



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Person responsible	EYFS Coordinator
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1. Introduction and Aims

At the School, we believe that the Early Years are a crucial stage of development for every pupil. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. Education in the Early Years Foundation Stage is about building on what pupils already know and learning key skills such as listening, speaking, concentration, persistence, creativity, and learning to work together and co-operate with other pupils. We also focus on developing early communication, literacy and numeracy skills that will prepare pupils for Key Stage 1. This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at the School.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the other following policies, a hard copy of which is available on request:

- Safeguarding policy and procedures
- First Aid policy
- Emergency Evacuation procedure
- Visitors Access policy
- the procedure to be followed in the event of a parent and/or carer failing to collect a pupil at the appointed time (Child Missing Education and Attendance policies)
- the procedure to be following in the event of a pupil going missing at, or away from, the setting (found in the Child Missing Education and Attendance policies)
- the Complaints policy and procedures
- Policy for the Administration of Medicines
- Health and Safety policy
- Educational Visits policy
- Positive Behaviour policy
- Use of Reasonable Force policy

2. Scope and responsibilities

This policy applies to the EYFS at the School. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of practitioners working in the EYFS setting. The EYFS coordinator, along with the Senior Leadership Team

and the Head are responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy and for ensuring that the outcomes are monitored.

3. Aims for the Early Years Foundation Stage

We aim to support all pupils to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each pupil to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and academically to their full potential. At the School we:

- Give each pupil a happy, positive and fun start to their school life so that they establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning.
- Offer each pupil a wide range of new and exciting experiences to enable choice and decision making.
- Enable each pupil, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop to the full, emotionally, socially, physically and academically.
- Use and value what each pupil can do and offer unlimited opportunities for development which are sensitive to the requirements of the individual pupil.
- Encourage pupils to develop independence within a caring, secure and inclusive environment.
- Plan challenging activities to meet all pupils' needs, including pupils with special educational needs, pupils who are more able, pupils with disabilities, pupils from all social and cultural backgrounds, pupils from different ethnic groups, and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

4. Philosophy

The Early Years Foundation Stage at the School is delivered in accordance with the Government's statutory document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage for Group and School based providers' (October 2024). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together pupils' welfare, learning and development requirements through four themes: 'A Unique Child', 'Positive Relationships', 'Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults' and 'Learning and Development'.

The philosophy of our provision underpins a curriculum founded on play; it is supported by a high-quality caring environment and provides a broad framework for all our work with young children.

Article 31 of the UN Convention of Rights of the Child is the right to play, and play is at the heart of the Early Years Curriculum at the School. We embrace the fact that in their play, children can be inquisitive, creative, experimental, reflective and resilient and are therefore able to learn at their highest level. Through play, pupils are able to embody our Learning Powers.

We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child-initiated play and adult-led activities is very important to us.

Using the pupils' interests as a starting point, we provide them with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning as well as helping them to make sense of the world.

Through their play, they have opportunities to think creatively and critically, both individually and with others. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our pupils the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. They learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate, ask questions and problem solve.

5. Teaching and Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage

We have a highly qualified, dedicated, professional and caring Early Years team. In the Reception classroom there is one teacher (who is the key person for all Reception pupils), one full-time and one part-time teaching assistant.

The Head of Lower School is in charge of the EYFS setting and he/she works in partnership with the Head.

The curriculum is centred on three prime areas of learning:

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

Teachers also provide learning opportunities that support the four specific areas which strengthen the prime areas. These are:

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

All activities are carefully planned to ensure they develop the Characteristics of Effective Learning in pupils, across all areas. These are:

- Playing and exploring – engagement
- Active learning – motivation
- Creating and thinking critically - thinking

In addition to the Reception team, the pupils are also taught by specialist teachers for P.E., Art, Drama, Dance, Computing, French, Spanish and Music.

6. Learning Powers

All our academic learning will be linked to our school focus on a growth mind-set and developing habits of learning that encourage the girls to become active learners, with characteristics that support them when they face challenges.

7. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and EAL

The Early Years Foundation Stage will be taught in accordance with the following policies: Equal Opportunities and Inclusion, Learning Enrichment, and English as an Additional Language.

We value the diversity of individuals within the School and believe that every pupil matters. To this end we will:

- Embrace all pupils' racial, cultural and religious backgrounds.
- Embed a culture of belonging and value amongst practitioners and pupils.
- Ensure that practice is culturally sensitive, and that the pupil is positioned as the expert of their own identity.
- Extend learning opportunities for the pupil by showing interest, expanding conversations and using diverse resources.

We know that pupils enter Reception with a rich and individual catalogue of experiences that have all contributed to their own personal narratives. We take an interest in their uniqueness, which is crucial in giving them a strong sense of who they are, in a number of ways:

- We celebrate difference and acknowledge that it exists in some way for every pupil.
- We identify and respond to pupils' individual strengths, abilities and interests to ensure that all pupils have the support they need to reach their full potential. Each pupil is unique and will be given support tailored to them.
- We aim to form strong and respectful partnerships with parents in order to provide the best support for pupils' learning and development.
- We strive to support and enhance equitable learning opportunities through the resources we use, the language we speak and the topics we teach.
- We educate our pupils in how to stand up for others and help everyone to be heard.

We give our pupils every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our pupils' range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we set realistic and challenging expectations based on the needs of our pupils, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage, with many exceeding them.

8. Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process in the EYFS. Observing and responding appropriately to pupils enables the shaping of teaching and learning experiences for each pupil which ensures they make progress from their starting points towards the Early Learning Goals.

Assessments are based on practitioners' observations of what pupils are doing in their day-to-day activities. As judgments are based on observational evidence gathered from a wide range of learning and teaching contexts, it is expected that all adults who interact with the pupils will contribute to the process. This is not limited to school staff and also includes regular contributions from parents. An essential feature of parental involvement is an ongoing dialogue which is done through regular parent meetings, wow cards, informal open mornings and curriculum evenings. This is regularly moderated internally, particularly with the Year 1 teacher in the summer term.

The EYFS Profile is completed for each pupil by 30th June of their Reception year. The Profile provides a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals and indicate whether pupils are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').

Formal written reports are given to parents in July and are shared with the Y1 teacher. This report forms the end of EYFS profile and states the outcomes of the Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

9. Parental Involvement and Community Links

We provide a happy and supportive environment, forging strong partnerships between home and school. Parents are encouraged to get involved in their daughters' education. They have the opportunity to talk to staff at the beginning and end of the school day, at open mornings, parents' evenings and our supper party at the beginning of the year. Each year begins with a parent meeting to inform parents of what goes on throughout the year. Other communication includes:

- Termly parents' meetings
- Reading records
- *Wow* cards which are sent home to be filled in by parents to record and share their daughter's achievements at home.
- The *Weekly Headlines* email which signposts parents to past and current letters as well as upcoming events
- *Bute Insights* which provides a summary of what has taken place in school and which is emailed to parents weekly.
- The Bute House Family Partnership, which consists of a parent and staff body who work together to enhance the life of the school.

10. Transition

We acknowledge that an effective transition between Nursery and Reception underpins a successful start to school. To this end we:

- Hold a *Getting Ready for School Talk* (first half of the Spring Term preceding the pupil's entry to Reception)
- Liaise with staff from Nursery settings (second half of the Summer Term preceding the pupil's entry to Reception)
- Hold a Teddy Bears' Picnic (second half of the Summer Term preceding the pupil's entry to Reception)
- Hold a *Starting School* parent meeting (second half of the Summer Term preceding the pupil's entry to Reception)
- Hold a new parents' barbecue (second half of the Summer Term preceding the pupil's entry to Reception)
- Hold a Welcome Meeting (in the September that the pupil starts Reception)

We build on this good practice and believe that transition is a process and not an event. The Reception pupils are well prepared for the move into Key Stage 1 by:

- Sending home transition cards (before the pupils' final half term in Reception).
- Creating an information booklet for parents answering questions asked on transition cards (second half of the Summer Term).
- Planning from a book series that continues from the end of Reception into the start of Year 1.
- Going on a joint Reception and Year 1 trip (second half of the Summer Term).
- Year 1 teacher and teaching assistant regularly work in the Reception classroom with the Reception girls (second half of the Summer Term).
- Holding a 'move up day' (second half of the Summer Term).
- Involving Year 1 teacher in the moderation of ELGs.

11. Behaviour Management

In the EYFS setting, the Reception teacher will be responsible for behaviour management. Corporal punishment is not used or threatened. Behaviour management in the EYFS is covered in the Positive Behaviour Policy and the policy for Use of Reasonable Force. In cases where physical intervention has been used as a last resort to protect the pupils from hurting themselves or others, or seriously damaging property, the incident will be recorded using the Incident Record Form (see appendix 1 of the policy for the Use of Reasonable Force) and reported following the procedure in the Use of Reasonable Force policy.

12. First Aid

First Aid in the EYFS is covered in the whole school policy for Health and Safety and the First Aid policy.

There are a number of people on site with the 2 day Paediatric First Aid (PFA) qualification required for EYFS. One of these people must be on the premises and on any outings the Reception class undertakes. The PFA certificate must be for a full course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. A list of staff who have a current PFA certificate will be displayed in the Reception classroom.

Parents should notify the School if their child has had an accident or has sustained an injury outside school by completing an Existing Injury form. In instances where the form is not completed by the parent and an existing injury is noticed by staff, the School will contact the parent to complete the Existing Injury form.

In line with the First Aid Policy (available on the School website), parents should notify the School if their child has an infectious disease and follow procedure as outlined in the policy. For information about administering medications, please refer to the Administration of Medicines policy.

13. Risk Management

Risk management assessments are carried out in line with school policy. Risk assessments of the Reception classroom and outdoor area are carried out daily and risks are addressed immediately or reported to the Director of Finance and Operations.

14. Ratios

During the school day, Reception pupils are always supervised by a member of staff with QTS (Qualified Teacher Status), as required by the EYFS Statutory Framework. This includes lessons and break times. See below for staffing on trips.

15. Trips

Educational off-site visits are planned and carried out in line with our Educational Visits policy. The ratio on each trip is assessed on a case-by-case basis with the Director of Finance and Operations to ensure safe supervision when off site and at least one paediatric first aider accompanies the visit.

16. Safeguarding (according to the School's Safeguarding Policy)

Safeguarding in the EYFS is covered in the whole school Policy for Safeguarding. This policy applies to the whole school, including EYFS, and is available to staff on Teacherlink, to the public on the School's website and is available in hard copy on request.

17. Monitoring and Review

The EYFS coordinator will regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy.

The EYFS Policy will be subject to review annually (or more frequently if changes to legislation, regulation or statutory guidance so require) by the EYFS coordinator.

The EYFS Policy will also be subject to critical review by the Governing Body, and will be reviewed by the relevant committee of the Governing Body on an annual basis.

The date of the next review is shown on the front page.