

## EYFS POLICY

THIS POLICY IS REVIEWED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS

**Policy reviewed by:** Viv Thompson - Director of Education and Safeguarding

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**Version:** v9.0

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Next review date: June 2027

**Reviewer's Signature:** 

Please note: 'School' refers to Chatsworth Schools; 'parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

This policy specifically applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

**POLICY AMENDMENT PAGE**

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The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their Reception year.

Aim for the Early Years Foundation Stage are to provide:

- quality and consistency across the setting, so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind.
- a secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly.
- partnership working between teachers/ practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

We adhere to the current EYFS (updated version from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2026) specific requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare (inclusive of all updates relating to safeguarding, learning and development, inclusion and welfare.)

The **Learning and Development** cover:

- the areas of learning and development inform the activities and experiences for our children.
- the early learning goals that children work towards (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five)
- assessment arrangements for measuring progress (and requirements for reporting to parents and/or carers)

The **Safeguarding and Welfare** provision covers the necessary steps we take to keep children safe and promote their welfare. The EYFS children are included in our Attendance Policy and prolonged periods of or unexpected absence should be monitored accordingly.

**Our Curriculum** enables every child to make successful progress and fosters a lifelong love of learning. We offer a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities, supporting discovery, exploration and progression to the next stage. Our provision is play-based, enriched with structured opportunities to build spoken language and oracy skills, in line with the enhanced focus from the 2025 framework. Children are supported to develop communication, collaboration, and critical thinking through talk-rich group activities, storytelling, and structured conversation opportunities.

We plan an enabling environment with stimulating, accessible, open-ended resources that encourage children to explore, make choices, and develop a positive 'can-do' attitude. Staff use sensitive interactions, observation and open-ended questioning to extend children's thinking and deepen their learning.

We observe the **four guiding principles** that shape practice our practice.

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their

learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

- importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates and in different ways, with careful consideration for children with SEND and those with English as an additional language.

The curriculum of the Early Years Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by promoting and developing three prime and four specific areas (see detail below)

In addition, we actively support children's **digital literacy** through safe, age-appropriate opportunities to engage with digital technologies, as described in the Media Literacy Framework for Under 5s (2025).

## Characteristics of Effective Learning

### Playing and Exploring - Active Learning - Creating and Thinking Critically

These characteristics are promoted through planned activities, supported play, and a language-rich environment.

### Inclusion

Every child receives quality first teaching, with appropriate differentiation and adaptations. Reasonable adjustments are made to meet the needs of children with SEND, including adjustments to the sensory environment, routines, and regulation strategies in line with the SEND Code of Practice 2025. Additional interventions are planned collaboratively with the SENDCo, teachers and teaching assistants.

The needs of children with English as an additional language are met through targeted language support and culturally relevant resources.

### Assessment & Record Keeping

Assessment is rigorous and continuous. We maintain individual profiles using **Blossom** with a clear tracking system at both individual and class level, monitored at least termly. Baseline assessments are completed within the first three weeks of a child starting, capturing their starting points and needs.

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

A minimum of two progress meetings per year are offered to parents, with written reports issued in line with the EYFS 2025 framework. Parents are invited to contribute their observations and feedback to their child's profile. Each child's profile is transferred to their next stage of education to support smooth transitions.

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 place an emphasis on the bond of a key person

with a child and their family in the EYFS (the Key Person in a school Reception Class will usually be the class teacher).

Although all staff support every child, in line with the EYFS, each child is assigned a key person who helps to make sure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. 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. In their absence a familiar person will take their place and liaise with the Key Person on their return. The Key Person should play a central part in the transitions across the EYFS and into KS1 to ensure added support for those who may struggle and to consolidate the handover to future practitioners/teachers.

### **Key Person responsibilities include;**

- Introducing a new child to their room/ classroom and making them feel special and comfortable in their surroundings & liaising with parents and carers about the child's individual needs and routines
- Developing a secure and trusting relationship with each child, and their family, greeting and settling on arrival and ensuring that any messages are recorded or passed on to relevant staff or the office
- Taking to the toilet, changing clothes and any other personal needs where practical and encouraging independence and good health and hygiene practice
- Comforting children when distressed or in need of support and sharing any particular needs with fellow staff
- Maintaining developmental records and observations and ensuring that observational needs are integrated into the classroom programme in conjunction with staff team

### **Safeguarding and Welfare**

We follow the latest safeguarding requirements in the EYFS framework, including:

- Maintaining a named online safety lead for the EYFS setting
- Evidencing staff training on child-on-child abuse in early years
- Outlining strategies for teaching online safety within the EYFS curriculum
- Promoting positive behaviour and ensuring the safeguarding of all children, including robust safer recruitment procedures.

All staff complete annual safeguarding training, including online safety and child-on-child abuse awareness, in line with the current KCSIE.

### **Safer Eating**

During EYFS eating times a member of PFA qualified staff must always be present. Information around allergies and intolerances should be gathered on entry and periodically checked, staff should know that these can arise at any point in a child's development and be aware of the treatment for an allergic reaction.

Children should always be within sight and hearing whilst eating, with staff facing the children as they eat in case of choking and to prevent food sharing (any incidences of choking that requires intervention should be reported to parents and carers.)

### **Safer Sleeping Guidance – Mandatory from September 2026 for children under 3 years of age**

If your school/setting has children under 2 a safer sleep space for babies and children must be provided, ensuring that

- babies 12 months and under must only be placed to sleep in a cot
- children are placed down on their back in their own separate sleep space on a clear, flat, firm surface such as a cot, bed or suitable mattress on the floor.
- sleep spaces should only contain a firm, flat, waterproof mattress and lightweight bedding which is firmly tucked in around the child no higher than their shoulders to prevent head covering
- where blankets are used, the baby should be placed feet-to-foot at the bottom of the cot, with blankets tucked in
- cots must not contain extra items such as toys, pillows, loose bedding, bumpers, wedges or straps
- children should not get too hot or cold - the recommended room temperature for babies (those aged 12 months and under) is 16 – 20°C.
- children's heads are not covered
- babies under six months of age must always have an adult with them in the same room for every sleep - all babies and children must be frequently checked when they are sleeping
- children are always within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping
- Evidence suggests that babies (those aged 12 months and under) are at a higher risk of SIDS if they have their heads covered. Some items added to their sleep space may increase the risk of SIDS and unnecessary items, such as cot bumpers and toys, can also increase the risk of accidents. Sleep comforters may be used for babies and children aged over 12 months only.
- A baby monitor can be used for children over six months of age, and you must ensure it allows children to be seen and heard at all times.

To check if a baby or child is too hot or cold, feel their chest or the back of their neck (hands and feet will usually be cooler, which is normal). If their skin feels clammy or sweaty, remove one or more layers of clothing or bedding. You should use your professional judgement during extreme temperatures.

Once babies can move from their back to their front and back again by themselves, they can find their own sleeping position. However, continue to place them on their back to sleep.

For children over two ensure a safe sleep space is provided, blankets are tucked in where used and toys/ comforters only used when absolutely necessary. All children should be settled lying on their back but if they turn in their sleep may be left.

Children should be checked regularly and a monitor may be used if it has video and sound – children should always be in sight and sound of an adult.

Additional information

<https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/safer-sleep>

**Resources** We provide a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that is exciting, stimulating and encourages lifelong learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community and the wider world and encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer. The profiles and photographs or videos reflect the children's individual learning.

## Prime Areas of Learning

**Personal, Social and Emotional Development** This area 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 9 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.

With our modelling and guidance, our children will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and managing personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to behave socially, make good friendships, co-operate, and resolve conflicts effectively. These skills will provide a solid foundation on which children can build and achieve at 'big' school and in later education and life.

**Physical Development** This is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy, and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop at stages throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination, and positional awareness. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, we support our 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. We offer repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with support as needed, to allow children to develop proficiency, control, and confidence.

**Communication and Language** The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's interactions are a strong focus as they form the foundations for language and cognitive development, and we promote a language rich environment with plenty of adult role modelling and commentary.

We read frequently to children, engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes, and poems, as well as providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts. Through conversation, storytelling and role play, children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teachers, enhanced by sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

## Specific Areas of Learning

**Literacy** We want our children to develop a life-long love of reading, both through language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension begins in the very young and develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (fiction & non-fiction) they read with them, and learning and using rhymes, poems and songs. We develop skilled word reading via decoding and recognition of familiar printed words. We develop writing through spelling, handwriting and articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing.

**Mathematics** We support our children to develop a solid foundation in number to support the development of the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically later on.

We want them to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. We provide frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using a variety of objects, for organising counting to develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary on which mastery of mathematics will be based. Our curriculum includes opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that our children develop positive attitudes and interests in Maths, looking for patterns and relationships, spotting connections, 'having a go', talking to staff and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

**Understanding the World** We guide our children to make sense of their physical world and their immediate and wider communities by offering a breadth of personal experiences, increasing their knowledge and sense of the world around them – this will include a range of visits & trips as well as visitors across each academic year. 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.

**Expressive Arts and Design** The development of our children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. We ensure 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 vital for developing 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.

## **The Early Learning Goals and Progress**

Staff use professional judgement, supported by written and photographic evidence, to assess whether children have reached expected levels at the end of the EYFS. Staff plan opportunities that build on children's interests, motivate and challenge them, and meet their individual needs.

Progress is carefully tracked and adapted for children with EAL or SEND, with planned interventions where required.

**Interpretation** In this policy, the term "senior manager" means the School Head, EYFS Lead and any

designated deputies.

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