Southwark Diocesan
Board of Education
Multi-Academy Trust

EYFS POLICY

Part of the 2026/2027 Trust Operating Manual

EYFS POLICY

Contents

1. AIMS 1
2. Legislation 1
3. Structure of the EYFS Text 1
4. Curriculum 1
5. ASSESSMENT 2
6. WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS 3
7. staff 3
8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures 4
9. Monitoring arrangements 8

EYFS POLICY

1. AIMS

1.1 This policy aims to ensure:

(a) That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a secure foundation for learning, development and good progress through school and life

(b) Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind

(c) A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers

(d) Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. LEGISLATION

2.1 This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), effective from 1 September 2025.

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

3. STRUCTURE OF THE EYFS

Our Early Years provision offers Nursery places for children from **2 years old**, with **15- or 30-hour places** available. Parents can also pay for **additional top-up hours** where required. We also have a **Reception class offering full-time places**. At the start of the academic year, we tend to use a **staggered entry** for Reception children to support a smooth transition and help them settle into school. **Nursery children may access either part-time or full-time provision, with arrangements tailored to support children in settling into the setting and making a positive start to their learning journey.**

4. CURRICULUM

4.1 Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest EYFS statutory framework.

4.2 The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that we must teach. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Three areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

(a) Communication and language

(b) Physical development

(c) Personal, social and emotional development

We also support the children in 4 specific areas which help strengthen and develop the 3 prime areas, and ignite the children's curiosity and enthusiasm:

(d) Literacy

(e) Mathematics

(f) Understanding the world

(g) Expressive arts and design

4.3 Planning

(a) Our staff are ambitious for all children and plan activities and experiences that enable them to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas. Throughout our EYFS, we place a strong focus on supporting children to develop the

foundational skills they need for learning, which will be built upon and developed as they progress through school.

(b) 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 challenging and enjoyable experiences.

(c) Where a child may have a special educational need or disability (SEND), staff consider whether specialist support is required, working closely with parents/carers and linking with relevant services and other agencies where appropriate to ensure children receive the right support to meet their individual needs.

(d) In planning and guiding children's activities, staff recognise and respond to the different rates at which children develop, taking into account each child's individual starting point, needs, interests and stage of development. Staff carefully adapt and differentiate learning experiences to provide the appropriate level of challenge and support, ensuring that all children are encouraged to make progress, develop confidence and build the foundational skills they need for their future learning.

4.4 Teaching

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

(b) They respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interactions and purposeful teaching.

(c) As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards a greater focus on teaching essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning, while continuing to build on children's individual interests and strengths. This helps children to develop the confidence, independence and foundational skills needed to prepare them for Key Stage 1.

5. ASSESSMENT

5.1 At St Stephen's, 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.

5.2 When a child is **aged between 2 and 3**, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed. It also focuses on any areas of possible concern, which may indicate a disability, special educational need or developmental delay. The progress check will describe the activities and strategies that the school intends to adopt to address any issues or concerns, involving parents and/or carers and other professionals as appropriate.

5.3 Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the reception baseline assessment (RBA). [The requirements for the RBA are set out in Annex B of EYFS statutory framework]

5.4 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:

(a) Meeting expected levels of development

(b) Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

5.5 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.

5.6 The school shares the results of each child's 'progress check' and EYFS profile (but not the reception baseline assessment) with their parents and/or carers.

5.7 In exceptional circumstances, after discussion and only in agreement with parents and/or carers, a child might stay in EYFS provision beyond the end of the academic year in which they turn 5. In these exceptional cases, we will continue to assess the child throughout their time in EYFS provision and complete their profile at the end of the year before they move into year 1.

5.8 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

6.1 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.

6.2 We keep parents and/or carers up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile help to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

6.3 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 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.

6.4 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:

(a) 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

(b) Support all staff to feel supported and confident in implementing our safeguarding policy and procedures

(c) 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

(d) Outline how training is delivered, and how staff are supported to put it in place, in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, which is available in the policies section on the school website.

Our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will:

(a) Provide ongoing support, advice and guidance to all staff

(b) Attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework

(c) Liaise as needed with local statutory children's services agencies and our local safeguarding partners

1.2 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:

(a) Obtaining a reference for any member of staff (including students and volunteers) before they are recruited

(b) Recording information about staff qualifications and identity checks, vetting processes and references

See our safeguarding policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures available in the policies section on the school website.

1.3 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 headteacher. If the concern is about the headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern Philip Ratcliff (Chair of Governors.)

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.

2. 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 and safeguarding policy, which is available in the policies section on the school website for more information.

2.1 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 headteacher/ chair of governors – referred to from here as the 'recipient' – they will:

(a) 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

(b) Get as much detail as possible about the concern at this meeting, and record the information

(c) Establish whether there is sufficient cause for concern to warrant further investigation. If there is, then:

  (i) Arrange a further investigation into the matter, involving the CEO, local governing body and/or chair of trustees, 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

  (ii) Inform the person who raised the concern about how the matter is being investigated and give an estimated timef rame 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.

2.2 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:

(a) For children aged under 2, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 3 children.

(b) For children aged 2, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 5 children

(c) For children aged 3 and over:

Where there is a person with qualified teacher status, early years professional status, or early years teacher status, an instructor or another suitably-qualified, overseas-trained teacher:

(i) For classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5 or older within the school year, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 30 children

(ii) For all other classes, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children

(iii) At least 1 other member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification, or has received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status

(d) Where a person with the above qualifications is not working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 8 children

(i) At least 1 member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification, or has received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status

(ii) At least half of all other staff hold an approved level 2 qualification

For reception classes in maintained schools and academies:

(e) We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils

For mixed classes in maintained schools and academies:

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

2.3 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.

2.4 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

We also have a DSL who has lead responsibility for safeguarding children. They are also responsible for:

(a) Liaising with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSPs (local safeguarding partners)

(b) Providing support, advice and guidance to all other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required

(c) Attending a safeguarding training course that complies with the criteria set out in annex C of the latest EYFS framework

2.5 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.

As part of updated statutory guidance for children pre-statutory school age (below 5 years old), EYFS settings are now legally required to follow up on unexplained absence and must also have at least two emergency contacts on file for every child.

EYFS Statutory Framework September 2025 (Section 3.11):

"Providers must follow up on absences in a timely manner. If a child is absent for a prolonged period of time, or if a child is absent without notification from the parent or carer, attempts must be made to contact the child's parents and/or carers and alternative emergency contacts."

At this school, we would deem children in:

(a) Nursery

(b) …..

To be within the Early Years Foundation Stage

As part of monitoring and improving pupil attendance within the Early Years Foundation Stage

We will also:

(a) Monitor patterns and trends in absences.

(b) Take into account each child's personal circumstances when reviewing absence

(c) Use our professional judgement when deciding whether an absence is prolonged and a cause for concern.

If a child within the EYFS is absent from school, the school will follow the relevant procedures, which include:

(a) Contacting parents and carers in the first instance to understand why the child is absent

(b) Reach out to emergency contacts if no response from parent/carer

(c) Following the school safeguarding procedures as appropriate, if contact with parents/carers still cannot be made

1.2 Oral health and tooth brushing

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by:

(a) The effects of eating too many sweet things

(b) The importance of brushing your teeth

(c) If you have introduced/want to introduce supervised tooth brushing, insert: We operate/intend to introduce a supervised tooth brushing programme, to support the children's oral health. We follow government guidance on supervised toothbrushing to make sure that it is evidence-based and safe.

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

1.3 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 setting, we will get information on their:

(a) Dietary requirements and preferences

(b) Food allergies and intolerances

(c) 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:

(a) Create allergy action plans for their child – with the help of health professionals, where appropriate

  (i) We will also keep this information up to date and share it with all staff

(b) Discuss their child's progress with solid foods

(c) 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:

(a) Prevents choking

(b) Meets each child's individual developmental needs

(c) 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.

1.4 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:

(a) Accident or injury sustained by the child

(b) 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.

1.5 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.

We comply with requirements of health and safety legislation, including fire safety and hygiene requirements.

1.6 Toileting and privacy

We make sure that there are:

(a) Enough toilets and hand basins available for the children

(b) Suitable and hygienic nappy changing facilities

(c) An adequate supply of necessary items such as clean bedding, towels and spare clothes

(d) Separate toilet facilities for adults

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

2. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Kirsty Taylor (EYFS Leader) every two years.

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

1. 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, see [insert link to school's policy page].

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/carer 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