

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Policy to be read in conjunction with:

Teaching, Learning & Curriculum Policy,
Assessment, Feedback and Marking Policy,
Intimate Care Policy,
Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy,
Behaviour & Inclusion Policy,
SEND Policy

Vision

At Consortium we aim to provide every child with the skills to become a happy, independent and curious lifelong learner. Our priority is that our provision provides a high level of engagement and active learning through a range of skill-based activities.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- that children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress.
- close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

Principles

We strive to meet every child's entitlement to develop a love of learning that will enable them to have the best possible future life chances. The Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (2024) states four guiding principles, which shapes our practice in the early years.

These are:

- every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children can be strong and independent through positive relationships;
- children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See "the characteristics of effective teaching and learning" at paragraph 1.15). The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). (Statutory framework, September 2024)

The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment underpin learning and development across all areas. Adults and the considered use of the environment, support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

We adhere to all the requirements of the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage including child: staff ratios, EYFS staff qualifications and Paediatric First Aid training.

Learning and Development

Our early years settings follow the curriculum as outlined in the 2024 EYFS statutory framework. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected.

However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and 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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

Achievement of these prime and specific areas of learning is through the characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Our EYFS Curriculum

- Is at the heart of our learning journey approach.
- Is distinctive, innovative and strategically planned.
- Is reviewed in the light of national developments, new thinking, research and development.
- Introduces challenging, engaging and real-life problems.
- Strives to encourage and develop a love of learning.
- Lets learning happen within a child-centred approach.
- Ensures resources and apparatus are available to support learning at every stage of development and in every area of the EYFS curriculum.

- Prepares children for the next stage of their education. Our curriculum in early years is the foundation for their future success. We plan carefully for our pupils to support them to build links in their learning.
- Ensures all areas of learning are regarded with the same level of importance and are interlinked in learning.
- Includes fundamental British values to teach children a sense of self and belonging; enabling them to learn and stay true to the values that make people good human beings.
- Ensures that children learn to live together peacefully, with each of them playing a valuable role in the multi-cultural world in which they live.

The Enabling Environment

The EYFS classroom is carefully planned to ensure all areas are used to enable learning for every child. The children have the choice of where they choose to learn. All activities are carefully planned based upon children's current assessment and all have a main learning intention that can be accessed with or without adult support.

Our basic provision is linked to the age-related expectations of the cohort. We encourage child-initiated activities and adapt our continuous provision accordingly. We enhance our provision through objects, prompts, conversation and questioning. Staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

When planning learning opportunities, we use the statements in the 'Development Matters' (DfE 2023) and Birth to Five Matters (Early Education 2021) to identify next steps for each child to deepen, challenge and extend their learning. During planning sessions, discussion takes place to ensure activities allow for Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning to be demonstrated and embedded.

Adult facilitators in the classrooms may lead activities based on skills and knowledge. These activities let learning happen through creative opportunities, a supportive environment and a sound pedagogical understanding.

We believe that children should have the chance to access outdoor learning in all seasons. We provide outdoor opportunities which look and feel different to indoor learning, so that children can access a whole range of new and diverse skills and learning experiences.

Appropriate resources in the EYFS environment are stimulating and relevant. The resources are provided to create rich learning opportunities through a range of highly structured, adult-led, child-led or child-initiated learning. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. Planning considers children with individual needs in line with the SEND policy.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1. Children are encouraged to challenge themselves through self-selecting tasks and activities. The activities offer opportunities for extended learning and are structured to develop learning.

Assessment

On-going formative assessment is at the heart of our effective early years practice. We make regular formative assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS can include children's work, short and photographic observations, voice recordings and the use of video to evidence children's Communication and Language achievements. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

We use teacher knowledge, children's achievements and assessment platforms to capture baseline assessments when children join the settings. This assessment will inform us of the children's emotional needs, as well as academic attainment at point of entry. This information will be analysed within our EYFS team as well as being shared with the Senior Leadership Team.

Section 6.4 of our Assessment, Feedback and Marking Policy outlines the three statutory summative assessments which take place within the EYFS.

Working with Parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. Parents and carers are given the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher twice a year in a formal parent meeting and receive a written report on their child's achievements at the end of the summer term.

The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

More informally we meet with parents throughout the academic year as and when necessary to discuss their child's particular needs. Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure 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 and also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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

- Talking to children about the effects of eating too many sweet things
- Discussing the importance of brushing your teeth
- Showing tooth brushing kits and tooth brushing routines
- Dental nurses visit settings

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our Intimate Care and Safeguarding & Child Protection policy.

Transition

Planning for a smooth and thorough transition starts as soon as possible and well in advance of the child's start date.

To ensure the best possible transition:-

- We value the parent as the first educator of their child.
- Schools make contact via phone with feeder pre-schools within our new intake to discuss essential information on every child.
- Schools visit as many pre-schools as possible to meet children in a familiar setting.
- We share important information about our setting during new-parents meeting.
- Schools use written information sent by pre-schools to inform early planning.
- We hold a series of 'welcome/taster' or 'Stay and Play' sessions for parents and children.
- We share information in a transition meeting with key adults for children with additional needs.

Working in partnership

We value our partnerships and endeavour to actively maintain these by sharing information, ideas, expertise and our knowledge within our team and with parents, carers, colleagues and other professionals.

Within our role of enabling partnerships we:-

- meet regularly with the EYFS school team within the setting, to discuss assessments, planning, individual children and research.
- hold regular parent workshops on relevant areas of their children's development e.g. maths, reading, phonics.
- work closely with other EYFS practitioners within Consortium to share good practice.
- moderate work with other EYFS practitioners within Consortium to agree judgements.

The Early Years Team

Our Trust Early Years Lead, provides leadership, collaboration among educators and offers bespoke school support to enhance the expertise of our teachers and practitioners. Our experienced staffing team understand the needs of young children and how best to create an environment to enable a love of learning.

Our aim is that it is hard to distinguish between teacher and teaching assistant in our settings. Everyone works towards the same goal: to ensure every child achieves to their highest ability through learning through play and enjoyment.

Document Control

Changes History

Version	Date	Amended By	Details of Change
V2	21/7/2022	Caroline Richardson (HoS EYFS)	Updated in line with new statutory framework. Removal of HoS Role information and reduced information about assessment.
V3	07/06/2024	Jemima Williams (HoS EYFS)	Updated in line with new statutory framework. Adding the HoS Role information
V4	16/05/2025	Jemima Williams and Lucy Ruskin	Removal of HoS Role information. No further changes.

Approval

Name	Job Title	Signed	Date
Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne	Principal/CEO	Electronic signature	09/12/2019
Dawn Carman-Jones	On behalf of the Trust Board	Electronic signature	09/12/2019
Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne	Principal/CEO	Electronic signature	22/09/2022
Dawn Carman-Jones	On behalf of the Trust Board	Electronic signature	22/09/2022
Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne	Principal/CEO	Electronic signature	22/01/2026
Steve Martin	On behalf of the Trust Board	Electronic signature	22/01/2026

This policy will be reviewed every 4 years by the EYFS Trust Lead or as required by changes in legislation.

At every review, this policy will be approved by the Education & Learning Committee.

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