Early Years and Foundation Stage policy

Our Values

To be:

Nurturing, Ethical and Brave

Our Vision

Every child develops:

Confidence, Compassion and Curiosity



Approved by:	Benjamin Russell	**Date:**	September 2024
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1. Aims

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
- We inspire, engage and enthuse our pupils to be active learners every day so that they become confident and independent thinkers
- 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) for 2023.

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

3. Structure of the EYFS

Our EYFS setting is based within mixed-aged Fern class which caters for children from the age of 4 to 7 when children will have finished Key Stage One and will transition into our Key Stage Two class (Heather Class).

We are fortunate to have a large classroom (split across three rooms) and extensive outdoor areas so, while there are many opportunities for whole class learning, the majority of learning is targeted at individual year groups.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest EYFS statutory framework. Our curriculum maps which outline how we meet each area of learning can be found here.

At Lealholm Primary School, our EYFS curriculum is carefully designed to reflect both the requirements of the EYFS Framework and the unique opportunities provided by our rural setting. Through our extensive outdoor environment, outdoor areas and strong links with the local community, children learn through first-hand experiences that promote curiosity, independence and a sense of belonging. We place a strong emphasis on communication, language development, early reading and personal, social and emotional development, while providing rich opportunities for exploration, investigation and imaginative play. Our curriculum is responsive to children's interests and experiences, ensuring that learning is meaningful, engaging and rooted in the world around them.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. 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 plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. To do this, staff 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 a challenging and enjoyable experience. 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, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

4.2 Teaching

At Lealholm Primary School, we recognise that young children learn best through play, exploration, active learning, critical thinking and meaningful relationships with adults. Staff use observation and interaction to extend children's learning through sustained shared thinking and carefully planned environments.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff 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.

Staff use the following schemes to support teacher-led activities:

- Whiterose maths
- Little Wandle Foundations
- Story Basket
- Poetry Basket
- Talk Through Stories

5. Assessment

At Lealholm Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are recorded and are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

Throughout children's year in EYFS, they will be formatively assessed in their early reading progress using the Little Wandle Assessment tracker. Teachers will also carry out formative assessments to identify strengths and areas for further practice in all of the Early Learning Goals.

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed using teachers' professional judgements against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

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

Where concerns are identified, staff follow the school's graduated approach and work closely with the SENDCO, parents and external professionals to ensure needs are identified and supported as early as possible.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

These roles and responsibilities are in addition or to exemplify the roles and responsibilities set out in the school's teaching and learning policy

Teachers:

- To ensure that adequate time is timetabled for teacher lead activities as outlined in section 4.
- To ensure that provision areas are regularly changed to meet children's needs, interests and curriculum requirements.
- To ensure that all relevant policies and procedures are being followed including the Health and Safety Policy and Child Protection policy.
- To ensure that regular assessments are recorded and are used to plan future learning.

7. Working with parents

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

As a nurturing school, we recognise the importance of transition. Our regular Stay and Play events provide the opportunity for children to get to know our setting with their parent/carer working alongside them. We extend this opportunity for individual children as appropriate.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through Class Dojo and termly meetings. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities at the end of EYFS.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person 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.

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 are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

Changes to our environment this academic year have been risk assessed to ensure that all children are safe within our newly allocated EYFS areas. Copies of this are available in the office or on the school's Sharepoint system.

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

All teaching staff hold a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate and are available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

Sometimes intimate care is required in EYFS settings. Please refer to our Intimate Care Policy for details.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's child protection and safeguarding policy.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Headteacher and EYFS teacher every two years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

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

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy