

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Responsibility for oversight and update of this Policy	Headteacher, EYFS Lead
Last updated	December 2024
Policy review cycle	2 Years
Latest policy Review date	December 2026
h://Policies/Early Years Foundation Stage Policy	

Developing the roots to grow and wings to fly

1. Aims

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experience between birth and age five has a major impact on their future life chances. High quality, early learning provides the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that must be met to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

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.
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with 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 [2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years classes consist of children aged between 3-5 years (Nursery 3-4 years and Reception 4-5 years). Reception has one specialised Early Years teacher and a highly qualified (level 5) Early Years practitioner who works closely with the class teacher. Nursery has a specialised level 5 practitioner who leads the Nursery as well as a class teacher, which is all overseen by the Early Years Lead. Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs.

- **Reception key worker- Class Teacher**
- **Nursery key worker- Early Years Practitioner and Class Teacher**

Children will complete work with both their key worker as well as whole class activities.

The start of the school day for Reception is 8.40am until 3.10pm. The start of a school day for children who are attending Nursery just for the morning is 8.45am until 11.45am. Afternoon sessions are 12.15 until 3.15pm and a full day is 8.45am until 3.15pm.

The Nursery is a separate, purpose-built unit with a contained outdoor area. There are two Reception classrooms in the main school building that also has a contained outdoor area. Both Nursery and Reception children have a free-flow access system between the indoor and outdoor classroom. The EYFS team will ensure that a member of staff is outside at all times when the children are accessing free flow. This is to ensure the safety and security of our pupils as the classrooms are set away from the outdoor area.

3.1 Nursery sessions and additional costs

Children can be admitted in the term after they become 3 years old. We run a cycle of 3 term admissions: September, January and April. Children can fulfil the 15 hours provision which is flexible throughout the week.

There are various extra options parents may consider which are payable at an hourly rate.

Chadsmead also offers the assisted 30-hour provision for parents meeting the criteria.

It is Chadsmead Primary Academy's policy to try and meet parent/carers' wishes where possible, however in some cases there may be more applications for a particular intake than there are places.

4. Curriculum

Our Early Years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2024 statutory framework of the EYFS for group and school-based providers.

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
- Maths
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

It is essential that our learning environments in Early Years are visually stimulating, safe and secure. We understand the importance of sharing the Early Years principles and practises with parents. This enables them to support their child's learning outside of school hours. Characteristics of effective learning are used and displayed in the classroom where children refer to them, explaining how they are learning. For example "I am being a persevering parrot because I am persevering with..."

The animals used for Characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- Go for it Gorilla- I will have a go.
- Persevering Parrot- I keep trying
- Proud Peacock- I am proud of what I do.
- Creative Chameleon- I have my own ideas.
- Exploring Elephant- I am an explorer.
- Choosing Chimp- I choose ways to do things.
- Concentrating Crocodile- I join in and concentrate.
- Reflecting Rhino- I reflect on my progress.
- Slinky Linky Snake- I make links.
- Analysing Alligator- I can work things out.

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences. 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.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. All staff members discuss learning, key skills and the next steps for each child.

Practitioners plan activities that are organised into mini units which take place throughout the year. Each mini unit is planned to encompass all the 7 areas of learning. We aim to provide multi-sensory, relevant experiences which are delivered in active ways both in the classroom and outside in our playground. Our units are on a one-year cycle which means the Nursery children who enter Reception will experience different units from when they were in Nursery. We aim to adapt, amend and change our units wherever necessary. This is dependent on the interests of each cohort or current events that are taking place, e.g., important festivals or celebrations.

The professional dialogue is fundamental for ensuring that all 7 areas of learning within the development matters bands are addressed. Daily discussions between teachers and practitioners take place to discuss further ideas that could be incorporated into the following day/week planning.

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed using the development matters ages and stages materials. The evidence which is collated in each child's individual learning journey are 'Wow moments', which are quality observations that show the child's progress. If a child's progress in any of the areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCO) in order to access special educational support.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented both indoor and outdoor through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-led activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

Both Reception and Nursery have daily inputs which are delivered by staff. Daily inputs include circle times, Maths, Literacy, Phonics (Read Write Inc), Religious and Worldviews, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design. Free flow is provided for the children both in Nursery and Reception, where they can move freely between the classroom and outside.

All children will have phonic sessions five times a week following the Read Write Inc. scheme. Children will be grouped according to their phonics ability. Both Nursery and Reception children will take part in Maths Meetings at least three times a week where they will sing rhymes, learn about days of the week, months of the year, seasons, shapes etc.

During afternoon sessions children are taught specific skills and knowledge which covers many of the prime areas, understanding the world and expressive arts and design with a focus on the unit which is being taught that term.

Nursery and Reception have weekly access to a natural area known as the 'forest'. The children are given the opportunity to develop their independence and explore the natural environment in a safe and secure space. The children are continuously supervised when accessing this environment and special rules and expectations are established from the onset.

5. Assessment

Assessment is a key tool within Nursery and Reception to help track the progress of each child. For every child starting Nursery and Reception at Chadsmead, our practitioners will complete a baseline assessment in their first two full weeks of school. Reception will also complete the Government Reception Baseline Assessment.

Although there is no statutory requirement to gather physical assessment information, we feel it is useful to capture children's 'WOW Moments' which will be personal to their learning journey throughout Early Years. Both Nursery and Reception will have a paper-based learning journal that captures the children's learning experiences through photographs, observational notes and independent work, which forms a crucial part of assessment.

This enables practitioners to monitor and assess children's progress as well as being an effective planning tool to ensure that the provision reflects the needs and interests of each individual learner. From completing

these observations staff can ensure each child has next steps to ensure their learning is being moved on. Parents are encouraged and supported to contribute to their child's achievements through 'Wow Moments' which are sent home.

Throughout the year children are tracked termly across the 7 areas of learning linked to the development matters. On entry and throughout the year staff will identify which banding children are 'On Track' for and which they are 'Not on Track'. Following the Development Matters the bandings are:

- Birth to 3
- 3- 4 Years
- Reception
- Early Learning Goal (ELG)

Children who are not on track in Early Years will have a development matters age and stage sheet where staff will highlight what a child has achieved, this will inform staff of what the child needs to achieve next to close the gap. Staff will have termly progress meetings with the Headteacher, which allow staff to discuss children's progress and identify any barriers to learning.

At the **end of Reception**, 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. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

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

In preparation this information is then shared with Year One staff, who meet in the summer term to discuss each individual child and their learning needs, learning styles etc as part of the transition process.

6. Working with parents

The Early Years Team recognises that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. We hold workshops throughout the year to show parents how we learn and how they can support their child at home. Some of the workshops include:

- Phonics
- Maths
- Stay and Play sessions
- Rhyme Time

These sessions are most valuable to both children and parents and we strongly encourage parents to attend all workshops.

Parental consultation evenings are held twice a year during the Autumn and Spring terms. These are essential opportunities to discuss each child's development and progress within EYFS. In July the children take home personalised reports which are based around the characteristics of learning.

Parents are asked to read with their child at home daily, this includes a bedtime story. Children have a weekly library session where they can choose a story book to take home so parents can read it as a bedtime story.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our Safeguarding Policy and Early Years Toileting and Intimate Care Policy.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Early Years leader and the Headteacher every two years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the School Standards Committee.

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

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according to the EYFS statutory framework.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy – Website Policies Early Years Toileting and Intimate Care Policy
Procedure for responding to illness	Health and Safety Policy - Website Policies
Administering medicines policy	Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy - Website Policies
Emergency evacuation procedure	Health and Safety Policy - Website Policies Chadsmead lockdown procedures – School Code red evacuation procedure - School Fire Safety Management Arrangements - School Lockdown classroom instructions – School Business Continuity Plan - School
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	Separate procedure document – Early Years Website
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy - Website Policies Attendance Policy - Website Policies
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	Community Academy Trust Complaints policy - Website Policies