



# **Early Years Foundation Stage (Under 5s) Policy**

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## 1. Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage covers children's first year of Primary School. Children start in the Reception Unit generally between the ages of 48 and 60 months and receive provision that matches their stage of development.

## 2. 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
- 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

## 3. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) that applies from September 2021.

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 4. What is our Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum?

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework in force from September 2021.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. These are further divided into Early Learning Goals (ELG) which are used to help assess the children's progress and attainment at the end of EYFS. 3 areas are known as the **prime areas** and are particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. 4 areas are known as the **specific areas** and are the building blocks for foundation subjects as they progress through their educational journey.

### 4.1. Communication and Language (prime area)

- ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding
  - Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions.

- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.
- ELG: Speaking
  - Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.
  - Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate.

#### **4.2. Personal, Social and Emotional Development (prime area)**

- ELG: Self-Regulation
  - Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.
  - Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate.
  - Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.
- ELG: Managing Self
  - Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge.
  - Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.
  - Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.
- ELG: Building relationships
  - Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others
  - Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers.
  - Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

#### **4.3. Physical Development (prime area)**

- ELG: Gross Motor Skills
  - Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others.

- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing.
- Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.
- ELG: Fine Motor Skills
  - Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using a tripod grip in almost all cases.
  - Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery to achieve small motor goals.
  - Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

#### **4.4. Literacy** (specific area)

- ELG: Comprehension
  - Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.
  - Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories.
  - Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.
- ELG: Word Reading
  - Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs.
  - Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending.
  - Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.
- ELG: Writing
  - Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed
  - Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with letter of letters
  - Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others

#### **4.5. Mathematics** (specific area)

- ELG: Number
  - Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number
  - Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5.

- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

- ELG: Numerical Patterns

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity.

#### **4.6. Understanding of the world (specific area)**

- ELG: Past and Present

- Talk about the lives of the people around then and their roles in society
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

- ELG: People, Culture and Communities

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps.
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.

- ELG: The Natural World

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants.
- Know the similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

#### **4.7. Expressive Arts and Design (specific area)**

- ELG: Creating with Materials

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.

- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used.
- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.
- ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive
  - Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher.
  - Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs.
  - Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music.

#### 4.8. Characteristics of effective learning

When planning, practitioners must reflect on the different ways children learn and reflect these in their practise. The Characteristics of Effective Learning describe factors that play a central role in a child's learning. They are vital elements of support, that run through and underpin all areas of learning and development. They are processes not outcomes.

Reporting to parents at the end of the year includes a paragraph explaining how the child demonstrates:

- 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; and
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

These drive how the curriculum is planned and delivered in Longthorpe Reception Unit.

## 5. Guiding Principles

The three guiding principles that shape practise in our early years setting:

- **A unique child:** The play-based approach enables each child to flourish and develop resilience, capability, confidence and self-assurance.
- **Positive Relationships:** Relationships are built through a range of strategies, including staggered entry allowing smaller group interaction, home visits enabling crucial one to one discussion, shared parent observation forms ensuring that the parental voice contributes as a co-contributor.
- **Enabling Environments:** The Longthorpe Reception environment supports and extends children's development and learning. All resources are child friendly (labelled

at their height and accessible through choice) and are enhanced every fortnight with a view to extending and motivating children's learning.

## 6. Learning and Development:

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected. Adult-led 'Nurture' (PSE) groups, Voice 21 discussion groups, Reading, Writing, Maths and Understanding of the World sessions are differentiated so that all children are supported and challenged. A fortnightly overarching theme in the unit enables examples of inter-connections to be made explicitly and supported

These areas are equally important, connected and underpinned by the Principles of the EYFS. This prepares them for the National Curriculum as and when they are ready. All planning starts with observing children in order to understand their current interests, development and learning stage and to identify next steps. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

A variety of sessions are planned for, including individual, small, large group and class activities, with a balance of adult led activities and those which are child initiated. The ultimate aim of all planning is to challenge children's thinking and to build on prior knowledge and skills.

Pupils are motivated by a range of stimuli, themes, books and resources, such as real role play resources e.g. real crockery, cutlery, cooking equipment, tins / packets etc, current ICT equipment, purposeful tasks, natural resources e.g. real honeycomb, wasps' nests, photos, pictures, videos, visits, visitors. We make changes over time to reflect changing interests. Children are encouraged to contribute to resources by making their own and bringing their own into school, enabling them to take ownership of their environment. A few times a year they help to choose the theme for learning.

Adult-led sessions are planned to be pacy and engaging, with small groups of children where possible.

**Special Educational Needs :** Children who are identified as having Special Educational Needs may have been identified in their pre-school setting and multi-agencies may be involved in writing an Education Health and Care plan (EHC). Appropriate provision is made and liaison takes place with outside agencies as necessary. When notified, children with Special Educational Needs may be visited in their Early Years setting prior to school entry. There may be the need to liaise with the school SENCo and other possible multi-agency professionals and their entry altered to meet their needs. Children will be assessed on entry to school (baseline assessment) and other needs may be identified and a one-page pupil profile' may be written which will be reviewed termly.

**Adults Other than Teachers:** Young children need a lot of individual attention and all the adults who work in the Reception Unit have an important role to play in the Foundation Stage Curriculum. The Teaching Assistants have specific training in understanding the EYFS and needs of Reception children. Adult to child ratios are ideally 1:15 in school.



## 7. Working with Parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. Parents are encouraged to participate actively in their children's education at home and school and we greatly value our partnership with them. The school holds sessions inviting parents and carers in to share methods and strategies for developing key skills or virtual meetings due to Covid.

## 8. Assessment and Record Keeping

At Longthorpe School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

On entry to school, information from pre-school settings is used (from Summary 2s), together with information shared with us by parents on the Autumn term play session and home/school visit. The information is used to help children settle into school quickly and to start to identify which stage each child has reached and the required next steps.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the **Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)**.

It assesses the children's ability in:

- Language, communication and literacy
- Mathematics

This is not reported to parents but a summary is shared during the first parent-teacher meeting.

Assessment is ongoing and at the **end of the EYFS**, staff 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.

*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. Multiple sources of written or photographic evidence are not required and teachers should not record unnecessary evidence.*

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage March 2021)

The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child and Year 1 staff at the end of the year.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other schools within the PKAT MAT, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

## 9. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- Using the NSPCC Talk PANTS strategy to help keep children safe from sexual abuse. The Pantosaurus character and song leads to discussions to help children understand that their body belongs to them, and they should tell someone they trust if anything makes them feel upset or worried.
- In the Spring term, we follow statutory guidance for safety around supervised tooth brushing.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

**Equal Opportunities:** All children have equal access to the curriculum regardless of ability, prior attainment, race, additional needs, disability, gender and religion.

## 10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the EYFS Lead every 3 years. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

## **11. Other information**

### **11.1. Pre School Liaison**

We aim to make good pre-school liaisons and develop positive attitudes towards coming to school by:

- Encouraging parents to visit the school before registering their child.
- Contacting parents by letter informing them of the induction process, including the play sessions.
- Inviting parents to a new parents' induction evening.
- Language Support staff being available to support the induction process if required.
- Teachers visiting playgroups and preschools, where possible.
- Children visiting, with parents, the current Reception class.
- Visits with individual children at home or over the phone.

### **11.2. Information Packs**

Parents are given an information pack which typically includes:

- Invitation to Reception Unit play sessions
- School Information Booklet
- Pupil Admission and Contact Form
- Healthcare leaflet
- School nurse information
- School meals information
- School uniform ordering information
- Dates and times of child's entry to school
- Application information for milk
- Starting school article

### **11.3. Class Allocation**

The Reception children are divided into two 'equal sized' registration groups. A balance of gender, ethnicity, special educational needs and siblings in school are taken into account when compiling the groups. These classes are fluid and there is movement between the two so that there is a balance between ability, the dynamics of personalities and likes and behaviour. At some point in the year, classes become more fixed when the as the children and teachers will move between the two classes as the year progresses.

#### **11.4. Part-time Start**

At the beginning of the Autumn Term the classes are split into two part-time sessions with the eldest children attending in the afternoon. They then progress quickly to full-time attendance. Legally, children can attend school part-time until the term of their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday, however experience has shown this can be detrimental to their attainment, social development and progress.

#### **11.5. Literacy Meeting**

During the Autumn term parents are invited to an informal meeting at school to discuss the early stages of literacy and the contribution they can make as co-educators. The teaching of reading, in particular, is regarded as a partnership between home and school, with parents playing a crucial role. A further meeting at the beginning of the Spring term discusses the importance of reading and how parents can support at home.

#### **11.6. Parent-Teacher Meeting**

Parents are invited into school to discuss their child's progress before the end of the Autumn Term. This is also an opportunity to discuss how their child has settled into school.

#### **11.7. Homework Policy for Reception Children**

Homework is considered an important partnership between the child, home, family and the school.

Sharing books forms an important feature of homework at all stages of a child's development.

In Reception children are encouraged to take home books to be shared in partnership with an adult at home. They are encouraged to supplement this with their own books from home. Provision is available for those parents who require additional support with this such as enrolment with the local library, signposted to on-line books and supplemented with additional books from school. Reading books shared at home are changed weekly.

We recommend that all children in Reception are read to at home. Current research states that there are significant gains to a child's vocabulary when they are read to EVERY night at home. Some benefits reading to children include:

- Supported cognitive development
- Improved language skills
- Preparation for academic success
- Developing a special bond with your child
- Increased concentration and discipline
- Improved imagination and creativity
- Cultivating a lifelong love of reading

Phonics teaching begins when children start full time, with new sounds (phonemes), writing the letters (graphemes) and tricky words introduced each week. Children are encouraged to practise these on a daily basis. Teatime talk is sent home every week informing parents of what the children have learnt during the week with advice on how to support their child's learning. Tutorials are uploaded onto Tapestry and parents are (Pre-covid) invited in on predetermined days to see phonics teaching in the class. As covid restriction ease pre-covid arrangement will resume.

Parents are encouraged to upload observations onto Tapestry. These provide an invaluable opportunity for parents/carers to contribute to their child's profile by informing us of their child's learning experiences outside of school. Parent observations contribute to the child's overall EYFS profile.

Children are encouraged to find information at home and to bring in things to discuss as part of their topic work. At all stages if a child shows particular enthusiasm for some aspect of school work then we hope that parents will encourage such enthusiasm in appropriate ways at home. The school also feels that, at the Reception stage in particular, children benefit from imaginative, creative play activities with other children to encourage the development of social skills.

### **11.8. Tapestry on-line Journal**

The Tapestry online learning journal is an easy-to-use, secure app, meaning of capturing key learning moments, and videoing milestones. Tapestry builds a very special record of a child's experiences, development and learning journey through their early years and primary education. Using photos, videos and diary entries, a teacher or early years practitioner, along with the child's parents, 'weaves' the story of the child and how they are growing and developing. All information held in the platform is stored securely, and can be downloaded and shared as required. Parents are able to view online their child's progress and how much fun they're having, whilst also uploading their own comments and media.

The communication between staff and parents helps to build a shared understanding of how every child can reach their full potential, from the beginning of reception and into Year 1 and Year 2. All parents are encouraged to log on and shown how to use and upload media at the beginning of their child's entry into reception. Observations and comments by reception staff will be uploaded in a two weekly cycle.

12. **Appendix 1 – Related Statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS**

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 medicines policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Fire 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