups.
- Children who need support to learn English as an additional language.
- Gifted and talented children.
- Children with medical needs and those with a physical or sensory disability
- Any child who is at risk of exclusion

For further information see our whole school policy for Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and Race Equality.

## **8 Monitoring**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the CEO every two years. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Board of Trustees.



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