Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

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1. Vision

Together we flourish in the love of God

Elements Diocesan Learning Trust values the individual nature of each school within the Trust family. We believe that every person is a unique and precious gift, created with purpose and value. We nurture each person as a child of God and recognise their inherent potential. Through our collective efforts, we inspire hope, nurture faith, and promote the flourishing of each school.
We ensure that every person is seen, valued, and empowered to succeed, regardless of their background or circumstances. Through justice and equity, we foster an inclusive environment where diversity is celebrated, and every person's unique gifts are honoured.
By embracing these principles, we create a culture where every person values themselves, their community, and the world around them to become compassionate, confident, and responsible individuals.

Values

To love, to learn, to serve – through collaboration, honesty and hope.

Our core values underpin all aspects of our Trust as we strive to make a positive difference to the lives of all pupils whilst they are at school and in later life. Through these values, we can be sure our community is one of hope; a place of transformation and trust, where all are treated with respect and dignity.

Love
We are committed to Compassion and Care: As Christ commands, we strive to love one another deeply, fostering empathy, respect, and kindness. We create a culture where we genuinely care for each other, supporting personal, professional and spiritual growth, as we walk in His love.

Learn
We are committed to Continuous Growth and Wisdom: Following the call to grow in knowledge and understanding, we cultivate a culture of curiosity, adaptability, and continual improvement. We encourage all to seek wisdom and learning, guided by God's truth, that we might serve more effectively.

Serve
We are committed to Service and Impact: Inspired by Christ's example of humble service, we dedicate ourselves to serving others, contributing to the well-being of our schools, communities, and beyond, bringing His light and love into all we do.

Collaboration
We are committed to Unity in Purpose: We value working together in mutual respect, knowing that through collaboration, we can have a greater impact supporting each other to achieve our shared vision.

Honesty
We are committed to Integrity and Truth: Following Christ's call to live in truth, we foster a culture of honesty, transparency, and trust, ensuring that our actions reflect His integrity in all dealings, upholding the highest ethical standards.

Hope
We are committed to Inspiring Hope and Faith: As bearers of Christ's hope, we instil in every individual the belief in their God-given potential to achieve great things, trusting in His plan to bring good out of all circumstances, and inspiring hope for a future filled with His promises.

2. 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

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

4. Structure of the EYFS

Our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting provides education for children aged 4–5 years old in our Reception class. The children attend full-time, following the school's normal school day from 8.40am – 3:15pm Monday to Friday, during term time.

The Reception class provides a structured and nurturing learning environment where children have opportunities to learn through a balance of adult-led activities and child-initiated play. The provision follows the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework and supports children across all seven areas of learning and development.

As Reception is part of the school, places are offered as full-time school places and there is no nursery-style hourly charging. Additional wraparound care, such as breakfast or after-school provision, may be available separately and is charged in accordance with the school's current fees.

5. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows 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

5.1 Planning

Long-term planning
Our EYFS class is mixed-age, so themes are planned on a three-year cycle. Six themes are chosen each year, which ensures children gain broad coverage across Key Stage 1 and don't repeat units of work as they move through the school.

Planning for all areas of learning
Teachers plan for all areas of learning and are responsive to the children's interests and needs. Themes provide a starting point, but planning is flexible and adapted as children's learning develops.

Provision
Enhanced provision is planned weekly to cover all areas of the EYFS framework. It is regularly adapted and amended to meet children's needs and interests. Learning in provision is either open-ended, giving children the freedom to explore and use their imagination, or linked to relevant learning, for example supporting children's phonics or reinforcing what they have learned in lessons.

The learning environment
The classroom is organised into different areas so that children can access all areas of learning. We also set weekly Rainbow Challenges, which encourage children to engage with a range of areas of learning, such as writing, maths and creative activities.

5.2 Teaching

Children are exposed to a well planned and thorough curriculum that covers all areas of the EYFS Framework. 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.

6. Assessment

At Offenham CE First School, 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.

Within the first 6 weeks of starting in Reception class, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) as well as the WellComm communication assessment. This enables staff to provide communication skills intervention for children who need it from early on in the year.

Daily formative assessment is completed by the class teacher to keep track of children's progress and attainment to support future planning and teaching.

Details of the children's progress is shared with parents during parents' evenings. 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 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.

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.

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other schools across the trust and Local authority, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. We submit EYFS profile data to the local authority on request.

7. Working with parents and carers

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 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.

We hold meetings for parents and carers before their children start school, so that families can become familiar with our setting. We also carry out home visits, which allow us to meet each child in a familiar environment and build a positive relationship with their parents and carers from the start. In September, we host a Welcome to Reception meeting, where we explain how parents and carers can best support their child's learning and provide resources to use at home. Parents' evenings are held twice a year to discuss children's attainment and progress. In addition, our 'Walk in Thursday' sessions give parents and carers the opportunity to come into the classroom with their child and look at the learning they have completed in school. Parents and carers are informed of the different ways they can contact members of staff if they have any questions or concerns. We ask parents/carers to provide more than 2 emergency contact numbers for their child (where possible).

8. Staff

8.1 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 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

- Outline how training is delivered, and how staff are supported to put it in place, in our child protection and safeguarding policy available electronically on the school website or on request from the School Office.

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

8.2 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 a reference 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 child protection and safeguarding policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures.

8.3 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 to [the chair of the Local School board.

See our whistleblowing policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures and more detail on our procedures for handling whistleblowing which can be found electronically on the school website or on request at the School Office.

8.3.1 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.

9. 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.

9.1 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).

The procedure for dealing with allegations against staff is set out in Appendix 3 of the Child Protection and safeguarding Policy in the Allegations against staff (including low-level concerns) policy.

9.2 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 classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5 or older within the school year, we comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils. There is also a member of support staff in the classroom.

9.3 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.

9.4 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

We also have a DSL who has lead responsibility for safeguarding children. 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

9.5 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.

See our attendance policy available electronically on our website or on request at the School Office for more on this, including our expectations of parents/carers to report child absences.

9.6 Oral health and tooth brushing

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by teaching it explicity for a half term during the year and have a visit from a dental professional.

We address the effects of eating too many sweet things and the importance of brushing your teeth

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's Child protection and safeguarding policy, available electronically on our website or on request at the School Office

9.7 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 or highchair 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. 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:

- 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.

9.8 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 in line with the First Aid Policy.

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 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.

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

9.10 Toileting and privacy

We make sure that there are:

- Enough toilets and hand basins available for the children
- An adequate supply of necessary items such as clean bedding, towels and spare clothes

- Separate toilet facilities for adults

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

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Trust every 3 years.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Local School 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/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