



Exeter Pre-Prep School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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INTRODUCTION

This policy applies to all staff across the school who work with EYFS children. This policy must be read in conjunction with Exeter Pre-Prep School policies, all of which are applicable to the EYFS as they are to Key Stage 1, including:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- Risk Assessment policy
- First Aid policy
- Administration of Medicines policy
- Parental Complaints procedure
- Missing Child policy
- Uncollected Child policy
- Equal Opportunities policy
- Behaviour policy
- Health and Safety policy

Within the EYFS and as a school, we aim to help our pupils to achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic wellbeing. Fundamental British values of mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs will be upheld at all times.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Exeter Pre-Prep School consists of the Nursery and Reception Class. Under the revised statutory framework (2025) the EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A UNIQUE CHILD

Child Development

In the EYFS we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, celebration in assemblies and in class circle times, this encourages children to develop a positive attitude to learning. Every area of development – physical, cognitive, linguistic, spiritual, social and emotional is equally important.

Inclusive Practice

We value the diversity of individuals within the EYFS and all children are treated fairly regardless of their race, gender, qualities, unique attributes, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our School. We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs and styles
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- Promoting a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued

- Using resources which reflect diversity, free from discrimination and stereotyping
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

Keeping Safe

It is important to us that all children in school are safe. We aim to ensure that the children are aware of boundaries and expectations of behaviour. We provide children with choices to help them develop important life skills. 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 wellbeing of all children. We will also collect and maintain at least two emergency contact details for each child.

Health and Wellbeing

We understand that we are legally required to comply with the welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for EYFS. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children
- Follow up any prolonged or unexplained absences.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Respecting each other

In the EYFS we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through forming secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Working with Parents

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts at our school
- Giving the children the opportunity to spend time with their class teacher before starting at our school during taster visits
- By inviting parents to parent/teacher meetings and offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress and allowing free access to their child's work
- Sending home a termly progress report in Nursery and Reception, and a final report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the Reception year
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher if there are any concerns

- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents, such as the harvest festival, parent drop-in afternoons, nativity performances and the summer showcase
- Inviting parents to post wow moments and comments relating to the children's experiences on the online learning journal, Tapestry.
- Providing parents with information about activities in school via our weekly newsletter and social media.

Supporting Learning and the role of the teacher and support staff

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop strong and valuable relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them and deal with their concerns, no matter how small. The EYFS uses the term 'Key Person' which refers to the person whose role it is to ensure that every child's learning and care meets their individual needs. The Key Person's role is also to support parents and carers in guiding their child's development at home and to engage with more specialist support if necessary. At Exeter Pre-Prep School, the Key Person is the child's class teacher.

The Wider Context

We aim to work successfully with families and outside professionals through:

- Supporting transition within the setting by focusing on the child and their family
- Gathering information from families specific to the child's interests and experiences
- Working closely with professionals and outside agencies to meet the needs of individual children
- Learning about the child's local community and home environment.

ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS

Within our EYFS setting at Exeter Pre-Prep School, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning/Supporting Every Child

Planning in the EYFS encompasses both topic-based learning and follows the children's interests. EYFS staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps in learning. These observations inform future planning. Children learn through a combination of independent play and focused tasks.

Our short-term activity planning aims to foster the children's interests, developing a high level of motivation for the individual learner. Formative assessment of children's learning informs everyday planning and is based on ongoing assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects the identified needs.

All EYFS Staff observe the children in many ways: 'caught moments', planned observations and evaluation of structured activities. Professional judgement is supported by evidence collected through annotated photographs, examples of work and written records of conversations. These are recorded in children's individual Learning Journeys: adult-initiated learning is kept in a folder, while child-initiated learning is recorded online using Tapestry. These files also contain information provided by parents and other settings.

EYFS Profile and Reporting to Parents

In the autumn term, children in Reception will take part in CEM baseline assessments. Exeter Pre-Prep School complies with digital assessment components and ensures that data will be handled in line with GDPR.

At the end of the Reception year, we use the EYFS Profile to summarise the formative assessments. Each child's level of development is recorded against the assessment scales derived from the Early Learning Goals.

In the summer term of the Reception year, staff provide an opportunity to discuss each child's progress with parents and they receive a written report at the end of the academic year. This information is shared with the children's Year 1 teacher before they start within Year 1.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, is arranged to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. There are seven areas of learning which can be accessed through continuous provision, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. This has a positive effect on the children's development. The children have the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

We recognise that children have different learning styles and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected. We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experience. Activities are planned for both the inside and outside environment and children are able to move between the indoor and outdoor classroom throughout the day, whatever the weather.

Playing and Exploring

We provide an environment with:

- Stimulating resources which are accessible, open ended and can be used and combined in a variety of ways and are relevant to the children's interests
- Flexible space indoors and outdoors to explore, build and move
- A planned, organised and calm atmosphere to aid concentration
- Resources which a child can move, change and affect
- Challenges appropriate to the development of the children

Active Learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and Thinking Critically

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can

access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the environment to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape the provision in our EYFS setting. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

The three **prime areas** are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Prime Areas:

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

Children will also be supported in the four **Specific areas** through which the Prime Areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

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

We deliver learning for all of the areas through purposeful play and learning experiences with a balance of child initiated and adult led activities.

THE PRIME AREAS

1. Communication and Language

Opportunities are provided across the curriculum to develop and enrich the communication and language skills of every child. Language skills are developed and promoted as children interact with one another, developing relationships and a knowledge that their efforts to communicate are valued. Free access to books including picture books, stories and non-fiction along with regular group story times, promote a love of books and reading.

Early Learning Goals

Listening, Attention and Understanding

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions;
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding;
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

Speaking

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary;

- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate;
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

2. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

This area focuses on children learning how to work, play, co-operate with others and function in a group beyond the family. Aspects of moral development including the development of personal values and an understanding of self and others are also explored. Fundamental British values of mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs are upheld and children are encouraged to develop an understanding of British values.

Children are encouraged to develop self-confidence and independence and to establish effective relationships with other children and adults. They learn to work as part of a group and independently, to concentrate and persevere in their learning and to seek help when needed. They are encouraged to develop a desire to explore new learning and to show an ability to initiate ideas and solve simple, practical problems. They work towards independence in selecting an activity or resource.

Children are encouraged to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others, developing an understanding of what is right and wrong and why. They learn to take turns and share fairly. They learn to express their feelings and behave in appropriate ways, showing expressions of wonder, joy and contemplation in response to their experiences of the world.

Early Learning Goals

Self-Regulation

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate;
- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

Managing Self

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge;
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly;
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

Building Relationships

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others;
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers;
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

3. Physical Development

Here the learning focus is on developing skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. Children learn these skills through being active and interactive in all that they do. Provision is made for regular and frequent physical activity both indoors and outside. This includes sessions using PE equipment as well as free play and break times. A range of resources such as construction kits, threading, playdough, cutting and finger gym activities provide opportunities for fine motor development. Specific mark making and handwriting sessions also focus on developing the appropriate tripod pencil grip.

Early Learning Goals

Gross Motor Skills

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others;
- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing;
- Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

Fine Motor Skills

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases;
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery;
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

THE SPECIFIC AREAS

1. Literacy

Children develop their knowledge of phonics and are able to link sounds to letters. We follow the Twinkl phonics scheme, supplemented with resources from 'Jolly Phonics' and 'Letters and Sounds'. An environment which is rich in print helps to promote the awareness of the written word. A wide variety of opportunities to experiment and develop mark making and writing skills are promoted cross curricular and within the context of role-play as well as part of teacher-initiated activities.

Early Learning Goals

Comprehension

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary;
- Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories;
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

Word Reading

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs;
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending;
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

Writing

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed;
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters;

- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

2. Mathematics

Mathematics is fostered through children becoming confident and competent at applying basic number knowledge and learnt skills appropriately. These include, counting, sorting, matching, recognising and creating patterns, recognising relationships between numbers. Children will also have opportunities to explore a range of activities involving shape, space and measures. Children will be taught these skills and will apply them through songs, games, imaginative play as well as practical activities such as cooking, construction and exploring a range of materials.

Early Learning Goals

Number

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number;
- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5;
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

Numerical Patterns

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system;
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity;
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

3. Understanding the world

This area of learning provides the foundation for later work in science, design and technology, history, geography and ICT. Every child's natural curiosity is fostered and encouraged as they explore and make sense of the world in which they live. They are encouraged to think critically and pose questions to promote an enquiring mind.

Early Learning Goals

Past and Present

- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society;
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

People, Culture and Communities

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps;
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.

The Natural World

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants;
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

4. Expressive arts and design

The children are encouraged to respond to, express, explore, experiment and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings through a range of materials. They will be provided with experiences and artefacts to inspire and stimulate their curiosity and promote experimentation with ideas, sound and movement as well as materials. Time is given for children to express themselves in a safe, nurturing environment and to develop their own ideas through freedom of expression and a sense of pride at their individuality.

Early Learning Goals

Creating with Materials

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function;
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used;
- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

Being Imaginative and Expressive

- Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher;
- Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs;
- Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music.

Health and Safety

EYFS Staff have a day-to-day responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of children in the EYFS. They must report any concerns to the Head and/or EYFS Co-ordinator immediately. EYFS Staff have a daily responsibility for inspecting classrooms, play areas and equipment used.

Intimate Care

Children are encouraged to be independent when toileting and taught how to maintain good hygiene by teaching effective hand washing. Should children need any support and assistance in changing or toileting, staff will consider the child's privacy at all times in balance with safeguarding considerations.

Healthy Eating

In the EYFS we aim to encourage and develop children's skills so they can make informed choices about food and drink. We help them to develop positive attitudes towards nutrition, diet and health. Our snack times, cookery activities and lunchtimes promote healthy eating and drinking. EYFS Staff

support and encourage good table manners at snack and mealtimes. Children are also supervised during all eating times. Staff will sit or stand where they can observe all children while eating. Food sharing is discouraged to reduce the risk of allergic reactions. Staff also have access to up-to-date dietary requirements and allergy information for each child.

Professional Development

In the EYFS we aim to raise the quality of our provision by encouraging and supporting the professional and personal development of the EYFS Staff through supervision, learning walks, observations and staff reviews and appraisals. Training courses run by the local authority and other professional bodies are regularly shared with staff who can apply to the EYFS Co-ordinator or the Head to attend any CPD relevant to their role. All staff hold Paediatric First Aid training which is renewed every three years, as stated in the EYFS statutory framework. All staff receive safeguarding training which is regular and relevant, clearly documented and reviewed periodically, in line with our safeguarding policy.

Whistleblowing

All staff, volunteers and students must be able to raise concerns if they believe there is poor or unsafe practice in the setting's safeguarding provision. Staff can report concerns to the Head or the Chair of Governors. If they feel unable to raise concerns internally, they can contact the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line on 0808 800 5000 or email help@NSPCC.org.uk.