Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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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.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Shepherdswell CEP School, we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Shepherdswell CEP School, children are admitted to reception in the September following their fourth birthday.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2025 EYFS statutory framework.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

At Shepherdswell CEP School, we are passionate and dedicated to the principle of all our children becoming wellbeing warriors, courageous adventurers and lifelong learners. That journey begins within our EYFS classroom, where we aim to develop a lifelong love of learning and strive for all our children to reach their full potential, regardless of social experiences.

Our EYFS curriculum has been designed with our school values at the heart of everyday practice:

LOVE, GRATITUDE, DETERMINATION, JUSTICE

Children are encouraged to succeed through collaborative and co-operative learning principles, through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning experiences. As such, there is a strong emphasis on the Prime Areas of Learning: Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication and Language, including Oracy.

We provide a carefully planned and engaging curriculum that maximises opportunities for meaningful, cross-curricular learning experiences. This provides our children with the knowledge and skills to prepare them for each stage in their learning journey.

As part of our early year's curriculum, our children access forest school on a weekly basis allowing them to explore and connect with the world around them as well as supporting our key values as a school.

4.1 Planning

Each half term, EYFS staff draw inspiration from the seasons, key events, celebrations and the children's interests to inspire our children to discover and learn about the world around them, whilst still allowing for children to follow their ideas and put these into practice. On a weekly basis staff send home a phonics newsletter in line with a school scheme. Staff introduce new vocabulary to the children through the drawing club programme.

Our children learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities which have been carefully planned to ensure all children's needs are met.

Continuous provision not only supports the children's next steps but embeds teacher directed learning, allowing children to practise and apply their growing knowledge and skills. Our outside learning environment is planned to support the term's theme which mirrors and embeds learning that takes place within the classroom. Children are encouraged to learn purposefully, co-operatively, to challenge themselves and be reflective about their learning.

Enhanced provision is also used to further challenge, develop and support the children's learning with in our setting. These are accessed both through independent and adult led throughout our discovery time.

Our forest school provision inspires the children to be courageous adventurers as well as learning important life skills. Our planning directly supports and reflect the early year's framework.

4.2 Teaching

Teacher led activities are structured to ensure that children's previous learning is revised, new concepts are taught, and children are given opportunity to practise and apply their learning, both with an adult and during their child-initiated -learning. Direct teaching is planned from previous observations from both adult-directed and child-initiated learning to ensure a clear progression for each child within the class. Our cross curricular opportunities ensure that children develop the ability to make connections between their learning and draw upon their past experiences to support them.

5. Assessment

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

We conduct the RBA (Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment) in the children's first six weeks of starting school. This assessment focuses on 'Language, Communication and Literacy,' and

'Mathematics.' The purpose of this assessment is to show progress from Reception to the end of Key Stage 2.

Ongoing observations throughout the year inform the progress of each child. Over the year the assessments are monitored through regular moderations with local schools and at the end of the year the final judgements are moderated to ensure accuracy of assessment.

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')

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 'progress check' and EYFS profile (but not the reception baseline assessment) 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.

In term 4, our children will take our FFT Aspire reading assessment to gain a reading age (in line with our whole school system).

6. Working with parents

At Shepherdswell CEP School, we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child has an online learning journal (Tapestry) where we share our learning journey throughout the year and celebrate progress with children's parent's. Successes at home are equally celebrated in school using this portal.

Additionally, effective partnerships are delivered through:

- Providing an induction meeting for Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.
- Holding a parent consultation early in the academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- Operating an open-door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Offering parent/teacher consultation meetings throughout the year at which their child's progress is discussed.
- Providing next steps which are individual to each child's progress throughout the year.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in reception.
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food tasting and photographs etc.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as Christmas productions and sports day etc.

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 year, 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- this can be found through the school website.

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 a reference for any member of staff (including students and volunteers) before they are recruited
- Recording information about staff qualifications and identity checks, vetting processes and references

See our safeguarding policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures – a copy of this policy can be found on the 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 Headteacher. If the concern is about the Headteacher, 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 Governors.

See our whistleblowing policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures and more detail on our procedures for handling whistleblowing – this policy can be found through the 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.

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 – this can be found on the school website.

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 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 a member of the Governing Board 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 comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils

8.3 Pediatric first aid (PFA)

We have at least 1 person with a current pediatric 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)

Within the school 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're 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 (this can be found on the 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 reception by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

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

8.7 Safer eating

While children are eating, there will always be at least 1 member of staff in the room with a valid Pediatric 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 and seated.

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 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:

- Toilets and hand basins available for the children
- Separate toilet facilities for adults

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

9. Monitoring arrangements

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head Teacher will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The Governing Body will also be part of this process.

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the EYFS lead and Headteacher annually.
At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

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

This isn't an exhaustive list of policies and only includes policies specific to the EYFS.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
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 child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent/carer 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