

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy



Approved by:	L Jackson (Headteacher)
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1. Aims

This policy aims 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 practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2024 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

3. Structure of the EYFS

EYFS Provision at Eppleton Academy Primary School comprises of a Nursery class – children aged 3 – 4 years and Reception class – children who turn 5 in the current academic year.

Nursery

Children can start Nursery provision in the term after their third birthday, at the start of the Autumn, Spring or Summer term.

All children are entitled to 15 hours free Nursery education: either 5 mornings 8.45am – 11.45am, Monday & Tuesday 8.45am – 3.15pm plus Wednesday 8.45am – 11.45am, or Wednesday 12.15pm – 3.15pm and Thursday & Friday 8.45am – 3.15pm. Parents of children accessing 15 hours are able to pay for extra sessions subject to availability and regular reviews which will be agreed on a half-termly basis.

Some children of working parents are eligible for 15 hours education plus 15 hours childcare if they meet the criteria and have a valid code. Parents of children accessing 30 hours provision must provide a packed lunch or arrange to pay for school lunches. Parents need to reconfirm their eligibility every 3 months and must have a valid code by the end of the month before a new term starts.

Reception children can access wrap around care from 7:30am until 5.30pm in KFC and Nursery children can access 7:30 until 4:15pm. All wrap around care must be booked and paid for in advance.

Changes to hours need to be agreed in advance.

4. Curriculum

Our curriculum aims to provide a language rich environment, a context for the development of language through effective communication and increased vocabulary, improve listening skills, initiate purposeful conversation and promote creative and critical thinking.

It is our intent that all children feel safe and valued. We want all children to become confident and independent learners who can communicate effectively.

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2024 statutory framework of the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 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 4 specific areas:

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

The EYFS Practitioners plan activities to develop the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

- **Playing and Exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'

'Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.'

- **Active Learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

'Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.'

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

'When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.'

4.1 Planning

We believe many children need to be given a starting point to learn new things and find topics are a great way to fire the imagination. The topics are flexible to ensure we also follow the children's interests and information provided by parents. Every half term Practitioners plan the next topic, and book visits and visitors that will enhance the learning where appropriate. Practitioners plan in more detail on a weekly basis using daily notes, observations and interactions with children to inform next steps in the learning journey.

Practitioners plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively.

Practitioners also consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, Practitioners consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies where appropriate.

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

4.2 Teaching

We aim to achieve our curriculum intent by providing high quality teaching and learning in an environment where everyone is cared for, valued and respected. Our curriculum is delivered through practical, playful approach to learning, based on the needs and interests and of our children. It is delivered mainly through topic-based planning using stories as a vehicle for learning. We teach children individually, in small groups, and in whole class groups. Through a combination of adult input, observations and continuous provision opportunities, learning is planned to encourage children to develop their learning independently through exploration and challenge. Our learning environments, both inside and outside, are stimulating and exciting, and are relevant to the needs and age/stage of our children.

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

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities across the day appropriate to the child's age and stage of development. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases, the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible.

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years environment. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them both indoors and outdoors. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our

children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions as well as developing vocabulary. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending play.

As children grow older and move into the reception year, there should be a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning. This will help children to prepare for Year 1

The Learning Environment

The Foundation Stage classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, quiet, creative etc.

Children have access to both inside and outside areas for learning across the day; this has a positive effect on the children's development. Each age group has its own outdoor classroom area. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on a different scale than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. All areas of the curriculum can be explored outside.

5. Assessment

Ongoing (formative) assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners knowing children's level of achievement and interests, and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge. In their interactions with children, practitioners should respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share. Assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement and should not be required to prove this through collection of physical evidence.

At the end of the EYFS, Practitioners 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 then shared with parents and/or carers. Parents will receive an annual written report that offers brief comments on their child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress.

The ELGs should not be used as a curriculum or in any way to limit the wide variety of rich experiences that are crucial to child development. Instead, the ELGs should support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development, and their readiness for year 1.

When forming a judgement about whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, teachers should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. This is sufficient evidence to assess a child's individual level of development in relation to each of the ELGs. Sources of written or photographic evidence are not required, and teachers are not required to record evidence.

The end of year assessments for Reception children will be used to assess if children have gained a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). In order to gain GLD children need to meet ELGs in 5 key areas of the curriculum Communication and Language, PSED, Physical Development, Mathematics and Literacy.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through termly meetings and reports. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. The Class Dojo app is used to share success both at home and school.

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 will support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home and also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate. Parents will be informed of who the key worker is prior to the child attending the setting.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2024) and Keeping Children Safe in Education. The school safeguarding procedures are used in Early Years (see Child Protection Policy). Teachers record safeguarding and welfare concerns using CPOMs.

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff:child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

For our nursery class:

- We have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children

For our reception class:

- We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate within the EYFS setting at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

In line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance Sept 2025, a paediatric first aider will be present when children eat snacks or meals within school.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by providing healthy snacks and drinks for children (fruit/ vegetables/ water or milk)

We also teach children about the importance of having a healthy and balanced lifestyle through Breakout lessons. Children are taught about making healthy choices and how to look after their health and hygiene.

8.Special Educational Needs

Care is taken to assess the needs of each child. Parents are informed from the onset of any concerns and we will work together to ensure each child is given the best support to enable them to access the curriculum and make progress (see SEND policy). The Early Years team work closely with the SENCo, Miss Rowell, to identify early intervention and liaise with outside agencies where necessary.

9.Medical and Dietary Need

If a child has medical needs, information must be gathered prior to the child starting school/ Nursery. Practitioners/ medical trained staff must work with Parents/ Carers to complete Health Care Plans to make plans to best meet the needs of the child. These Health Care Plans need to be updated with any developments/ changes to the child's medical needs as required and must be reviewed annually if no changes need to be made before.

Children with allergies/ intolerances must also have a Health Care plan put in place with consultation with Parents/ Carers. Staff and the school kitchen must be made aware of any intolerances and allergies. The school kitchen will provide a menu suitable for the allergies/ intolerances. Any allergy/ intolerances must be considered for school events and classroom activities.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by Miss Sarah Imrie, EYFS Lead, every year. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See School Health and Safety Policy
Administering medicines policy	See School Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See School Health and Safety Policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Arrivals and Departures Policy

Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See School Complaints policy
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