



## EYFS Policy

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## Aims of 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
- That all children within Early Years have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which allows them to develop both their own personal strengths and the knowledge and skills required to continue making good progress throughout their education both at Spofforth and beyond.
- 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

## Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2024 statutory EYFS framework available at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

## Structure of the EYFS

In Early Years at Follifoot and Spofforth Federation, we recognise the value of introducing and developing our collective vision for children to Love, Learn and Thrive. We are the first step in a child's educational journey, working alongside families and the local community to provide a welcoming environment for children to learn and develop. Our curriculum offer for all children,

begins for many of our children in Nursery and Reception where we acknowledge the importance and impact of our curriculum as laid out in the EYFS.

We are in a unique position to be able to offer our children a dedicated Early Years setting (in which) to deliver the EYFS curriculum (and are able to impact children's learning for 2 years, undoubtedly giving us opportunities to have an increasingly positive impact on children's learning opportunities as noted in our latest OFSTED inspection:

'Children in the early years get off to a flying start. The curriculum is sequenced well and the small steps to build up children's learning are in place.'

(Spofforth OFSTED, July 2022)

As a successful Federation, it has been a pleasure to welcome all Reception pupils from both Spofforth and Follifoot schools as a single Early Years class, based at the Spofforth setting. The benefits to working in this way are:

- all children access the same play based, holistic, child-led curriculum.
- the children have a wider group of peers to enhance their social development.
- there is a dedicated Early Years team with a wealth of experience working with an age group and curriculum they love and are passionate about.
- the children have a welcoming, purpose-built classroom and large dedicated Early Years outside space.

## Curriculum

Our curriculum is carefully designed using the EYFS Statutory Framework and our extensive knowledge and experience of the needs of our children and is adapted year on year as we evolve our practise to continue to meet the needs of our children and families.

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 laying the foundations for successful future learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics

- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Our Early Years setting provides a warm, unique and secure environment for our youngest children to learn, play and flourish. Through play, the children explore and make sense of the world. They practice new skills, construct and secure their understanding, and have daily opportunities to think creatively. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems, discuss and negotiate plans, and learn to manage their behaviour. We encourage all our children to become independent learners and thinkers and we recognise the importance of a high-quality education for all.

There are four overarching, guiding principles stated in the EYFS Framework which shape early years practice at Follifoot and Spofforth Federation:

- 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
- **learning and development is very important**. Children develop and learn at different rates

We have developed a curriculum based on the educational programmes outlined in 2024 EYFS statutory framework, development matters, the expectations and experiences we want our children to have going forward into Key Stage one at either Spofforth or Follifoot school. We believe in a balanced curriculum. A balance between child led and adult led play and activities, between children's interests and what we deem necessary knowledge for the children to know and experience. Our curriculum is flexible and subject to change if we feel a different approach, topic or focus would have a greater impact on the children's learning.

## Planning

Planning is based on our curriculum. It is flexible to take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child, and we use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience.

Each day we consider the learning in each area of the classroom, any adult led carpet sessions, and focused activities which support the children's learning.

The areas in the classroom are planned for and we constantly observe and play with the children in those areas both inside and outside, in order to keep them interesting and challenging.

We use recognised, approved schemes including Little Wandle Phonics and NCTEM Mastering number, to guide our teaching and provide a systematic, progressive approach. These schemes continue to be used throughout Key Stage 1.

We consider each child when we are planning activities and ensure all of the children are supported and thriving. Where a child may need extra support, possibly due to a special educational need, we work with parents, our SENCO and any relevant agencies to provide the best support and plan for that child.

## Teaching

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.

At Spofforth we teach and learn inside the classroom and outside in our natural, outdoor playground.

We scaffold learning through quality interactions and promote the use and understanding of excellent vocabulary. We question, model, prompt, resource and guide children in their learning.

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.

## Assessment

At Spofforth, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations 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 statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) when we consider children to be settled enough.

We assess phonics progress in Reception children every half term.

We complete our own summative assessment for both Nursery and Reception children, based on our curriculum, every half term. These assessments are completed on the seven areas of learning and development. These assessments shape the planning for the following half term.

At the **end of the EYFS**, 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 and support our transition conversations as children continue their learning journey into Key Stage 1.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the moderation case study materials) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

## Working with parents

In our school we work hard to develop good relationships with our families and we often receive positive comments about the family feel in our school. The Early Years classroom is not only the child's first step on the education ladder but also the parent's too. We need parents as partners so we can both support their child's education as a team. We invite parents and carers into the classroom every day so they gain an understanding of what their child will be learning and feel part of it. This also gives both the teacher or parent an opportunity to talk about anything they deem necessary. We encourage parents to share 'wow' moments from home which help us gain a wholistic picture of the child and this also feeds into our assessment; many of our observations are from parents. This daily contact and support builds strong links allowing for children's needs and ongoing development to be at the forefront of our communications with families. Using apps such as 'Class dojo' allows us to send parents and carers photos and messages providing a snapshot of their child's day. We also provide parents with information events such as 'starting school,' 'how we teach phonics' and also regular stay and play sessions where carers are invited into the classroom to simply play with the children and see what goes on in the classroom.

Every week parents and carers receive a newsletter stating what we have been learning this week and plans for the following week. We hope these letters and photographs provide parents with helpful information in order for them to feel a part of their children's first steps of education. Termly parent consultation evenings provide the opportunity for a more in-depth discussion between parents and teachers.

Each child is assigned a key person at the beginning of the year and parent's are informed of this. However, we do make the point of letting them know they can talk to any of the Early Years staff as we share information among us in order to ensure we all understand what is going on with all children.

## Safeguarding and welfare procedures

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate children on appropriate boundaries and school rules to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. We know that children learn best when they are healthy and safe, when their individual needs are met and when they have the chance to build positive relationships with the adults around them as well as their peers. Our safeguarding policies and curriculum are in line with those of the rest of the school. In addition to this, as an Early Years Unit, we adhere to the safe guarding procedures outlined in the Early Years statutory framework and are aware of the additional safeguarding issues involved when working and supporting younger children and the additional statutory requirements laid out, see our intimate care policy etc. We watch the children whilst eating and we have named key workers for the children and share information with their care givers regularly. We carry out a formal daily risk assessment of our classroom and outdoor areas, ensuring the equipment and environment is suitable and safe every morning. We continue to monitor these areas throughout the day.

We promote health, well-being and staying safe throughout early years and discuss these matters on an appropriate level. Please see the school safeguarding policy.

In early years we promote oral health, and use carpet times to discuss how we can keep healthy.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed every year.

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## 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, medical Policy, First Aid Policy, Medicine Policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy, Medical Policy, First Aid Policy, Medicine 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