



Early Years Policy

Policy Dated:	September 2026
Date of Next Review:	September 2027
Reason for Review/Revision:	Annual review cycle
Publication Scheme	School website
Version	03
Lead	Executive Headteacher

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Childcare Act 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, where applicable
- DfE, Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (current edition in force at the date of adoption)
- DfE, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- DfE, Working Together to Safeguard Children (current edition in force at the date of adoption)
- DfE, Development Matters (current edition in use)
- DfE, Reception Baseline Assessment: Assessment and Reporting Arrangements (current edition)

- DfE, Early Years Foundation Stage Profile: Assessment and Reporting Arrangements (current edition)
- Early Education, Birth to 5 Matters (current edition)
- UK Council for Internet Safety, Education for a Connected World (current edition)
- Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance relating to the Equality Act 2010

This policy should be read alongside the following school policies and procedures:

- Assessment Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Managing Children with Medical Conditions Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Single Equality Scheme

Where national legislation or statutory guidance is updated before this policy is formally reviewed, the school will implement the statutory requirements immediately. This policy will be interpreted in line with the most recent statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education until the next scheduled review.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school complies with the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- Ensuring appropriate policies and procedures are in place to safeguard children, including arrangements for child protection, allegations against staff, online safety, the use of mobile phones and cameras, and safer recruitment.
- Ensuring sufficient resources are available to deliver a high quality EYFS curriculum.
- Monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of this policy.
- Reviewing safeguarding, curriculum, attendance and outcomes within the EYFS as part of the school's quality assurance processes.
- Ensuring that this policy is implemented fairly and does not discriminate on any unlawful grounds.

The Head of School is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the statutory requirements of the EYFS are fully implemented.
- Promoting high expectations for teaching, learning and safeguarding.
- Ensuring appropriate staffing, training and professional development.
- Monitoring the quality of education, children's development and welfare.
- Reporting significant issues to the governing body.

The EYFS Lead is responsible for:

- Leading the day-to-day organisation and management of the EYFS.
- Ensuring that the curriculum is ambitious, well sequenced and meets the needs of all children.
- Monitoring teaching, learning and assessment.
- Supporting staff through coaching, monitoring and professional development.
- Ensuring assessment is used effectively to inform future learning rather than generate unnecessary workload.

- Working closely with the SENDCO, safeguarding team and parents to ensure every child achieves their potential.
- Monitoring provision for disadvantaged pupils and evaluating the impact of EYPP funding.

All EYFS staff are responsible for:

- Implementing this policy consistently.
- Providing high quality teaching and interactions.
- Planning learning that builds children's knowledge and skills over time.
- Maintaining high expectations for every child.
- Identifying emerging needs quickly and responding appropriately.
- Maintaining accurate records where required.
- Following safeguarding procedures at all times.
- Promoting children's welfare, wellbeing and safety.

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Work in partnership with the school.
- Support their child's learning and development at home.
- Share relevant information that may affect their child's education or wellbeing.
- Ensure their child attends regularly and arrives punctually.
- Raise concerns promptly so they can be addressed collaboratively.

3. Aims

Through the implementation of this policy, the school aims to:

- Give every child a happy, safe and successful start to school.
- Foster curiosity, independence, resilience and a lifelong love of learning.
- Deliver an ambitious curriculum that prepares children well for Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Promote children's social, emotional, physical and cognitive development.
- Develop children's communication and language through high quality interactions, conversation, storytelling and reading.
- Ensure all children make strong progress from their individual starting points.
- Provide early identification and support for children requiring additional help.
- Promote equality, inclusion and high aspirations for every child.
- Build strong partnerships with parents and carers.
- Ensure every child feels safe, valued and respected.

The four overarching principles of the EYFS underpin all practice:

- Every child is unique and capable of learning, developing and achieving.
- Positive relationships enable children to become confident and independent learners.
- Enabling environments support learning through carefully planned experiences and responsive teaching.
- Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates.

To achieve these aims the school will:

- Provide a broad, balanced and knowledge-rich curriculum.
- Plan sequential learning that builds children's understanding over time.
- Deliver high quality adult interactions that extend children's thinking and language.
- Use assessment to identify next steps in learning.
- Encourage sustained shared thinking through purposeful play and adult guidance.

- Promote independence, self regulation and positive learning behaviours.
- Maintain a safe, stimulating and inclusive learning environment.

4. Learning and Development

The school will provide a curriculum that is ambitious, engaging and designed to ensure children develop the knowledge, skills and vocabulary needed for future success.

Planning will be informed by children's interests, prior learning and developmental needs while ensuring that all children experience the full breadth of the EYFS curriculum.

Learning will be organised around the seven areas of learning.

Prime areas

- Communication and Language
 - Listening, Attention and Understanding
 - Speaking
- Physical Development
 - Gross Motor Skills
 - Fine Motor Skills
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
 - Self Regulation
 - Managing Self
 - Building Relationships

Specific areas

- Literacy
 - Comprehension
 - Word Reading
 - Writing
- Mathematics
 - Number
 - Numerical Patterns
- Understanding the World
 - Past and Present
 - People, Culture and Communities
 - The Natural World
- Expressive Arts and Design
 - Creating with Materials
 - Being Imaginative and Expressive

Teaching will:

- Build knowledge progressively through carefully sequenced learning.
- Develop children's vocabulary across all areas of learning.
- Promote language rich environments with frequent opportunities for discussion.
- Balance adult directed teaching with high quality child initiated learning.
- Use purposeful play to consolidate and extend learning.
- Identify misconceptions quickly and adapt teaching accordingly.
- Encourage children to think critically, solve problems and apply prior learning.

The characteristics of effective teaching and learning underpin all provision:

- Playing and exploring.
- Active learning.
- Creating and thinking critically.

Continuous provision will be carefully planned to reinforce previously taught knowledge, encourage independence and provide opportunities for children to practise and deepen their learning.

5. Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of effective teaching and learning.

Practitioners will use ongoing formative assessment through observation, discussion and high quality interactions to understand children's learning and inform future planning.

Assessment will:

- Identify children's strengths and next steps.
- Inform curriculum planning.
- Support early identification of additional needs.
- Enable timely intervention where appropriate.
- Minimise unnecessary paperwork so practitioners spend the maximum amount of time interacting with children.

Statutory assessments include:

- Nursery Baseline Assessment, where used by the school.
- Reception Baseline Assessment completed within the first six weeks of Reception.
- EYFS Profile completed at the end of the Reception Year.

Parents and carers will be kept informed about their child's learning and development through regular communication and meetings.

Children with SEND or English as an Additional Language will receive appropriate support and reasonable adjustments during assessment where required.

Assessment information will be shared with Year 1 staff to support a smooth transition and continuity of learning.

6. Inclusion

The school is committed to ensuring that every child is valued, included and supported to achieve their full potential.

High expectations apply equally to all children regardless of background, ability, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, language or family circumstances.

The school will:

- Identify emerging needs as early as possible.
- Work closely with parents, external agencies and professionals.
- Follow the graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review.
- Make reasonable adjustments to remove barriers to learning.
- Adapt teaching while maintaining ambitious expectations.
- Ensure disadvantaged children have full access to the curriculum.
- Use EYPP funding strategically and evaluate its impact.
- Promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination.

The SENDCO will work alongside the EYFS Lead to coordinate provision for children with SEND and ensure statutory duties are fulfilled.

7. The Learning Environment and Outdoor Provision

The learning environment will be organised to promote independence, curiosity and high quality learning.

Indoor and outdoor environments will be viewed as equally important parts of the curriculum and will provide opportunities across all seven areas of learning.

The school will ensure that:

- Learning spaces are safe, stimulating and well organised.
- Resources are accessible and promote independent learning.
- Continuous provision reflects children's learning and curriculum priorities.
- Outdoor learning takes place daily unless weather conditions make this unsafe.
- Children have opportunities to develop physical skills, communication, creativity, investigation and problem solving through outdoor experiences.
- Reading, mark making, mathematics and language development are embedded throughout the environment.
- High quality adult interactions are used to extend children's thinking during play.

Suitable toilet, hygiene and changing facilities will be available and maintained to a high standard.

The learning environment will be reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to meet the needs of all children and supports the delivery of an ambitious EYFS curriculum.

8. Safeguarding and Welfare

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all staff have a duty to act in the best interests of children at all times.

The school will ensure that all safeguarding arrangements comply with the current statutory guidance and are implemented consistently throughout the EYFS.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the Head of School.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are identified within the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Providing leadership on safeguarding and child protection.
- Supporting staff in recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- Liaising with children's social care, the local authority and other agencies where appropriate.
- Ensuring safeguarding records are accurate, confidential and securely maintained.
- Ensuring all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and regular updates.

All staff working within the EYFS will:

- Read and follow the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Complete safeguarding training appropriate to their role.
- Recognise the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Record and report concerns immediately using the school's agreed procedures.
- Promote children's emotional wellbeing and sense of safety.

Children's attendance, punctuality and patterns of absence will be monitored as part of the school's safeguarding procedures. Concerns will be followed up promptly in line with the Attendance Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Risk assessments will be undertaken where appropriate to ensure children remain safe during learning, visits and other activities.

9. Mobile Phones and Devices

For the purposes of this policy, mobile phones include smartphones, tablets, smart watches and any device capable of taking photographs, recording video or accessing the internet.

The use of mobile devices will always prioritise children's safety, privacy and welfare.

Use of personal devices by staff

Staff must not use personal mobile phones or personal devices while children are present.

Personal devices must be switched to silent mode and stored securely throughout the school day.

Staff may only access personal devices during designated breaks in areas where children are not present.

Personal devices must never be used to photograph, film or record children.

Failure to comply with these expectations may result in disciplinary action.

Use of mobile devices by parents, visitors and contractors

Parents, visitors and contractors must comply with the school's safeguarding procedures regarding photography and recording.

Photographs or videos must not be taken without prior permission.

Where photographs are permitted during school events, parents should only photograph their own child wherever possible and should respect the privacy of other children and families.

The school discourages the publication of photographs or videos of children on social media.

Any concerns relating to the inappropriate use of mobile devices will be reported immediately to the DSL.

Use of school devices

Only school-owned devices will be used to photograph or record children's learning.

School devices will:

- Be password protected.
- Be used solely for educational purposes.
- Store images securely.

- Be managed in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy and Acceptable Use Policy.

Photographs will only be taken where parental consent has been obtained.

Staff must not photograph injuries for safeguarding purposes. Safeguarding concerns will instead be recorded using the school's reporting system and referred immediately to the DSL.

10. Computing and Technology

Technology is used to enrich learning and prepare children for an increasingly digital world.

Children will be introduced to technology through purposeful experiences that support learning across the EYFS curriculum.

The school aims to:

- Develop children's confidence in using age appropriate technology.
- Promote creativity, communication and problem solving.
- Support early digital literacy.
- Encourage safe and responsible use of technology.
- Enhance learning across all areas of the curriculum.

Technology will be used to support learning in:

- Communication and Language.
- Physical Development.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development.
- Literacy.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding the World.
- Expressive Arts and Design.

Teaching will reflect the expectations within the EYFS Statutory Framework and Education for a Connected World.

Children will be supervised whenever they access digital technology.

Appropriate filtering, monitoring and online safety measures will be in place on all school devices.

Online safety will be taught through age appropriate discussion, modelling and planned learning experiences.

Staff will promote healthy and balanced use of technology, recognising that high quality interactions, play and practical experiences remain central to children's learning.

11. Health and Safety

The school will take all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of children attending the EYFS.

Health and safety procedures will be implemented in accordance with the school's Health and Safety Policy.

The school will:

- Maintain safe, secure and well-maintained learning environments.
- Carry out appropriate risk assessments.
- Ensure equipment is suitable and regularly inspected.
- Promote good hygiene practices.
- Promote healthy eating and good oral health.
- Provide access to fresh drinking water throughout the day.
- Ensure appropriate supervision at all times.

Accidents and injuries will be recorded and parents or carers informed as soon as practicable.

Serious accidents, injuries or incidents will be reported in accordance with statutory requirements.

Medicines will only be administered in accordance with the Managing Children with Medical Conditions Policy and with appropriate parental consent.

Information relating to allergies, dietary needs and medical conditions will be recorded and shared with relevant staff.

Smoking, vaping and the use of tobacco products are prohibited anywhere on school premises.

Fire evacuation procedures will be practised regularly, and all staff will be familiar with emergency procedures.

12. Staff Taking Medication or Other Substances

The school is committed to providing a safe environment for children and maintaining high standards of professional conduct.

Staff must ensure that any medication they take does not affect their ability to care for children safely.

Any member of staff taking medication that could impair their judgement, alertness or ability to supervise children must seek medical advice and inform the Head of School where appropriate.

The misuse of alcohol, illegal drugs or other substances that may impair professional judgement will not be tolerated.

Any member of staff who is believed to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while at work will be removed from duties involving children immediately and managed in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures.

Medication belonging to staff must be stored safely and kept out of the reach of children.

All staff are expected to comply with the Staff Code of Conduct and any relevant Trust policies relating to health, wellbeing and fitness to work.

13. Staffing

The school is committed to ensuring that all children are cared for and educated by suitably qualified, experienced and competent staff.

Recruitment procedures will comply with the school's Safer Recruitment Policy and all statutory safeguarding requirements.

All staff appointed to work within the EYFS will:

- Complete appropriate pre-employment checks.
- Receive an induction covering safeguarding, child protection, health and safety, behaviour expectations and emergency procedures.
- Receive ongoing professional development to maintain and improve their knowledge and practice.
- Participate in regular supervision, coaching and performance management.

The EYFS Lead will provide professional support through:

- Regular monitoring of teaching and learning.
- Professional dialogue and coaching.
- Support with curriculum development.
- Identification of professional development needs.

Staff supervision will provide opportunities to:

- Discuss children's learning, development and wellbeing.
- Review safeguarding concerns where appropriate.
- Reflect upon professional practice.
- Identify solutions to challenges.
- Improve the quality of teaching and provision.

The school will ensure staffing arrangements comply with the statutory requirements of the EYFS.

At least one member of staff holding a current Paediatric First Aid qualification will be available whenever children are present and will accompany children on educational visits where required.

Staffing ratios will meet the requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework.

Each child will be assigned a key person who will:

- Build positive relationships with the child and family.
- Support the child's learning and development.
- Monitor wellbeing and progress.
- Act as the main point of contact for parents and carers.

The school will promote staff wellbeing and ensure staff receive appropriate support to maintain high quality provision.

14. Information and Records

The school will maintain accurate records in accordance with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the school's Data Protection Policy.

Records relating to children will include, where appropriate:

- Full name and date of birth.
- Parent and carer contact details.
- Emergency contact information.
- Information regarding parental responsibility.
- Medical information, allergies and dietary requirements.
- Attendance records.
- Assessment information.
- Safeguarding records where applicable.

The school will also maintain records relating to:

- Staff qualifications.
- Paediatric First Aid certification.
- Daily attendance.
- Key person allocations.
- Accidents and incidents.
- Educational visits where appropriate.

Information will be:

- Accurate and up to date.
- Stored securely.
- Shared only where lawful and necessary.
- Retained in accordance with the school's retention schedule.

Parents and carers will have access to information regarding:

- The EYFS curriculum.
- Children's learning and development.
- School routines.
- Available support for children with SEND.
- Policies and procedures affecting their child.
- The school's Privacy Notice.

Statutory notifications will be made to relevant agencies where required by legislation.

15. Parental Involvement

The school recognises that parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators.

Strong partnerships between home and school are fundamental to children's success within the EYFS.

The school will:

- Maintain open and positive communication with parents and carers.
- Encourage parents and carers to contribute to their child's learning.
- Share information about children's progress regularly.
- Provide opportunities for formal and informal discussions.
- Offer guidance to support learning at home.
- Celebrate children's achievements.

Parents and carers will be encouraged to share information about children's interests, experiences and achievements outside school to help inform planning and assessment.

The school operates an open and supportive approach to communication. Meetings may be arranged whenever concerns or additional support are required.

Parents and carers will provide consent, where appropriate, for:

- Educational visits.
- Use of photographs and videos.
- Internet access.
- Medical treatment where required.

The school values the contribution families make to children's education and will work collaboratively to ensure every child thrives.

16. Transition Arrangements

Effective transition arrangements are essential to children's wellbeing, confidence and future success.

The school will work closely with parents, carers and partner settings to ensure smooth transitions into and beyond the EYFS.

Transition into Nursery or Reception may include:

- Parent information meetings.
- Home visits or introductory meetings where appropriate.
- Stay and play sessions.
- Visits to the learning environment.
- Opportunities for children to meet staff.

Information will be gathered from previous settings to support continuity of learning and ensure children's individual needs are understood.

Transition to Year 1 will include:

- Opportunities for children to visit their new classroom.
- Joint working between Reception and Year 1 staff.
- Sharing assessment information and learning records.
- Discussion of children's individual strengths, needs and next steps.
- Opportunities for parents and carers to receive information about Year 1 expectations.

Transition arrangements will be planned carefully to minimise anxiety and promote continuity in learning, behaviour and wellbeing.

17. Monitoring and Review

The governing body and Head of School will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy.

Monitoring activities may include:

- Lesson visits.
- Learning environment reviews.
- Assessment analysis.
- Safeguarding monitoring.
- Attendance monitoring.
- Pupil progress discussions.
- Professional dialogue with staff.
- Feedback from parents and carers.

The EYFS Lead will review the quality of provision regularly and identify priorities for further improvement.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where changes in legislation, statutory guidance or school procedures require amendment.

Where statutory guidance changes before the next scheduled review, the school will implement the revised requirements immediately.