



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

Article 28: Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights

Article 30: Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.

Article 31: Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities

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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

A strong foundation in the Early Years is crucial for children's success throughout their education and beyond.” Amanda Spielman, 2023.

At The Cherrywood Federation our EYFS provision provides the strong foundations for children's cognitive, social and emotional development. We believe all children deserve to have an equal chance of success and are able to thrive. We provide a safe, stimulating environment in which children can experiment, explore and progress in their own creative ways. We consider the individual needs, interests and development of each child and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences in all areas of learning and development, providing high quality care, and a nurturing setting. We are committed to inclusive practice that recognises and values diversity. We support children with English as an Additional Language, children from different cultural and religious backgrounds, and those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Teaching, resources, and environments seek to reflect the diversity of the wider world to foster respect, tolerance and understanding from the earliest age.

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 policy links to other school policies-

Attendance Policy

Administration of Medicines Policy

Early Years Settling in Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Recruitment Policy

SEND policy

Staff Conduct Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

3. Structure of the EYFS

At both Hatfeild Primary School and Joseph Hood Primary School, EYFS comprises of a Nursery and Reception. Both schools offer 30 hour provision (these places can be funded or self-funded) and provision for rising 3s in Nursery. The Nursery at Hatfeild Primary School offers 26 places in each session and the Nursery at Joseph Hood is able to offer up to 39 places in each session. Sessions are split into mornings and afternoons.

Nursery session times at Joseph Hood Primary School and Hatfeild Primary School:

Morning Nursery 8.45-11.45

Afternoon Nursery 12.15-3.15

Reception is the final year of EYFS and children start in Reception in the September of the year that they turn 5. Children attend full time and the school day runs from 8.45-3.15.

4. Curriculum

Our Early Years settings follow the curriculum as outlined in the latest EYFS statutory framework.

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:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- 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:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Across the Federation, we want our EYFS curriculum to provide all children with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to be confident, curious and independent learners.

Our aim is for children to leave Early Years as sociable empathetic individuals with a developing understanding that everyone should be valued and respected; preparing our children for both their future learning journey and to be responsible citizens in modern Britain.

4.1 Planning

We ensure planning is ambitious, engaging, and personalised, providing experiences for our children 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.

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 a challenging and enjoyable experience.

Where a child may have a special educational need or disability (SEND), staff 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

Children learn best through hands-on, meaningful play and real experiences.

We provide:

- a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities
- enabling indoor and outdoor environments
- language-rich interactions and guided play

We teach a rich and broad, well structured curriculum that suits the needs of our children. We carefully map out the skills we want our children to learn across Nursery and Reception which then links to the school's Yr 1-6 curriculum.

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 essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning, to help the children prepare for Key Stage 1.

5. Assessment

At The Cherrywood Federation, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the 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. Our schools use the Evidence Me platform to share observations with parents and for parents to share updates and comments on their child's progress. Staff will address any learning and development needs swiftly in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff administer the reception baseline assessment (RBA). The requirements for the RBA are set out in Annex B of the EYFS statutory framework. [EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers](#)

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 profile data 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.

The school shares the results of each child's baseline assessment and progress updates throughout the year with parents and/or carers. At the end of Nursery and Reception, parents receive a written report for their child with a commentary on their child's progress in both the prime and specific areas of learning.

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.

6. Working with parents and carers

6.1 Relationships with parents

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 therefore work hard to develop trusting, caring, respectful, professional relationships with both our children and their families.

We keep parents and/or carers up to date with their child's progress and development through parents' evenings, Evidence Me updates and end of year reports. We also provide curriculum information and home learning ideas and encourage parents to be involved in school life. We provide stay and play sessions prior to children starting in our EYFS, run reading cafes, where parents can come into school to read with their child, parent drop ins-opportunities for parents to visit school and children to share their learning, parent workshops for parents to find out more about the curriculum and what their child is learning and we have "open door" policy for school to build relationships with parents.

We hope these 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 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.

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

6.2 Phonics and Early Reading

We teach children to read through our structured synthetic phonics programme, Read, Write, Inc (RWI). Children have daily phonic lessons which follow a clear, consistent teaching sequence and provide opportunities for children to practise reading and blending words/sentences daily. We follow the order of teaching laid out in the scheme, providing fidelity to the RWI scheme and ensuring a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics across the school. Through RWI accredited training and coaching we have developed a consistent approach to phonics teaching- we use the same lesson structures, terminology, flashcards, resources and classroom displays.

In early reading, only phonetically decodable books are issued for independent reading, and these match the grapheme-phoneme correspondence that children know. Books are sent home in Reception as soon as children are beginning to blend and decode simple words.

6.3 Maths

We believe that maths in the EYFS should be fun, relevant and accessible. We use the White Rose scheme of work to teach children maths across the school. This focuses on a CVA approach-concrete, visual and abstract. In EYFS we use a variety of concrete resources. Children are shown where these resources are kept and are encouraged to use the resources independently and self-select those they think are appropriate for whatever

they are doing. We teach using a combination of these concrete, pictorial and abstract techniques.

6.4 Play

We provide a free-flow play based environment. We believe that well planned and purposeful play is vital in encouraging young children to learn. "Play is the highest form of research," Albert Einstein.

We plan, organise and resource the indoor and outdoor areas to provide play opportunities across all the early learning areas. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to regulate their emotions and understand the need for rules.

Children's knowledge, skills and understanding within each area of the curriculum will be developed through a combination of teacher-led learning, supported and guided group time, play-based learning, and time to develop their knowledge and skills independently.

Although adults in the EYFS will support and scaffold pupils' learning to enable them to reach their full potential, there will be a wide range of opportunities for children to develop and progress independently through play-based learning known as 'Areas of Continuous Provision' or 'Free Flow Learning'. On a daily basis children will experience a balance of group focused work and independent or supported Free Flow learning.

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 annually, 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
- Outline how training is delivered, and how staff are supported to put it in place, in our child protection and safeguarding policy

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 two references 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 Executive Headteacher/Heads of School. If the concern is about the Executive Headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the LADO, John Shelley. See our Safeguarding and Whistleblowing policy for more information.

7.4 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 and Safeguarding Policy for more information.

8.1 Responding to allegations or concerns

If we have concerns about children's safety or welfare, we will notify our local authority children's social care team- The Children and Families Hub (MASH)- , 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 working at either school, or elsewhere, e.g. on a visit, we will inform Ofsted and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

8.1.1 Investigating the concern

When a concern is received by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Executive Headteacher or Head/s of School– referred to from here as the 'recipient' – 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 in a factual manner and in a timeline manner.
- Seek HR advice.
- 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 Executive Headteacher or Head/s of School, if appropriate. In some cases, the recipient may need to bring in an external, independent body to investigate, such as the LADO. 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:

For children in the school nursery setting

- We have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children
- At least 1 member of staff is a school teacher as defined by section 122 of the Education Act 2002
- 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

Reception classes

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

8.3 Paediatric first aid (PFA)

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate in the EYFS setting and several members of staff across the school who are paediatric first aid trained and available at all times when children are present, including on outings and in extended school care. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

8.4 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

We have a DSL who has lead responsibility for safeguarding all children. This person is the Head/s of School. 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
- We have a member of the Early Years staff who has attended new to DSL training.

8.5 Absence

We're required to promptly follow up on absences. We undertake first day calling if parents/carers have not told us about their child's absence. We will attempt to contact the

parents/carers first to check on a child's absence. If we are unable to make contact with parents, we will then contact alternative emergency contacts

See our attendance policy for more information regarding this, including our expectations of parents/carers to report child absences.

8.6 Oral health and tooth brushing

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the Early Years by talking to the children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth and good dental hygiene
- Healthy eating habits
- We invite a local dentist practitioner into school to talk to the children about how to brush your teeth

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 and, where possible, in a designated eating space.

Before a child joins our setting, 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. Parents / carers will be asked to contact the catering company directly- should their child require an adapted menu at lunchtimes and / or After School Care provision.

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.

Children receiving a 'special menu' will be allocated a lanyard that must be worn during mealtimes.

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 accidents 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 parents / carers if their child has a head injury; this will be via text message or telephone call. For head injuries, a qualified first aider will be asked to check the child over.

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.

We conduct robust and proportionate risk assessments for:

- daily premises checks
- off-site visits and external providers
- activities with physical or environmental risk (e.g. outdoor education)
- fire, hygiene, food safety and evacuation

All risks are reviewed termly or after any incident. Dynamic risk assessment is part of staff decision-making at all times. 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 spare clothes
- Separate toilet facilities for adults

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

Linked policy: Intimate Care and Toileting Policy

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Anita Saville (Executive Headteacher) annually

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

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 below.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	Cherrywood Federation Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedure for responding to illness	Health and Safety Policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	Health and Safety Policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	Cherrywood Federation Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedures for a parent/carer failing to collect a child and for missing children	Cherrywood Federation Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	Cherrywood Federation Complaints Procedure
Attendance Policy	Cherrywood Federation Attendance policy