

Woodsetton School



Early Years Policy

This policy was reviewed and updated in September 2025

The next anticipated review date will be September 2026

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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.

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Structure of the EYFS

At Woodsetton School the EYFS is implemented for the child's year in Reception under statutory guidance to complete the Early Years Foundation Profile (EYFSP).

For the Year 2025-26, children in Caterpillars & Moles are in a mixed Reception / Year 1 class.

Woodsetton School follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework.

4. Curriculum

The curriculum encompasses the four overarching principles of:

- every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- the importance of learning and development.

We recognise that children develop and learn at different rates and plan appropriate provision to support this. This is to ensure a strong foundation for the children's development in the three prime areas. The specific areas of learning provide children with a broad curriculum and with opportunities to strengthen and apply the prime areas of learning. This is particularly important in developing language and extending vocabulary, supported by a total communication environment. Adults play a vital role in this with through adult modelling, storytelling, role-play activities and conversation.

The EYFS learning and development requirements comprise of:

- the seven areas of learning and development and the educational programmes
- the early learning goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the reception year
- the assessment requirements (when and how practitioners must assess children's achievements, and when and how they should discuss children's progress with parents and/or carers)

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

4.1 Planning

Our staff are ambitious for all children, and plan activities and experiences for the children that enable them to develop and learn effectively, depending upon their starting point.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests and development of each child in their care, and consider whether the child needs any additional support. They use this information to plan and adapt activities to ensure high expectations are reached through an enjoyable experience.

Staff will consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding the children's activities, staff reflect on the different rates at which children are developing, and take these into account.

4.2 Teaching

Staff make sure that the children experience the 3 key characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring; active learning; and creating and thinking critically.

They respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As the children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more focus on teaching and applying essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning, to help the children prepare for their next phase of learning.

5. Assessment

At Woodsetton, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their progress, development and interests. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers and keep them up to date with the child's progress and development. Staff will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the reception baseline assessment (RBA).

In the final term of the academic year in which the child reaches age 5, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child (before 30 June in that term). Each child is 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 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 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.

6. Working with parents and carers

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there's a strong partnership between our staff and each child's parents and/or carers.

We keep parents and/or carers 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 is assigned a key person who helps to make sure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person with the class teacher supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate and will work collaboratively with the school family support worker.

Parents are welcomed into the school to whole school events and family workshops.

We ask parents/carers to provide more than 2 emergency contact numbers for their child (where possible).

7. 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 2 years, 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

- Staff complete annual compliance training for Child Protection & Safeguarding through face to face events and via e-learning platforms (National College). Regular workshops are also delivered to all staff with updates and changes to policy. This is compulsory.

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.

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 Head teacher. If the concern is about the head teacher or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to CEO/Local Advisory Chair.

See our whistleblowing policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures and more detail on our procedures for handling whistleblowing.

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.

8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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 & Safeguarding policy.

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 Head teacher/DSL– referred to from here as the 'recipient' – 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 the CEO 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 make sure that the appropriate statutory staff:child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

We determine ratios guided by all relevant ratio requirements and by the needs of the children within the group.

8.3 Paediatric first aid (PFA)

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric 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)

We also have a DSL (Mrs Sarah Allen) 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.

8.6 Oral health and tooth brushing

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by engaging in learning activities to cover:

- The importance of brushing your teeth
- Healthy eating
- Visiting the dentist

8.7 Safer eating

While children are eating, there will always be at least 1 member of staff in the room with a valid Paediatric 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 safely in an appropriate chair or highchair and, where possible, in a designated eating space.

Before a child joins our school, 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 and snack time 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.

All staff have the responsibility to report any safety concerns to SLT and the site team.

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:

- Enough toilets and hand basins available for the children
- Suitable and hygienic nappy changing facilities
- An adequate supply of necessary items such as clean towels and spare clothes
- Separate toilet facilities for adults

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

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Chair of the Local Advisory Board annually.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the Local Advisory Board/Trustees.

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. For a full list of our policies:

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS
Safeguarding policy and procedures Child Protection & Safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness Health & Safety policy
Administering medicines policy Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure Emergency Evacuation Plan
Procedure for checking the identity of visitor Child Protection & Safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent/carer failing to collect a child and for missing children Child Protection & Safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints Complaints Policy