

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy



Approved by:	L Jackson (Headteacher)
---------------------	-------------------------

Date: July 2026

Approved by:	Governing Body
---------------------	----------------

Date: Ratified July 2026

Last reviewed on:	July 2026
--------------------------	-----------

Next review due by:	July 2027
----------------------------	-----------

Contents

1. Aims	2
2. Legislation	2
3. Structure of the EYFS	2
4. Curriculum	3
5. Assessment	5
6. Working with parents and carers	6
7. Staff	6
8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures	7
9. Monitoring arrangements	12
Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS	13

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a secure foundation for learning, development and 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
- A close working partnership between staff and 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 [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#), effective from 1 September 2025.

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. These classes have separate classrooms and do not operate as a unit.

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, 5 afternoons 12:15- 3:15pm, Monday & Tuesday 8.45am – 3.15pm plus Wednesday 8.45am – 11.45am, or alternatively Wednesday 12.15pm – 3.15pm and Thursday & Friday 8.45am – 3.15pm. Parents/ carers 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. These agreed extra sessions must be paid for in advance.

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/ carers of children accessing 30 hours provision must provide a packed lunch or arrange to pay for school lunches. Parents/ carers 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 (5pm Friday) in KFC and Nursery children can access 7:30 until 4:15pm. All wrap around care must be booked and paid for in advance via Parent Pay.

Changes to hours need to be agreed in advance.

4. Curriculum

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

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that we must teach. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Three areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important 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

We also support the children in 4 specific areas which help strengthen and develop the 3 prime areas, and ignite the children's curiosity and enthusiasm:

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

Our curriculum aims to:

- inspire a love of learning
- build strong foundations for learning
- develop the children's independent learning and thinking
- support cognitive, emotional and physical growth
- promote academic excellence and high expectations to achieve excellent learning outcomes for all
- promote positive links between home, school and community
- inspire children within and beyond the classroom
- develop children's communication and language skills to ensure they become effective confident communicators
- ready children for the next stage of their education and prepare them to be responsible citizens in the world
- encourage children to aim high and reach their full potential

Our EYFS practitioners plan opportunities 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

Our staff ensure learning is ambitious for all children, they plan activities and experiences that are well sequenced and build upon previous learning. Staff consider the individual needs of each child and their stage of development when planning day to day learning.

Where a child may have a special educational need or disability (SEND), staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

Staff reflect upon learning that takes place and plan for next steps, including any additional support or interventions that may need to take place.

We believe a topic-based approach is a great way to spark imagination and make learning engaging for all. When planning, staff consider the children's own interests, making sure to enhance the provision and curriculum to include children's interests throughout the year as they arise.

Every half term teachers plan the next topic, and book visits, visitors and experiences that will enhance the learning where appropriate. Teachers plan in more detail on a weekly basis using daily notes, observations and interactions with children to inform next steps in the learning journey. Daily discussions take place between class teachers and other EY practitioners (Teaching Assistants), working in the EY setting to ensure their observations are taken into consideration when planning for next steps. Practitioners carefully consider the individual needs of the children and their stage of development in order to best support their learning. We know young children all learn differently and at different rates so it is important to consider this when planning our curriculum.

Where a child may have a special educational need or a disability, teachers work closely with our school's SENDCo to consider next steps of actions and whether specialist support is required. Early identification and communication with parents/ carers are crucial to ensure children get the best support to enable them to thrive and reach their full potential. When needed staff will make links with relevant services and other agencies such as Speech and Language, Language and Learning, Educational Psychologists, etc.

4.2 Teaching

Staff make sure that the children experience the 3 key characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring; active learning; and creating and thinking critically. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As the children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more focus on teaching essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning, to help the children prepare for Key Stage 1.

We are committed to providing high quality teaching and learning in our EY environments where everyone is cared for, valued and respected. Our provision includes both inside and outside learning areas which are designed and set up to be stimulating and exciting, and are relevant to the needs and age/stage of our children.

Our curriculum is delivered through practical, playful activities, opportunities and experiences based on the needs and interests of our children. It is delivered mainly through topic-based planning using stories as a vehicle for learning. We teach children in different situations such as one to one basis, in small groups and in whole class situations.

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. The role of the adults in our Early Years is to facilitate and support learning through play. We focus on high quality interactions to ensure adults can extend

children's thinking by modelling language, questioning thinking and challenging ideas to move learning forward.

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. Through their play children have the opportunity 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 foundational skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning to prepare for Year 1.

Our EY provisions 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

At Eppleton Academy, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their progress, development and interests. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also consider observations shared by parents and/or carers and keep them up to date with the child's progress and development. Staff will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals.

Nursery

In Nursery, ongoing daily observations and assessments inform planning and next steps. Progress in learning is shared with parents/ carers through parents evening meetings, stay and play sessions and end of year reports. If staff in Nursery have any concerns about learning and progress this is discussed with parents/ carers at the time of any concerns. Baseline and end of year assessments are recorded for Nursery but teacher assessments each half term, help to inform planning and next steps.

Reception

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the reception baseline assessment (RBA). [The requirements for the RBA are set out in Annex B of EYFS statutory framework]

In the final term of the academic year in which the child reaches age 5, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child (before 30 June in that term). Each child is assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

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. The use of DfE guidance (exemplification materials), EY training, network meetings and moderation allow professional dialogue to support assessment judgements.

We share the EYFS profile with the child's Year 1 teacher. This helps to inform a discussion between reception and year 1 teachers about the child's stage of development and learning needs, and helps with planning activities in year 1.

The school shares the results of each child's EYFS profile with their parents and/or carers.

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. We submit EYFS profile data to the local authority on request.

EY staff use their everyday observations about children's progress to support learning. Assessment should not require excessive paperwork or cause prolonged time spent away from the children, we know adults are best dedicating time to high quality interactions with children.

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.

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's a strong partnership between our staff and each child's parents and/or carers.

We keep parents and/or carers up to date with their child's progress and development. Progress checks and the EYFS profile help to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

In Nursery and Reception, the designated key person is the class teacher. The key worker makes sure that learning and care is tailored to meet the needs of each child. 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.

We ask parents/carers to provide more than 2 emergency contact numbers for their child (where possible).

We invite parents/ carers into school throughout the year to build strong relationships with families. We know that children learn best when school and home work together to focus on learning and progress. This includes parent meetings and workshops which are designed to support parent/ school partnerships. These could include: Phonics, Transition, seasonal themed workshops.

7. Staff

7.1 Staff training

We will:

- Train all staff in safeguarding procedures in line with Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance
- Support all staff to feel supported and confident in implementing our safeguarding policy and procedures
- Renew training every 2 years, or more often when it's needed to help maintain skills; keep up to date with any changes to our safeguarding procedures; or because of any safeguarding concerns
- Outline how training is delivered, and how staff are supported to put it in place, in our child protection and safeguarding policy

Our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will:

- Provide ongoing support, advice and guidance to all staff
- Attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework
- Liaise as needed with local statutory children's services agencies and our local safeguarding partners

7.2 Safer recruitment

When recruiting staff, we will follow the procedures set out in the latest EYFS framework guidance on checking the suitability of new recruits, including:

- Obtaining an enhanced criminal records check and barred list check for every person aged 16 and over including all volunteers who work directly with children
- Obtaining at least 1 written reference for any member of staff (including students and volunteers) before they are recruited. At least 1 reference must be from the applicant's current employer, training provider or education setting and completed by a senior person with appropriate authority.
- Recording information about staff qualifications and identity checks, vetting processes and references

See our safeguarding policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures (can be found on our school website).

7.3 Whistleblowing

We make sure that all staff are aware of our whistleblowing procedures; feel able to raise concerns about any poor or unsafe practice; and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

In the event that a member of staff feels that they need to blow the whistle on misconduct, they should report their concern to the head teacher/ or EYFS Lead. If the concern is about the headteacher/ EYFS Lead or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the chair of the governing board.

See our whistleblowing policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures and more detail on our procedures for handling whistleblowing (this can be found on our school website).

7.3.1 Malicious or vexatious allegations

If an allegation is made in good faith, but investigation finds no wrongdoing, there will be no disciplinary action against the member of staff who raised the concern.

If, however, an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, we will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the person making the allegation.

8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We recognise that 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 safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

All practitioners are alert to any issues of concern in children's lives at home or elsewhere.

See our child protection and safeguarding policy (which can be found on our school website) for more information.

8.1 Responding to allegations or concerns

If we have concerns about children's safety or welfare, we will immediately notify our local authority children's social care team, in line with local reporting procedures. In emergencies, we will also inform the police.

If any allegation is made of serious harm or abuse by anyone living, working or looking after children at the premises or elsewhere, e.g. on a visit, we will inform Ofsted within 14 days of the allegation being made. We will also inform them of any action we have taken in response to the allegation(s).

8.1.1 Investigating the concern

When a concern is received by the headteacher/ EYFS Lead/ governor– referred to from here as the ‘recipient’ – they will:

- Meet with the person raising the concern within a reasonable time. The person raising the concern may be joined by a trade union or professional association representative or other accompanying person
- Get as much detail as possible about the concern at this meeting, and record the information
- Establish whether there is sufficient cause for concern to warrant further investigation. If there is, then:
 - Arrange a further investigation into the matter, involving the governing body if appropriate. In some cases, the recipient may need to bring in an external, independent body to investigate. In others, they may need to report the matter to the police
 - Inform the person who raised the concern about how the matter is being investigated and give an estimated timeframe for when they will be informed of the next steps

8.1.2 Outcome of the investigation

Once the investigation – whether this was just the initial investigation of the concern, or whether further investigation was needed – is complete, the investigating person(s) will prepare a report detailing the findings and confirming whether or not any wrongdoing has occurred.

The report will include any recommendations and details on how the matter can be rectified and whether or not a referral is required to an external organisation, such as the local authority in line with local reporting procedure, or police.

They will inform the person who raised the concern of the outcome of the investigation, though certain details may need to be restricted due to confidentiality.

Beyond the immediate actions, the headteacher, governors and other staff, if necessary, will review the relevant policies and procedures to prevent future occurrences of the same wrongdoing.

While we cannot always guarantee the outcome sought, we will try to deal with concerns fairly and in an appropriate way.

8.2 Staffing ratios

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 children aged 3 and over

Where there is a person with qualified teacher status, early years professional status, or early years teacher status an instructor or another suitably qualified, overseas- trained teacher:

- For classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5 or older within the school year, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 30 children
- For all other classes, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children
- At least 1 other member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification, or has received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status
- Where a person with the above qualifications is not working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 8 children

- At least 1 member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification, or has received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status
- At least half of all other staff hold an approved level 2 qualification

For reception classes

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

8.3 Paediatric first aid (PFA)

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

8.4 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

We also have a DSL who has lead responsibility for safeguarding children. They are also responsible for:

- Liaising with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSPs (local safeguarding partners)
- Providing support, advice and guidance to all other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required
- Attending a safeguarding training course that complies with the criteria set out in annex C of the latest EYFS framework

8.5 Absence

We are required to promptly follow up on absences.

If a child is absent for a prolonged time or if their parents/carers haven't told us about the absence, we will attempt to contact the parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts.

See our attendance policy (can be found on our school website) for more on this, including our expectations of parents/carers to report child absences.

8.6 Oral health and tooth brushing

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweets
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- The importance of good oral hygiene

We follow [government guidance on supervised toothbrushing](#) to make sure that it is evidence-based and safe.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's child protection and safeguarding policy (which can be found on our school website)

8.7 Safer eating

While children are eating, there will always be at least 1 member of staff in the room with a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate (from a course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the latest EYFS framework). All children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating.

Before a child joins our setting, we will get information on their:

- Dietary requirements and preferences
- Food allergies and intolerances
- Health requirements

We will share this information with all staff involved in food preparation and handling. At each mealtime and snack time it will be clear which staff member is responsible for checking that the food meets all the requirements for each child.

We will make sure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis; the differences between allergies and intolerances; and that children can develop allergies at any time, especially during the introduction of solid foods.

We will consult with parents/carers to:

- Create allergy action plans for their child – with the help of health professionals, where appropriate
 - We will also keep this information up to date and share it with all staff
- Discuss their child's progress with solid foods
- Work with them to move on to the next stage at a pace that's right for their child

We will prepare food in a way that:

- Prevents choking
- Meets each child's individual developmental needs
- Is in line with the DfE's [Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance](#)

In the event of a choking incident that requires intervention, we will record details of the incident and make the child's parents/carers aware. We will periodically review the records to identify whether we can change anything in our practice to make eating safer, and then take action as appropriate.

8.8 Accident or injury

We keep a first aid box (which contains appropriate items for children) always accessible.

We keep a written record of accident or injuries and any first aid treatment.

We will inform parents or carers the same day as, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, of any:

- Accident or injury sustained by the child
- First aid treatment given

We will notify the relevant authority of any serious accident, illness, or injury to, or death of any child while in our care and inform them of the action taken, as soon as reasonably practicable.

8.9 Safety of premises

We make sure that our premises, including overall floor space and outdoor space, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children we care for and the activities provided on the premises.

We comply with requirements of health and safety legislation, including fire safety and hygiene requirements.

8.10 Toileting and privacy

We make sure that there are:

- Suitable toileting facilities
- Suitable hygienic nappy changing facilities
- An adequate supply of necessary items such as gloves, wipes, nappy sacks etc.
- Separate toilet facilities for adults

During nappy changes and toileting, we will balance children's privacy with their safeguarding and support needs.

If a child has frequent toileting accidents staff will speak with parents/ carers to discuss any concerns. It may be appropriate for staff to work with parents to develop an intimate care plan to support the toileting needs of the child. This can be found in our intimate care policy (found on our website). The individual intimate care policy is devised with parents and will be reviewed with parents during parents evening appointments and an end of year review will be held.

8.11 Safer Sleeping

In EYFS, we do not have allocated sleep times for children. If a child falls asleep unexpectedly, they will be moved to a safe sleeping area. EYFS staff follow safe sleeping arrangements for children, as stated below:

Safe Sleep Environment

- Children will sleep on a clean, firm sleep mat.
- The sleep area should be quiet, well ventilated, and maintained at a comfortable temperature.
- Sleep spaces should be free from hazards, toys, loose items, cords, and furniture that could pose a risk.
- Child's face should never be covered.
- A blanket can be used but should never cover the child's face or restrict movements of the child.

Continuous Supervision

- A member of staff should remain in or immediately adjacent to the sleeping area.
- Sleeping children must never be left unsupervised.
- Ratios must continue to meet EYFS requirements while children are sleeping.

Regular Welfare Checks

- Visual checks should be carried out frequently.
- 10-minute recorded checks ensure children are safe and well
- Checks should include:
 - Breathing.
 - Skin colour
 - Comfort and temperature
 - Sleeping position

Child Position

For children aged 3-5 years:

- Children may find their own comfortable sleeping position.
- Staff should ensure children are not sleeping in unsafe locations such as sofas, beanbags, or unsuitable furniture.

Health Concerns

- If a child falls asleep unusually, appears lethargic, or is difficult to wake, parents will be contacted and the child may need to go home if they are unwell.
- Staff will follow the school's first-aid and safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.

Children with Additional Needs

- Individual healthcare plans should identify any specific sleep requirements.
- Adjustments should be made in consultation with parents and relevant health professionals.

8.12 Screen use

We have regard to the DfE's [help for early years providers: screen use](#) guidance when making decisions about how and when children use screens in our setting. Screens are used to support learning but are not used extensively or to excess. We have considered when and why screens should be used to limit their use and to promote hands on practical learning instead.

8.13 Organising premises for confidentiality and safeguarding

We ensure that:

- There is an area where staff may talk to parents and/or carers confidentially
- There is an area for staff to take breaks away from areas being used by children
- Children are only released into the care of individuals of whom the parent and/or carer has explicitly notified us
- Children do not leave our premises unsupervised

We take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised persons entering our premises and have an agreed procedure for checking the identity of visitors.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by 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

See our school policies for this information

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See school 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 school Child Protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent/carer failing to collect a child and for missing children	See school Child Protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See the Complaints Policy