



POLICY FOR EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

Presented to:
Trustee Standards Meeting
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¹ This is the date the policy was approved by the meeting

² This is the date the policy was reviewed prior to its approval above

³ This is the date as set by the policy review clause or the date approved plus three years

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Policy for Early Years Foundation Stage

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1.0 **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The aims and objectives of the policy are to provide guidance on Early Years Foundation Stage in the Primary phase of the MAT.

2.0 **ADMISSION POLICIES**

2.1 **Nursery Places**

The admissions criteria for any nursery places will be available each year from each school's office (where there is Nursery provision available).

2.2 **Reception Places**

Reception children are admitted in September of each academic year as they approach their fifth birthday. Children may start school on a part-time basis, but they will quickly begin full time education within the first few weeks of September. In exceptional circumstances; it may be appropriate for a child to remain part time beyond this. This decision will be made following discussions with the child's parents / carers, class teacher and senior leaders and will have the child's best interests at the forefront of this decision.

2.3 Criteria for admission to Reception classes follow those decided by Peterborough local authority and the local authority is responsible for implementing these procedures and making final decisions about which children are offered places in one of our Reception classes. A copy of these criteria can be obtained from each school's office.

3.0 **PRINCIPLES**

3.1 The Trust believes that the following principles should apply to the education offered during the Early Years Foundation Stage.

3.2 Effective education requires both an engaging curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum.

3.3 Children are entitled to education that supports and extends knowledge, skills, understanding and confidence, and helps them to overcome any disadvantage.

3.4 Early years' experience should build on what children already know and can do. It should encourage a positive attitude and disposition to learn.

3.5 No child should be excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability.

3.6 Parents / carers and practitioners should work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

3.7 To be effective, an early year's curriculum should be carefully structured.

3.8 Learning must engage the children and include exciting activities planned by adults, which involve direct teaching by the adults. This will be delivered as either a whole class, small group, paired or one to one approach depending on the needs of the learners and the aims of the learning. They should also have access to activities that allow children to apply and extend their newly learnt skills, either independently or with support. Learning opportunities should be practical, hands-on and stimulating. Children need time to become engrossed, work in depth and complete activities. Activities should take place both indoors and outdoors

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in both the class learning zones and throughout the extensive buildings and ground of the School.

- 3.9 Practitioners must be able to observe, whilst directly teaching pupils, and respond appropriately to children without getting side-tracked into spending too much time recording what has been observed. There is an emphasis on adults engaging with the children through careful questioning and discussion and the record keeping of what the adults observe is kept to a minimum in order to maximise their level of interaction with the children. The purpose of on-going observation (assessment for learning) during learning activities is to ensure practitioners are able to extend children's learning during the activity and plan for future learning activities at an appropriate level.
- 3.10 Well-planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process and help them make progress in their learning.

4.0 **CURRICULUM**

- 4.1 Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage will follow a bespoke curriculum based on current research, alongside other year-groups. This means that pupils are able to make a smooth transition at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage as they move into Year 1. In developing the contents of the bespoke curriculum we are mindful to ensure we meet the requirements of the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (Effective from September 2021). The children continue to work towards the Early Learning Goals (which are currently statutory), which describe the expected outcomes by the end of their Reception year.
- 4.2 The Trust believe that all pupils, regardless of their age, are capable of making huge amounts of progress in their learning. We have based this belief on current research that contradicts some aspects of the traditional early -years approach (which is largely based on the findings of the Plowden report from 1967). We strongly believe that no artificial ceilings should be placed on the amount of progress any child can make and therefore have high expectations of what the children can learn via our well-considered approach to early-years education.
- 4.3 The children will be gaining knowledge and skills in the following areas:
- Communication and language
 - Physical development
 - Personal, social and emotional development
 - Literacy
 - Mathematics
 - Understanding the world
 - Expressive arts and design
- 4.4 Children will also be developing life-long skills, which will help them to become effective learners. These are known as 'Characteristics of Effective Learning':
- **Playing and Exploring (Engagement)**
 - **Active Learning (Motivation)**
 - **Creating and Thinking Critically (Thinking)**
- 4.5 Both indoor and outdoor learning environments are exciting and stimulating that encourages a positive attitude to learning. Materials and equipment that reflect both the community are used that the children come from and the wider world. Activities are differentiated in line with

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their own stage of development. Independent learning is encouraged as well as adult-led learning.

- 4.6 We use a creative approach with lots of exciting hands-on experiences that allow the children to widen their knowledge of the world through a multi-sensory approach. Visits are planned that link to our topics and enable the children to further develop their skills and knowledge.

5.0 **Communication and Language**

- 5.1 The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

(Description from The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory framework for group and school-based providers 2024)

6.0 **Physical Development**

- 6.1 Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

(Description from The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory framework for group and school-based providers 2024)

7.0 **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

- 7.1 Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

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8.0 **Literacy**

8.1 It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

(Description from The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory framework for group and school-based providers 2024)

9.0 **Mathematics**

9.1 Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

(Description from The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory framework for group and school-based providers 2024)

10.0 **Understanding the World**

10.1 Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

(Description from The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory framework for group and school-based providers 2024)

11.0 **Expressive Arts and Design**

11.1 The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

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12.0 **ASSESSMENT**

12.1 **Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)**

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception.

The statutory guidance for the administration of the RBA is set out in Annex B. The guidance covers all intakes in reception within an academic year including during autumn, spring and summer terms.

(Description from The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory framework for group and school-based providers 2024)

12.2 **The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)**

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. This includes those children who, by exception, complete the EYFS in an Ofsted or childminder agency registered setting and who are due to start school in year 1 in the following academic year.

The Profile provides parents / carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for year 1. The Profile must reflect practitioners' own knowledge and professional judgement of a child to inform discussions with parents / carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent / carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development must be assessed against the early learning goals. Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile. Year 1 teachers must be given a copy of the Profile report in order to support a successful transition for children into Year 1. The EYFS Profile information should inform Year 1 teachers about each child's learning and development which will assist them in planning the Year 1 curriculum to meet the needs of all children.

Schools must share the results of the Profile with parents / carers and explain to them when and how they can discuss the Profile with the teacher⁴⁴ who completed it.

The Profile must be completed for all children, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Reasonable adjustments to the assessment process for children with SEND must be made as appropriate. Providers should consider whether they may need to seek specialist assistance to help with this. Children will have differing levels of knowledge, skills and abilities across the Profile, and it is important that there is a full assessment of all areas of their development, to inform plans for future activities and to identify any additional support needs.

(Description from The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory framework for group and school-based providers 2024)

Schools must take part in moderation of the EYFS Profile assessments and have procedures in place to quality assure these judgements. This should be a supportive and collaborative process which involves professional discussions around the knowledge and understanding of a child's development. This does not require collecting or recording evidence.

13.0 **PARENTS / CARERS AS PARTNERS**

13.1 We recognise that parents / carers are children's first and most enduring educators. We aim to develop an effective partnership with parents / carers, which involve a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

13.2 All parents / carers are made to feel welcome and encouraged to help their own child.

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13.3 We aim to keep parents / carers fully informed about the curriculum and their child's progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage in a variety of ways, including brochures, letters, displays, social media, parent / carer consultations, end-of-year reports and informal discussion and parental engagement.

14.0 **SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE REQUIREMENTS**

14.1 The safety and welfare of our pupils is paramount. Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) our policies and procedures meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the "The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory framework for group and school-based providers 2024" (Effective from September 2024). Details of the policies and procedures we follow, in order to ensure the safety and well-being of our pupils, can be found by looking at the MAT's policies, which apply to pupils throughout the whole MAT.

15.0 **Date for review**

15.1 The Trust Board will review this policy in line with the procedure for policy review

15.2 If no other reason for review, this policy will be reviewed in three years by the Trustees.

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