

# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



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**Responsible Directorate**

Education

# Our Trust

*These four critical questions make it clear who we are and what we do.  
We ask ourselves these questions to guide our work and our improvement.*

## Why do we exist?

To **transform life chances** by achieving the highest possible standards and preparing all our students to lead successful lives.

## How do we behave?

- **Hard work**  
*We are determined to see things through to the end and are resilient when faced with challenges.*
- **Integrity**  
*We do the right thing because it is the right thing to do.*
- **Teamwork**  
*We work together to help everyone succeed.*

## What do we do?

- 1.1 We educate, safeguard and champion all our learners.
- 1.2 We set high standards for ourselves and our learners.
- 1.3 We build the powerful knowledge and cultural capital which stimulate social mobility and lifelong learning.

## How will we succeed?

- 1 | Aligned autonomy
- 2 | Keeping it simple
- 3 | Talent development

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# Statement of Intent

It is our core responsibility to ensure that students have access to the very best education possible. One of the most fundamental and influential aspects of a child's education is the curriculum that they have access to. The power of curriculum is immense. It has the power to not only transform an individual, but to also transform whole communities and shape their understanding of the world and their place in it. Therefore, it is imperative that the curriculum on offer within our academies is truly world class and gives students access to powerful knowledge that takes them far beyond what their own individual experience ever could. To achieve this, we must ensure we expose all students to *the best that has been thought and said and engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement*. To truly transform lives, we must not only show students what is possible but inspire and instil the confidence in them to go out and do it.

All learners in our academies will experience a curriculum that:

1. Is **ambitious** and **enjoyable** through knowledge and skills developed from Foundation Stage to Post 16 and adult provision.
2. Is **knowledge rich**, ensuring access to a wide, global cultural capital – thus maximising lifetime opportunities.
3. Is **inclusive**, nurturing and tailored towards the needs of the individual.
4. Is focused on developing the very best **oracy, literacy, numeracy, and digital** skills – enabling access to the widest learning and the very best careers possible to ensure we develop global citizens.
5. Is **enriching**, ensuring all experience a rich variety of cultural, artistic, and sporting activities.
6. Is **broad** in terms of coverage and (at least) encompassing the breadth of the 2014 English National Curriculum.
7. Celebrates the uniqueness of each educational setting in terms of **localised knowledge and skills**.
8. **Develops** character, personal pride, and the highest moral standards.
9. Celebrates **diversity**, challenges **injustice**, promotes **equality** and encourages the creation of a better world.
10. Is delivered by well-qualified, forward-thinking, skilled, passionate **professionals**.

## 1 | Legal Framework and Definitions

1.1 This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to:

- The *Education and Inspections Act* (2006)
- The *Health Act* (2006)
- The *Equality Act* (2010)
- The *Education Act* (2011)
- The *Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations* (2014)
- The *Immigration Act* (2016)
- The *General Data Protection Regulation* (GDPR)

- The *Data Protection Act* (2018)
- *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* (DfE, 2024)

1.2 This policy also has due regard to DfE/Ofsted guidance and other Early Years experts, including, but not limited to, the following:

- *The Early Years: Foundations of Life, Health and Learning* (Dame Tickell, 2011)
- *Development Matters* (DfE, 2020)
- *Early Years Outcomes* (DfE, 2013)
- *Bold Beginnings* (Ofsted, 2017)
- *Working with the Revised Early Years Foundation Stage: Principles into Practice* (Julian Grenier, 2020)
- *Ofsted Research Reviews: The Best Start in Life* (DfE, 2023)

## 2 | Scope of this Policy

2.1 This policy applies to all academy leaders, academy staff and academy learners.

2.2 For the purposes of this policy, references to *children* includes all learners in our academies.

2.3 For a glossary of the terms used in this policy refer to [Appendix 1](#).

## 3 | EYFS Principles

3.1 The EYFS curriculum underpins all future learning by promoting and developing:

- Communication and Language
- Physical development
- Personal, social, and emotional development
- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design.

3.2 Our academies weave the Early Years' seven key features of effective practice into our daily practice promoting:

- The best for every child
- High quality care
- The curriculum: what we want children to learn
- Pedagogy: helping children to learn
- Assessment: checking what children have learnt
- Self-regulation and executive function
- Partnerships with parents

## 4 | Teaching and Learning

**4.1** Research states that there is no way or style that has more impact than another to enable outstanding outcomes. As academies, we believe that high quality play and interactions between adults and children should be all encompassing and fully focussed on achieving excellent outcomes for our youngest children.

**4.2** The features defined in the policy on teaching and learning apply to the Foundation Stage in the same way as Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

**4.3** Good practice within the Foundation Stage begins with:

- The partnership between teachers and parents/carers to help our children to feel secure within the academy and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- Highly skilled practitioners that have the knowledge of how children develop and learn, and how to reflect this within their teaching.
- A range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make timely interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk and other means of communication.
- A skilfully planned progressive and ambitious curriculum that helps children achieve their best.
- High quality provision that builds upon, extends children's interests, and develops their intellectual, physical, social, and emotional abilities.
- A communication rich environment where children are encouraged to talk about their learning, develop independence, resilience, and self-management.
- High quality experiences to develop early reading skills including daily exposure to stories and high-quality systematic phonics.
- A sharp focus on the needs of individual children using a range of evidence. This looks at children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents and carers and acted upon to support the children in developing new skills and knowledge.
- The regular identification of training needs linked to appraisals and the children's needs for all adults working in the Foundation Stage
- Preparing children for the next stage of their education.

## 5 | Play at the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 5.1 Through play, children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up their ideas, learn how to process and manage feelings and begin to understand the need for rules, sharing and structures. They can communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. All these skills form the firm foundations for future learning.

## 6 | Inclusion at the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 6.1 The children are at the centre of every decision that we make. Children make the best progress when they feel happy and safe, and their individual needs are met within all aspects of their learning.

- 6.2 Within Early Years, we set individual, ambitious targets for each child based on a wide range of information. These are shared with parents and reviewed on a regular basis. Detailed analysis takes place by highly skilled professionals that plan next steps for individual children. These are communicated with parents so that support can be given through fun activities at home.

- 6.3 Our academies meet the needs of all children through:
- Focusing upon supporting and developing communication and language skills with all our children through exposure to high quality texts and interactions with adults and peers.
  - Planning engaging opportunities that build upon and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
  - Using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs.
  - Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively.
  - Offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued.
  - Planning challenging activities for all children that develop their skills across all areas of the Early Years curriculum and in preparation for year 1 and beyond.
  - Monitoring children's progress and providing support, as necessary. This can be done within the academy or by seeking advice from external agencies. If additional support is needed, parents will be invited into the academy to agree what support is needed.
  - Having flexible arrangements linked to a phased induction and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances. There is flexibility in the first 2 weeks of the year to support transition. Anything beyond this will need to be discussed with the Principal, Trust Early Years Lead and Director of Primary Education.

## 7 | The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

- 7.1 Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the seven areas of learning outlined in the *Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2021)* (Communication and Language, Physical Development, Personal, Emotional and Social Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts and Design). Children’s learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skills across multiple learning areas.
- 7.2 Within reception year, our children have a daily mathematics, literacy, and phonics session to help prepare them for year 1. Several transition events take place between Early Years and KS1.
- 7.3 Long, medium, and short-term planning is completed regularly, building upon the assessment information from practitioners within the setting. This identifies the intended learning outcomes, for all children. When planning activities, childrens’ interest and individual needs form the starting point.
- 7.4 Outdoor learning is an essential part of the Early Years curriculum and helps children to develop gross and fine motor skills that form the basis of future learning. Children will be outside learning in all weathers.

## 8 | Assessment

- 8.1 We make regular diagnostic assessments of children’s learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observations which involves adults within the Early Years and parent observations from home. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement although this will not interfere with adult’s interaction with children. Academies may also use other assessment tools such as FFT, Tapestry or Evidence me.
- 8.2 During the first month in Nursery and Reception classes, the teacher assesses the ability of each child. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, ensuring that planning is adjusted to meet the needs of individuals and groups of children. We share the information contained in the Foundation Stage profile at our parental consultation meetings. Children in Reception will take part in the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) which is a national assessment for early mathematics, literacy, communication, and language carried out by academy staff. This must be completed in the first six weeks of Reception. Further information can be found here:  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/983889/Reception\\_baseline\\_assessment\\_and\\_reporting\\_arrangements\\_v1.0.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/983889/Reception_baseline_assessment_and_reporting_arrangements_v1.0.pdf)



- 8.3 Progress from the academy's internal baseline is evaluated using a wide range of assessment information collected through teaching and learning activities. Discussions around children's progress take place formally at least three times a year (see assessment cycle in [Appendix 1](#)).
- 8.4 In the final term of reception, an overall summary of these assessments is sent to the Local Authority for analysis. This identifies if children have achieved the good level of development (GLD) expected at the end of Reception. This also includes a summary of a child's characteristics for effective learning as detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Development Matters document.
- 8.5 This information is then sent to the child's next teacher to use to make plans for the year ahead as well as the summary of each child's characteristics of effective learning. This information is also shared at parental consultation meetings or as part of children's end of year report.
- 8.6 Each teacher keeps a learning journey for each child which takes the form of a book and/or an electronic system. This captures children's significant and memorable moments that demonstrate progress. These are shared with parents on a regular basis, usually at parent consultations. Parents are actively encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey, ensuring that achievements both in and out of the academy are captured.
- 8.7 Parents and carers receive an annual report that comments on their child's progress in each area of learning and a summary of the characteristics of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and areas for development. These are completed in the summer term and sent to parents and carers prior to the end of the academic year. For children within Reception, information sent to the local authority for end of year data will also be given to parents as part of their end of year report.

## 9 | The Role of Parents and Carers

- 9.1 Parents and carers have an important role to play in the education of their child. A collaborative and positive relationship is essential in providing a child with a positive educational experience. We aim to ensure this relationship by:
- Talking to parents and carers about their child before starting at the academy. This could take the form of home visits or transition visits within the academy.

- Providing opportunities to the children to spend time with their teacher before starting at the academy.
- Inviting all parents and carers to an induction meeting before their child starts at the academy.
- Offering parents and carers regular information on how to support their child's learning at home and contribute to their assessment.
- Encouraging parents and carers to talk to their child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- Offering a range of activities, throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, academy, and parents/carers.
- Providing various activities that involve parents and carers. These could take the form of parent learning mornings, parent workshops or providing home learning that can be completed with the child.

9.2 There is a formal meeting for parents and carers at least once a term, at which the parents/carers discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents and carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each academy year.

## 10 | Safeguarding

10.1 Safeguarding children is essential within our academies and holds the highest priority. Clear policies and procedures are in place to ensure that children are safeguarded at all times. If there are any concerns in relation to safeguarding, these are reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead within the academy.

10.2 The EYFS Leader must hold at least a Level 3 qualification with all other staff holding a Level 2 or equivalent qualification.

10.3 Staff within Early Years must hold a valid paediatric first aid qualification to be included within ratios. The qualification must include an element of face-to-face assessment to validate the training.

10.4 A key worker system may be used in the academy, providing the child and parents with a main point of contact. All staff within the academy work hard to ensure that all children are happy and feel safe. Concerns can be discussed with any member of staff.

# Appendix 1- Primary Assessment Cycle

