



**OFFORD**  
PRIMARY  
SCHOOL

# EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

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<b>Approved by:</b>	Governing Body
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## Introduction

At Offord Primary School, we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a critical period in a child's development, laying the groundwork for lifelong learning, well-being, and success. Children develop more rapidly from birth to five than at any other stage, and the experiences they have during these formative years shape their future.

We are committed to providing a secure, nurturing, and stimulating environment where every child can thrive. Our EYFS provision is not only a preparation for the next stage of education but a foundation for life.

## Our Vision

We believe that every child has the right to grow up safe, healthy, and happy. They should be supported to enjoy learning, achieve their potential, and make a positive contribution to the world around them. Our aim is to foster confident, curious, and capable learners who are ready to embrace the opportunities ahead.

## Our Aims

We are dedicated to:

- Creating a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment that supports the needs of all children, including those with additional or special educational needs.
- Delivering a broad, balanced, and creative curriculum that promotes personal, social, emotional, spiritual, physical, and intellectual development.
- Recognising and celebrating each child as a unique individual, supporting them to progress at their own pace.
- Encouraging independence, resilience, and self-confidence through meaningful choices and decision-making.
- Building strong partnerships with parents, carers, and previous settings, valuing their insights and contributions.
- Ensuring that all children, regardless of background, culture, language, ability, or gender, are enabled to succeed.
- Providing rich, engaging, and inclusive learning experiences that inspire curiosity, risk-taking, and a love of learning.

## Guiding Principles of the EYFS

Our approach is rooted in the four overarching principles of the EYFS Framework:

### 1. A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a capable learner who develops at their own pace. We nurture their individuality, resilience, and confidence, using praise and encouragement to foster a positive attitude to learning.

### 2. Positive Relationships

Children learn best when they feel safe and valued. We prioritise warm, respectful, and professional relationships with children and their families, and support children in developing kind, empathetic relationships with their peers.



### 3. Enabling Environments

Our learning environments—indoors and outdoors—are thoughtfully designed to inspire exploration and extend learning. We use observations and assessments to plan purposeful, challenging experiences that reflect children’s interests and developmental needs.

### 4. Learning and Development

We get to know each child from the outset through the Reception Baseline Assessment, observations, and conversations with families and previous settings. Our high-quality teaching and tailored activities ensure that every child makes meaningful progress from their unique starting point.

#### **In our school these principles look like this:**

**A Unique Child** - We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at Offord Primary School are treated fairly, regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning. In Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging targets that match the needs of our children as individuals, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year. We plan, giving opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence. We use a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs. We provide a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them learn effectively. We offer a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued. Challenging activities are provided to meet the needs of all children. Children’s progress is monitored, and action is taken to provide support as necessary (such as referrals to speech therapy). We work closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children’s needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress

**Positive Relationships**- Parents/Carers are kept informed of their child’s development throughout the year through parent consultations, via our online home learning platform, Seesaw, through informal conversations and an end of year report. Parents are encouraged to read with their child and are supported to do this effectively. Parents are invited to curriculum workshops throughout the year, including Maths, Reading/Writing and Phonics. Parents are also invited into school for ‘Welcome Weekdays’ throughout the school year. Teaching staff prioritise forming positive attachments with children at the very start of their school lives. This ensures children feel safe and supported in school, meaning they get the very best out of their learning. Children are supported to form kind and caring relationships with peers and to start to build relationships. They are taught to navigate social situations and build their resilience when this goes wrong.

**Enabling Environments**- There are specific areas where the children can be active, be focused and be creative. The Foundation Stage has its own outdoor classroom area which enables us to offer outdoor learning opportunities, for doing things in different ways and in different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We provide the children with daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned learning opportunities, whilst also providing free access to high quality resources. We ensure that play-based learning is highly valued and that children have opportunities to direct their own learning, paired with adult-led sessions to advance progress. Our indoor and outdoor spaces are calm, inspiring and safe. They foster a sense of intrigue and curiosity, whilst also reducing cognitive load. Our classrooms continually strive to be places where children love to be and where they feel a positive attitude towards their learning. Our environment evolves throughout



the year to reflect our individual children, their passions, interests and experiences. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe and tidy and are always monitored by an adult.

**Learning and Development-** The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum centres around 17 Early Learning Goals against which each child is assessed at the end of their Reception year. Within this there are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early year's settings. All areas of learning and development are equally weighted in terms of significance and focus, and more importantly, they are all interconnected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. They require a balance of adult led and child- initiated activities to enable most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS, and where this is not possible, to reach their own personal milestones. These areas of learning can be split into three prime and four specific areas of learning, all of which are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and to thrive.

The three Prime areas are: Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language and Physical Development.

The Specific Areas are: Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.

## Characteristics of Effective Learning

At the heart of our curriculum lie the three Characteristics of Effective Learning, which are embedded throughout our teaching, planning, and provision. These are:

### Playing and Exploring

Children are given rich opportunities to investigate, experience, and 'have a go'. Through play, they explore and develop learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build ideas, learn self-regulation, and begin to understand the importance of rules. Play encourages creative thinking both independently and collaboratively. As children investigate and solve problems, they communicate and share their discoveries with others.

### Active Learning

Children are supported to concentrate, persevere through challenges, and take pride in their achievements. Active learning thrives when children are motivated and engaged. We foster independence and give children ownership of their learning, helping them build confidence and make decisions that lead to a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment.

### Creating and Thinking Critically

We nurture children's ability to generate ideas, make connections, and develop strategies. Creativity is encouraged across all areas of learning. Adults play a key role in supporting children's thinking by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas, and asking open-ended questions. Children are free to access resources and move purposefully around the classroom to extend their learning.

## Observation, Assessment and Planning

Effective planning is essential for creating learning experiences that are engaging, varied, and progressive. It builds on what children already know and can do. Our planning reflects the principles of the EYFS and is informed by ongoing observations of children's interests, development, and learning needs.

All children complete the Reception Baseline Assessment within the first six weeks of their Reception year. This one-to-one, non-threatening assessment with the class teacher helps establish individual starting points and is submitted to the DfE. Combined with teacher



observations and input from previous settings and caregivers, it provides a valuable foundation for future planning.

Teachers and Learning Assistants regularly observe children during learning opportunities. These observations, often recorded on our online platform Seesaw, are conducted sensitively to avoid disrupting the flow of learning. They help assess understanding, ability, and progress. Parents and carers can also contribute to their child's learning journey through Seesaw.

Planning within the EYFS is topic-based but remains flexible to respond to children's interests and developmental needs. Weekly plans serve as a guide and are continuously adapted to reflect the evolving needs of the children.

We make regular assessments to ensure that future planning and any necessary interventions are tailored to identified needs.

## Safeguarding and Welfare

*"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe, secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them."*

— Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2023, Department for Education

At Offord Primary, we are committed to meeting the statutory welfare requirements outlined in the EYFS Framework 2023, including:

- Safeguarding children
- Ensuring staff suitability
- Promoting good health
- Supporting positive behaviour
- Maintaining accurate records, policies, and procedures

### Keeping Safe

We prioritise the safety of every child. Through education on boundaries, rules, and choices, we help children understand the importance of safety. We encourage risk-taking in a controlled environment and teach children to recognise and avoid hazards. Our aim is to protect both the physical and emotional well-being of all children.

### Medical Needs

All staff are informed of any specific medical needs, such as eczema, asthma, allergies, or epilepsy. These needs are clearly displayed in classrooms and on our online systems. Medication is administered only by a registered first aider, following a care plan completed by parents, carers, or medical professionals. Inhalers and ointments are stored securely in classroom First Aid boxes, accessible to staff but out of children's reach. First Aid training is regularly updated.

### Good Health

Children receive a daily fruit or vegetable snack and have access to water throughout the day. We encourage children to bring a named water bottle to school. Staff ensure children are appropriately protected against adverse weather conditions.

### Intimate Care

Intimate care refers to any support involving washing, touching, or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children can typically manage independently. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may require assistance—for example, with dressing, toileting, or changing clothes after an accident. In most cases, intimate care relates to personal hygiene.



Every child has the right to privacy, dignity, and respectful treatment. Staff are expected to maintain a professional approach and work in close partnership with parents to ensure appropriate support is provided. All intimate care follows the school's Intimate Care Policy, and no such care is administered without the express written consent of the parent or guardian, documented in an individual Intimate Care Plan.

## **Transition**

Starting school is a significant milestone, and we plan this period carefully to ensure a smooth, positive experience for every child. Our aim is to help children settle quickly, confidently, and happily into their new environment.

### **Starting Foundation Stage**

Parents of children joining the Foundation Stage in the upcoming academic year are invited to a Welcome Meeting during the summer term. This meeting introduces key staff, outlines the Foundation Stage curriculum, and offers guidance on supporting children to become "school ready." Details of the September induction process are also shared.

For children who may benefit from additional support, Foundation Stage staff will visit preschool settings before the end of the summer term. These visits allow staff to observe children in familiar surroundings and liaise with key workers to gather valuable information that supports a smooth transition.

### **Stay and Play Sessions**

Towards the end of the summer term, children and their parents are invited to attend a Stay and Play session in the Foundation Stage area. These sessions help children become familiar with the classroom environment and key staff and provide parents with an informal opportunity to ask questions and engage with the teaching team.

### **Phased Induction**

To ease children into school life, the first days of the autumn term follow a phased induction model. Children attend for half days, with only half of their class present at a time. This gentle start helps children adjust to routines and expectations without becoming overwhelmed. From the following week, children begin attending full days unless a personalised transition plan is agreed upon between staff and parents/carers.

### **Transition to Year 1**

As children prepare to move from the Foundation Stage to Year 1, we work diligently to ensure the transition is smooth and supportive. Foundation Stage and Year 1 teachers collaborate throughout the year, and class placements are thoughtfully considered.

Once classes are confirmed, children participate in transition visits to their new Year 1 classrooms during the summer term. These visits help them become familiar with their new environment and teachers. Our Year 1/2 classrooms are designed to reflect the EYFS approach, maintaining a provision-based learning environment that supports continuity and comfort.

## **Partnership with Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers are a child's first and most important educators. At Offord Primary School we are committed to building strong, collaborative relationships with families that continue throughout each child's educational journey. We value open communication, shared insights, and mutual support to ensure every child thrives throughout their journey at our school.