



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

1. Introduction

These guidelines set out the approach to the education of children in our Reception class. During the year we will follow the 'Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework' (2023) and use the non-statutory curriculum guidance - 'Development Matters' (September 2020) - to support planning, teaching and learning.

Legislation that the Framework refers to:

- The learning and development requirements are given legal force by an Order² made under section 39(1)(a) of the Childcare Act 2006
- The safeguarding and welfare requirements are given legal force by Regulations³ made under section 39(1)(b) of the Childcare Act 2006

Our school aims to deliver the EYFS Framework ensuring that every child develops and makes progress enabling them to be happy, independent learners and improve their life outcomes; setting them up with every chance of success tomorrow.

We provide a safe and secure learning environment for children to explore and learn through play, whilst encouraging equality and inclusion.

There are seven key features of effective practise within Development Matters. These are:

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

2. Teaching and Learning Practices

Children develop quickly during the EYFS from birth to five years; at their own rates and in their own ways. Provision in the Foundation Stage enables children to develop their personalities, talents and abilities, as well as their learning. An Early Years classroom is set up to support each individual child's development pathway. A holistic approach to teaching is crucial in the Early Years with child initiated play reinforcing the learning that takes place. There is a mix of adult-led activities and child-initiated activities to enable the children to learn and apply their skills.

The learning that a child demonstrates spontaneously and independently in a range of contexts helps form the basis of future planning and assessments, but it is also balanced with activities



guided by adults; therefore, an enabling environment that offers rich learning opportunities through child-initiated play is important. It is vital that we get to know and value all our children in order to achieve this.

Formative assessment is an integral part of supporting each child's learning and development. This begins with observing the children as they interact with their child-initiated and adult led learning.

Child Initiated Play

Our classroom environment is set up to encourage learning through play, including lots of challenges and prompts to direct their learning.

Children have new provision set up regularly for them to access independently. The challenges that are set up are modelled to the children so they know how to access each area. During child initiated play, children can use these areas if they choose and it provides them with the opportunity to complete some independent learning. The areas may be set up against the children's own interests they have expressed, and/or to encourage learning in an area that children need more practise with. For example, if it becomes apparent that children are finding repeating patterns difficult, an area could be set up for them to practise this.

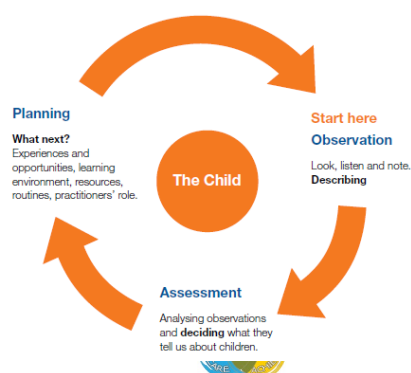
The continuous and enhanced provision areas are changed regularly, for instance; if the children become disinterested and stop using an area, if another area arises from assessments whereby children need more practise, or if children express an interest in something new. The various areas extend to outside the classroom and the outdoor area also includes several prompts and challenges that children can access.

Adult-led Learning

We also teach through whole class sessions followed by group work where the class teachers and teaching assistant work with small groups of children on differentiated activities. Children have daily maths, literacy and phonics whole class teaching.

Their work often goes into their books and photos are regularly shared on Tapestry. We use a WALT and Success Criteria with each piece of work to assess their understanding and to see if they have achieved the learning objective for that lesson. Assessing the children through both child-led and adult-led learning enables our planning to be supportive of their development.

The children are at the centre of the '*Observe → Assess → Plan*' cycle.



3. Curriculum

The EYFS is the statutory framework published in 2023. It sets the standards for the development, learning and care of children from birth to five years old. This, alongside the non-statutory Development Matters guidance 2020, is used for planning and assessing in the Foundation Stage.

The EYFS is broken into seven areas of learning and development. The initial three are the 'Prime' Areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

These 3 prime areas of learning are fundamental; they work together to support development in the remaining in all other areas of learning. They are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

The remaining four areas of learning and development are the 'Specific' areas and include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. The four Specific areas are as follows:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Each area of learning and development is broken down into aspects. There are seventeen aspects in total, each with an Early Learning Goal that is assessed at the end of the Reception year. The seventeen aspects are broken down as follows:

Area of Learning and Development	Aspect	
Communication and Language	Listening, Attention and Understanding	Prime Areas
	Speaking	
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Self-Regulation	
	Managing Self	
	Building Relationships	
Physical Development	Gross Motor Skills	
	Fine Motor Skills	
Literacy	Comprehension	Specific Areas
	Word Reading	
	Writing	
Mathematics	Number	
	Numerical Patterns	
Understanding the World	Past and Present	
	People, Culture and Communities	
	The Natural World	
Expressive Arts and Design	Creating with Materials	
	Being Imaginative and Expressive	



The Development Matters (2020) guidance enables us to check that children are secure in the earlier stages before you look at their age band. It also now includes 'observation checkpoints' for some of the which are intended to help highlight if a child is falling behind in their development.

Each of the 17 aspects within Development Matters (2020) are divided into the following age bands:

- Birth to three – babies, toddlers and young children
- 3 & 4 year olds
- Children in Reception

This simplified range of age bands allows more room to make professional judgements about a child's development and a 'best fit' judgement based on our knowledge and experience, instead of using the previous age bands to track children's progress.

The Development Matters (2020) handbook provides criteria for the seven areas of learning of EYFS, but not for the individual ELGs. The ELGs can be found within the EYFS Statutory Framework (2023).

The level of development children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the ELGs, but these should not form the basis of the curriculum.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

The Characteristics of Effective learning are interconnected within the 17 aspects. They are:

- **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.
- **Creating and thinking critically:** children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

These three Characteristics of Effective Learning tell us about a child's learning styles. They help us to reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust our practice accordingly.

4. Assessment

The EYFS requires practitioners in Reception to review children's progress and share a summary with parents at the end of the Reception year in the EYFS Profile, whilst being kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development throughout the year.

Assessment at the start of the Reception year

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) has been implemented as a statutory requirement from September 2021. It is a short, interactive assessment that is taken in the first 6 weeks of when a





child starts in Reception. It is designed to take around 20 minutes per pupil and has been developed so that it is inclusive to the majority of pupils on entry to school; this includes SEND children and children with English as an additional language (EAL).

The RBA assesses children in early mathematics, literacy, communication and language. It is intended to form a starting point for cohort-level school progress measures. The data is then compared to Key Stage 2 outcomes, 7 years later, to form an overall progress measure for school.

Assessment at the end of the Reception year

The EYFS Profile must be completed for each child in the final term and no later than 30th June. Development Matters can be used as a guide when assessing children and making a best-fit judgement against the development statements. The EYFS Profile summarises children's development at the end of the EYFS against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) in all 17 aspects within the prime and specific areas of learning. It is indicated whether children are meeting the expected levels of development, or if they not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). There is no longer an 'exceeding' level.

Reception Parents/carers and the Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report and the Local Authority (LA) must also receive a copy of the EYFS Profile results.

Recording Progress and Attainment

In Reception, it is not a statutory requirement that progress and attainment is recorded at any other time other than the RBA at the start of the year, and the EYFS profile at the end of the Reception year.

However, we consider it to be good practice to develop a way in which children's progress can be monitored and reflected upon to ensure planning across the year is optimal.

Along with the RBA, we look at transition records passed on from nursery settings and our own assessments taken from observations and children's work to help inform a baseline for each child. Progress and attainment is then recorded at the end of each term to help form the basis of personalised planning for each child.

We currently use Insight Tracking to record children's attainment and measure progress each term. We input the first assessment during Autumn 1 as the baseline then continue to input assessments the end of each half term. As with the removal of age bands from the previous Development Matters (2012), we will now assess children on Insight to establish if they are 'below' or 'on track' against the statements.

Additional assessments

We follow the Sounds Write programme for teaching phonics and use the diagnostic assessment that is recommended, to use alongside the programme. Phonics assessments are completed each



term with children. This helps to identify any areas – such as specific sounds or decoding skills - that may need revisiting and helps to track each child’s progress throughout the year. We have a small phonics intervention group who work with the class teaching assistant, who is specifically trained in speech and language and language acquisition, to help address any areas of development for identified children.

During the Summer Term, we complete Salford Reading Tests to ensure all children are completing home reading at the correct age band. We currently send home Sounds Write reading books to support the phonics programme we follow.

5. Parental links / Partnership

Partnerships with parents and carers are extremely important in the Reception class. It begins in the Summer term, before the children start school, with the class teacher meeting the parents of the new class for an information meeting. At the start of the Autumn term, meetings are conducted to meet the parents on a 1:1 basis. Parents who do not live together but would both like to attend a meeting can request this. Reception Class teaching staff can be easily contacted via the school office or class email address. We want parents and carers to feel confident to approach us about any pupil needs, questions or queries.

Parents are encouraged to play an important role in their child’s education and are usually invited to many events throughout their child’s time in Reception. Some examples are as follows:

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual mini meetings are held. Parents/carers are set up a Tapestry account to receive observations and photos of their child at school. Parent info meeting when the children first start school. Children invite parents/carers in for sessions e.g. craft or story re-tell. Parents/carers are invited to a harvest assembly. Start of year questionnaire is sent home. Parents can consider how their child has settled into school and how clear the starting school arrangements were. Phonics workshop designed to help parents/carers feel confident when supporting their child with reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children invite their parents/carers to a Forest School session in Spring 2. This is normally an Easter egg hunt. Second parents’ evening in February to share learning journeys and talk about how their child is progressing. Parents/carers are invited to a ‘stay and play’ session linked with our current topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents/carers are invited to an end of year assembly that the Reception children have put together. End of year reports are shared with parents and children share their completed learning journeys with their parents. Downloads of Tapestry reports are available. An end of year questionnaire is sent home so the parents can reflect on their child’s time in Reception as well as their learning. Feedback is given to the class teacher. Questionnaires from school are termly for any other feedback to be shared. Information about the transition into Year 1 shared with parents.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First parents' evening in October/November. Learning journeys and assessments are shared. • Parents are invited to a Christmas assembly. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are invited to meet to Year 1 teacher
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Reading at Home

Children are sent home reading books twice weekly and communication between school and home is very important. Parents and carers write in the children's reading records and books are changed accordingly. Home learning is shared via Numbots, Tapestry challenges and a weekly nursery rhyme to learn, once a week. Word lists are given out when appropriate. Parents/carers are asked to support their child with this as a way of involving with their learning from the week.

Tapestry – Online Learning Journeys

In Reception we use Tapestry to communicate regularly with parents, as well as using it as a tool to compile an online learning journey. Photos and observations are frequently uploaded and parents are able to view and comment on their child's work. This is set up ready for when the children start school in September.

6. Safeguarding and Welfare

Children's safety is crucial and an important part of school life. Reception is the first class a child will attend so it is important to build trusting relationships with the children from their very first day. Children are taught the class rules very early on and these are put in place to ensure they are safe within their environment. As a class, we complete a 'class charter' that includes some class rules we have all agreed are important to ensure we are safe, happy and ready to learn.

Whilst their safety is of paramount importance, we also encourage the children to become independent and learn to self-select their activities and manage their own risks. The rules of safety and behaviour are very important and children are encouraged to follow them at all times. We place a large emphasis on this when they start school and create many activities where this is exercised. A risk assessment is put in place for the outside area and this is reviewed and adapted where necessary.

Safeguarding follows the same procedure for the whole school. We look, listen and note if a child says something that could be a safeguarding matter and we also get to know the children so we recognise when they may be acting differently which could be a cause for concern.

Any concerns are recorded on the correct form and passed onto the Head Teacher or the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) in charge if the Head Teacher is unavailable.





Requests are sent home to parents to see if their child's photos are allowed to be used on the school website and social media platforms. We ensure we know about any allergies or medical problems before a child starts school.

With the new EYFS framework in place from December 2023, there is now a new requirement to promote the good oral health of children.

7. Transition Procedures

The transition process begins in the Summer term, before the child starts school, with children from the Children's Centre and other nursery settings coming over to visit their new classroom for regular 'stay and play' sessions.

The class teachers meet frequently with the nursery practitioners during the summer term to share important information about the children. This ranges from any safeguarding matters to how each child has progressed. We conduct a handover whereby the nursery shares the children's learning journeys with the class teacher and pass on their transition records.

The class teachers meet with the nursery practitioners for a moderation meeting where assessments are shared and scrutinised to ensure the progression from nursery to school is smooth in terms of attainment. This enables the class teachers to plan effectively for the first term of school for the children.

The class teacher and nursery staff work together to develop ideas that can be put in place whilst children are still in nursery to make their transition into school as smooth as possible.

Our transition procedures timeline is laid out below:

Summer Term	Autumn Term	Spring Term
Class teacher/s meet with nursery staff. Nursery children attend regular 'stay and play' sessions in small groups. Handover of transition records from nurseries. Moderation of transition record assessments. Information meeting for new parents. Starting school arrangements are explained and welcome packs with all information are handed out. These packs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Information regarding start dates, home visit dates and times, pick up and drop off points etc. ➤ Admission forms 	Starting school transition procedures are followed Plenty of communication with parents about how their child is settling into school Feedback to nursery about how children have settled into Reception. Hold an open morning for parents of children starting the following academic year to come and visit our school. Individual meetings with parents regarding pupil needs. Monitoring and moderation visits to pre-school settings.	Plan next term's transition process with nursery and organise dates for 'stay and play' sessions. New class list is provided Outside nurseries are contacted to prepare for transition with children who will be starting school with us A virtual tour of the school is posted on the school website for parents whose children have secured a place to view, prior to visiting for the information meeting. Monitoring and moderation visits to pre-school settings.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A list of things they will need to prepare for school such as school uniform, PE kit etc. ➤ Photos of members of staff ➤ Photos of the Reception classroom and outside area ➤ Fun activities for children to complete over the summer to help them prepare for school. 		SENDCO to attend.
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8. Moderation

With the new EYFS framework in place from December 2023, the statutory duty for local authorities to moderate the EYFSP in 25% of schools has been removed. We are still required to submit EYFSP data to the local authority and this will be still be collected nationally. It will, of course, remain good practice to continue to moderate internally.

Moderation is an important part of assessment and occurs regularly throughout the school year. It ensures that all assessments are accurate against national standards and that other teachers, schools and external colleagues agree with our judgements.

Pupil Progress Meetings (PPM) are conducted across the year, with the Head Teacher to check all pupils are progressing and if not, then identify what support can be given. Curriculum Leads ensure that the children have been assessed fairly and accurately, through moderation, this is overseen by the Senior Leadership Team. Children’s work is shared throughout the year within cluster groups where possible, and other staff members within school to discuss the age bands at which they have been assessed.

A Maths and Literacy book scrutiny takes place termly, with Curriculum Leads or SLT and children’s work is cross referenced with Insight assessments to ensure they are accurate.

The Reception teacher/s and Year 1 teacher meet in the final term to moderate and discuss evidence about each child’s development, for transition to the next year group, from EYFS Framework into the National Curriculum.

9. Inclusion

It is important that all our pupils have equal opportunities and access to learning. We ensure we have arrangements in place to support children with SEN or disabilities. If a child with SEND starts school, we ensure arrangements are in place prior to them starting. This often involves conversations with the parents/carers, our SENDCO, the nursery providers and any outside agencies where relevant. It is important we have the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills to provide the right support.

At the start of the school year we complete a ‘My Profile’ with all children. This allows them to share personal information about what is important to them, their hopes and goals and what



helps them and doesn't help them. This can be completed as a classroom activity or 1:1 with an adult.

If a child is identified as having an additional need during the school year, we follow the Gloucestershire SEND Graduated Pathway and, once their needs are identified and with permission from their parents/carers, may be put on a My Plan where they are set SMART targets. We then work closely with these children and monitor their progress. Their My Plan is considered a working document and, whilst we formally review them at the end of each term, targets can be adapted or changed especially if they have achieved their target at an early stage in the term.

We also ensure children with English as an additional language (EAL) are able to access learning. This can be supported by using visual communication cards. We use a visual timetable in the classroom to support our children in what is happening 'now' and 'next'. It is important to us to remember that a child's home language is integral to their culture and their individual identity and so it should still be encouraged to be used and developed.

Written by: Emma Best (Rec Class Teacher) - September 2022, Updated September 2024.

Ratified by the EYFS Governor and FGB on 14.10.24.

