


Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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PARTNERSHIP OF SCHOOLS

Vision

At our school, we value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage and are passionate about preparing children for their future learning and successes. Our classrooms are a nurturing environment for our pupils and provide safe, secure, and inviting spaces where children initiate and engage in their own learning. There are no ceilings on learning and with high expectations and learning opportunities, our children are taken through stimulating and inspiring journeys, allowing them to flourish. Resilience, responsibility and perseverance alongside compassion, kindness and integrity are all fundamental in enabling our children to be valued members of our school communities.

We hope that by taking children on their first steps through education that they develop the enthusiasm to accept challenge and embrace new opportunities. We seek to promote lively and inquisitive minds with the desire and skill to explore new ideas, foster a sense of awe and wonder, and develop natural curiosity, so children enjoy learning in and out of school. We encourage our children to believe in themselves, while equipping them with the fundamental skills to enjoy and achieve in life.

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the Early Years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their lives as they grow up.'

[Statutory Framework for EYFS](#)

All children come to school with their own life experiences and it is our privilege to acknowledge and build upon that prior learning. We work alongside parents and carers and make links with nurseries and preschools to ensure children's needs are met.

Curriculum

In EYFS we follow the curriculum as outlined in the Statutory Framework

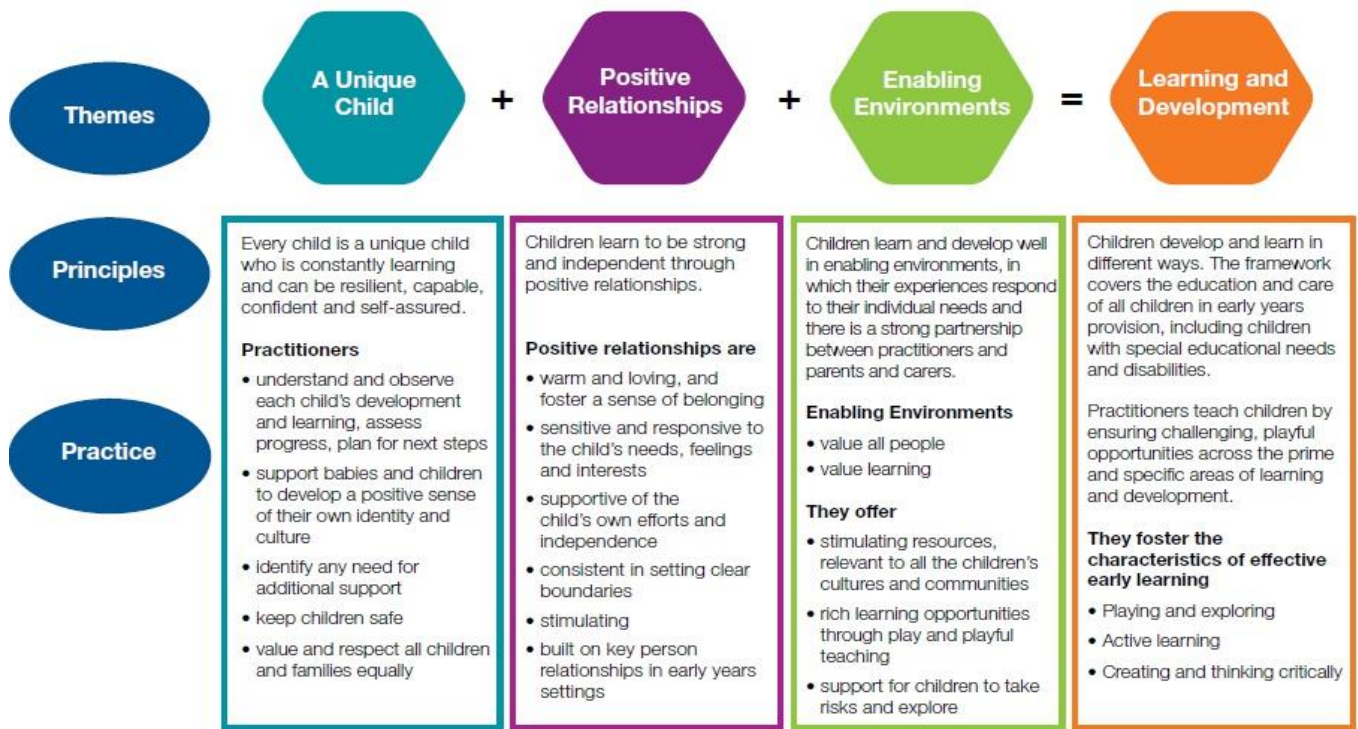
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf

All practice in Early Years is underpinned by the four guiding principles set out in the framework and exemplified within Development Matters.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/971620/Development_Matters.pdf

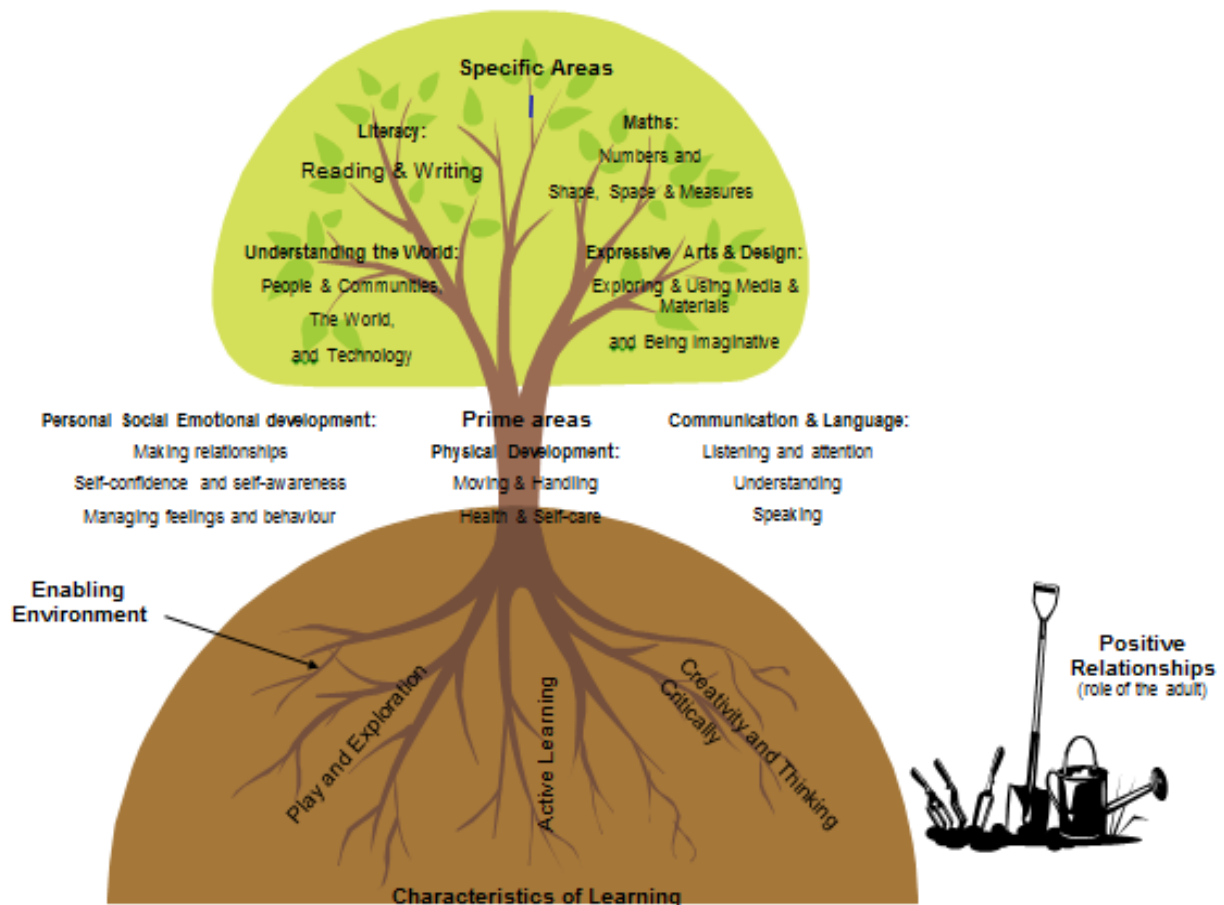
- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning Development

We encourage independence through extending child-led activities within an intentionally planned environment, and carefully planned experiences and challenges. The adult's role is to ensure that children receive high quality interactions, which extend their knowledge, skills and understanding.



The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning 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.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM



Enabling Environments

Children have access to a rich learning environment where opportunities and conditions allow them to flourish in all aspects of their development. The learning environment provides balance across the seven areas of learning and is designed to promote independence.

“Children must have access to a rich learning environment where opportunities and conditions allow them to flourish in all aspects of their development. The learning environment should provide balance across the areas of learning. Integral to this is an ethos which:

- *respects each child as an individual*
- *values children's efforts, interests and purposes as instrumental to successful learning”*

DfE Early Years Foundation Stage Handbook 2018

In planning the environment and in guiding children's activities, practitioners will reflect on the different ways that children learn and ensure they have opportunities to develop the characteristics of learning:

- **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.

Children should have opportunities to explore the following as part of their core provision:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| • Reading | • Construction |
| • Writing | • Investigation |
| • Small world | • Maths |
| • Role play | • Phonics |
| • Fine motor | • Creative |

Resources should be well maintained and displayed in a way that makes them accessible and irresistible for young children to want to explore them. Children will need to be taught how to look after them, and how to tidy them away properly. Adults will need to repair and replenish when required. Resources should include real life items that can be handled and promote curiosity.

“Kindergartens shall have sufficient space and equipment to allow play and varied activities that promote a love of exercise, and provide a wide range of motor and sensory experiences, as well as the opportunity to learn and master skills. Alternating between play, learning, concentration and expression is necessary for physical and psychological well-being. The design of the physical outdoor and indoor environment provides an important framework for children's well-being, experiences and learning.”

Framework Plan for the Content & Tasks of Kindergartens, Norwegian Ministry of Education & Research

Intentional and Cooperative Play

There should be enough space throughout the provision for small groups of children to play in order to encourage talk and teamwork. There should be clear learning intentions behind each of the activities or resources, linking to children's individual needs and the learning outcomes taught through directional teaching. Adults will need to observe children closely and use intentional questioning to challenge their thinking and move learning forwards.

Encouraging a Love of Books and Reading

Book areas should be themed and inviting, sparking children's curiosity to explore pictures and texts in a variety of genres. Books should be well stocked, and always displayed with the title showing, with some books being 'face on'. There needs to be soft seating to help make the area welcoming and encourage children to spend time enjoying books. Books should be available all around the classroom and changed regularly in line with themes and children's interests to keep them relevant and fresh. Use of story sacks, shelves and interest items should be displayed to encourage the use of storytelling, supporting the development of communication and language.

Themed Displays and Spaces

The theme for the learning should be evident within the environment. This helps to support children to make connections between different areas of learning, so that they can remember more over time.

The Outdoor Learning Environment

The outdoor learning environment should complement the indoor environment. In particular, there should be:

- Water and sand play
- A mud kitchen
- Space for gross motor physical activity
- Climbing apparatus or large construction resources for building circuits and safe climbing tasks
- Nature exploration

Planning and Teaching

The curriculum for Early Years Foundation Stage needs to be broad and balanced, taking into account the characteristics of effective learning. Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful teaching and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, think about problems, and work with others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is carefully planned for and guided by adults. There is an ongoing judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children or led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interactions. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, which will help children prepare for more formal learning in Year 1. (See Statutory Framework)

Daily intentional and direct teaching opportunities should be planned for to ensure children receive:

- high quality modelling,
- opportunities to carry out talk tasks and short activities with a talk partner or in a small group,
- time to rehearse skills in a variety of contexts to help build mastery and consolidation,
- opportunities to be challenged in their thinking and learning,
- the teaching of new skills and knowledge,
- the teaching of self-regulation, mindfulness and growth mindset.

Assessment

At our school, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process.

Assessment Through Child-initiated Activity

Children with effective learning characteristics:

- are willing to have a go;
- are involved and concentrating;
- have their own ideas;
- choose ways to do things;
- find new ways of doing things;
- enjoy achieving what they set out to do.

To accurately assess these characteristics, practitioners need to observe learning which children have initiated rather than only focusing on what children do when prompted. Children need rich opportunities to initiate ideas and activities so that they can develop the learning characteristics, which are assessed as part of the EYFS profile.

Children can demonstrate embedded learning and secure development without the need for overt adult support. Where learning is secure, it is likely that children often initiate the use of that learning.

Practitioners will make judgements by observing behaviour that a child demonstrates consistently and independently in a range of situations. Attainment in this context will assure practitioners of the child's confidence and ownership of the specific knowledge, skill or concept being assessed. Skillful interactions with adults and learning which is supported by them are necessary on the journey to embedding skills and knowledge.

Most evidence for EYFS profile judgements will come from practitioners observing a child's self-initiated or independent activity. Adult-led activities can offer insight into children's attainment by making sure the child has the opportunity to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do. Much practitioner knowledge of what children know and can do will be gathered from day-to-day interactions. This is not often formally recorded; however, it:

- provides the basis for making judgements
- provides a focus for moderation dialogue
- informs future practice and provision

Accurate assessment will depend on contributions from a range of perspectives, including the child's. Practitioners should involve children fully in their own assessment by encouraging them to communicate about and review their own learning. Assessment should build on the insights of all adults who have significant interactions with the child. Adults with different roles will be able to make different contributions. Accurate assessment requires a two-way flow of information between setting(s) and home. A review of a child's achievements should include those demonstrated at home. Assessments which include parent and carer contributions enable staff to gain a holistic view of a child's learning and development.

EYFS Profile Assessment Processes and Attainment

When children first enter reception, staff will make a baseline assessment taking into account information from home visits, nursery reports and transition documents, visit days, conversations with parents and observations from the first few weeks at school. To make this judgement they will use development matters, making an individual assessment against each of the 17 areas of learning. We would expect a child entering reception to have a 'typical' baseline if they are

secure at 30-50 months in all areas, with some areas at 40-60 months for autumn born children. Under the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, staff must also carry out 'The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)'. This is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception.

At the end of the reception year, staff will complete the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) in order to determine whether a child has met a 'good level of development' (GLD). This would mean that a child will have met the early learning goal (ELG) in each of the prime areas (communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development) as well as literacy and mathematics. If they have met the ELG then they have met the criteria for 'expected'. If they have not met the ELG for that area, then they will be assessed as 'emerging'. Assessments against the ELGs are made in the summer term, although staff may gather evidence towards these earlier in the year.

Throughout the year, teachers will make an informed judgement on the likelihood that a child will meet GLD by the end of the academic year. In order to do this, we must have a secure knowledge of the curriculum and assessment information about each child in the class. Evidence towards the final assessment can come from observations, workbooks, summative assessment, teacher and support staff knowledge and feedback from home and outside agencies. These judgements will become more refined as practitioners further assess the children in their class. These are quality assured through internal and external moderation as well as through pupil progress meetings with the leadership team.

Practitioners will compile the profile by reviewing the evidence gathered in order to make a judgement for each child, for each ELG. The judgement must say whether the child's learning and development is:

- best described by the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS (expected)
- not yet at the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS (emerging)

Practitioners must consider the whole of each ELG when making their decision. The most accurate picture of the child's overall embedded learning will come from a holistic view of the descriptor. For further information, refer to the latest EYFS Assessment and Reporting Arrangements: [National curriculum assessments: early years foundation stage - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-assessments-early-years-foundation-stage)

Progress

We measure progress based on how well children are doing compared to their starting points, i.e. the reception baseline. By tracking their attainment along their learning journey, we can ensure that children make at least expected progress over time. Children's learning journeys are a vital part of this picture along with development matters trackers (where the teacher feels this is necessary). Children and parents should be part of this reflective process regularly so that they can recognise their achievements and plan next steps in their learning (AfL).

Target Setting

Targets set for children will be based on their prior assessments to ensure that each child will make at least expected progress over time. This will be based on the child's baseline assessment.

Senior leaders will work with teachers to set targets for the end of each academic year. Targets should be personalised and aspirational. From knowing each child really well, some children will be set targets higher than their prior assessments and so will need to make accelerated progress to meet them.

Working with parents

We see parents and carers as crucial partners within their children's learning journey. They are regularly invited into school to be part of the learning experiences with their children.

Parents and carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development regularly throughout the year. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, and when their individual needs are met. They must have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. All staff working within Early Years are qualified, knowledgeable and experienced, and have regular opportunities for CPD. Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

Transition

Starting school is a big step for children, but we ensure that this transition is full of positive emotions – excitement, confidence and happiness. This happens when children know exactly where they are going, who will be there, what they will be able to do and how long they will be staying. A successful transition means children settle quickly into school, learning and developing from day one. Practitioners welcome a class of children (who they already know very well) and these children are settled, confident and ready to learn. Transition will be successful if:

- practitioners know each child, including their interests and needs;
- the school is able to meet these interests and needs;
- practitioners have formed a relationship with each family;
- children know, and like, the practitioners;
- children are familiar and happy with their new school environment, its routines and expectations;
- children have met and made friends with some of the other children who will be in their class.

As part of transition arrangements, schools will organise the following:

Visits to preschools: Most children attend a preschool setting and practitioners there will know them very well. One way to get to know the new children is to visit them in their preschool and see them operating in an environment that they know, with staff that they trust. In the summer term EYFS staff will visit children in their preschools. During these visits we spend time talking to the key person and looking at any records or learning journeys.

Induction visits to school: This allows the children a chance to explore their new classrooms and to meet some of the staff and children who will be coming to school with them. Practitioners will make observations during these sessions to start building a profile of each child.

Involving parents: We understand that the starting school process can also be daunting for parents. We therefore ensure that communication systems are set up early on to allow parents to feel involved and informed about the events that will take place prior to their child starting school. This may include:

- Letters sent to the children in the post
- Parent mail
- Leaflets shared at the initial parent meeting

- An opportunity to contact the teachers via email or phone so that parents can discuss their child's needs; this is particularly important for parents whose children have additional or medical needs.

Transition into year 1: By the end of Reception, we aim for children to be school ready. This means they will:

- have strong social skills
- can cope emotionally with being separated from their parents
- are relatively independent in their own personal care
- have a curiosity about the world and a desire to learn
- have a firm grounding in the key skills of communication, language, literacy and mathematics.

Careful consideration should always be given to ensure that the transition from foundation to year 1 is a positive experience which provides children with the confidence to thrive in their new environment. Children's emotional development and wellbeing should be planned for, taking into account the opportunities to meet the teacher, how the environment is set up and the design of the year 1 curriculum.

As children transition into year 1, foundation staff need to plan timetables that reflect the changes in routines which they may encounter in key stage 1. Equally, the year 1 team will plan their timetables to reflect the needs of the children. This may include more whole class teaching, creating a good balance between child led play and written work and playtimes.

As part of effective transition, the positive parental partnerships developed in Early Years, must also be maintained. Keeping parents informed through letters and observations of their child can all help to support the transition.

As well as all the above considerations, the definition of 'school readiness' needs to be interpreted and adopted by the school. This definition will include more aspects than the 'good level of development' measure. Staff must work together to share as much information as possible that will enable the teachers and practitioners to prepare children for year 1 and the National Curriculum.

Taken from [Focus Education Ensuring Smooth Transitions](#).

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Governing Body will assess the implementation and effectiveness of this policy. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout our school.

This Policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body on a 3-yearly cycle.

Adherence to the policy will be monitored by the School's Local Committee.

Policy adopted:	Autumn Term 2022
Other related policies:	See Appendix
Next review:	Autumn Term 2025

Appendix. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according the EYFS statutory framework.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy