



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Person responsible	EYFS Coordinator
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1. Introduction and Aims

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 (EYFS) 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. Bute House Preparatory School (the School) focuses 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 EYFS at the School.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following Policies, hard copies of which are available on request:

- Safeguarding Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Emergency Evacuation Procedures (FIRE)
- Accessibility Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Missing Child and Child Missing Education Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Administration of Medications Policy
- 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

The School aims to support all pupils to become independent and collaborative learners. It 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. The School will:

- 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 a wide range of 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' (September 2025). 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 the School's 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. The School embraces 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 Learning Powers.

The School believes 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 the School.

Using the pupils' interests as a starting point, the School provides 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, pupils 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 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

The School has 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 they work 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 pupils develop the Characteristics of Effective Learning 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 and Music.

6. Learning Powers

The pupils' learning is linked to the School's focus on a growth mind-set and on developing habits that encourage them to become active learners, with characteristics that will support them when they face challenges.

7. Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and English as an Additional Language (EAL)

The School welcomes pupils from all ethnic backgrounds, nationalities and religions, and is committed to embracing and celebrating diversity and promoting a whole school culture of equality, safety and protection.

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

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 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 the pupil's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. Each pupil's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals and indicates 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 the EYFS Profile and states the outcomes of the Early Learning Goals.

9. Parental Involvement and Community Links

The School provides 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 EYFS 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 Bute House app where weekly letters and other key information, such as the School calendar, forms, important documents, helpful links, and news updates are shared.
- The Bute House Family Partnership

10. Transition

The School acknowledges that an effective transition between Nursery and Reception underpins a successful start. To this end the School will:

- 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)

The School builds on this good practice and believes 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).
- 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 pupils (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 Use of Reasonable Force Policy. 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 Use of Reasonable Force Policy) 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 Health and Safety Policy and the First Aid Policy.

There are a number of people with the full Paediatric First Aid (PFA) qualification required for EYFS who will be on the premises at all times and on any outings the Reception class undertakes. Children in the EYFS will be in sight and hearing of a staff member with full PFA whilst eating. 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 full 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 Medications 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 the 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 Safeguarding Policy. 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.