

Elstow School



EYFS Policy

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I. 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 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

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#). The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Structure of EYFS

At Elstow we cater for children aged between four years and five years. This is carried out in two Reception classes. Our pupils are dropped off and collected at their classroom door with an individual hand-over from a familiar member of staff ensuring high levels of parent/carer liaison and very secure safeguarding of the pupils.

Reception

Most of our children start full-time in the September of the academic year that they become statutory school age (aged five). There are occasional exceptions to this and in these situations,

we work in partnership with families to ensure that each child has the best start to their education as possible.

4. Structure of EYFS

All our pupils are entitled to a knowledge-rich curriculum where knowledge is valued, specified, well-sequenced and taught to be remembered. Our curriculum is designed to take pupils beyond the limits of their personal experiences and the classroom. Our aim is to provide our youngest pupils with the tools that they need to establish a strong sense of identity and to feel empowered by the knowledge they have of the world around them.

We are aware that not all children begin school with the same knowledge, skills and experience. Therefore, our curriculum in the EYFS has been devised to focus on closing the gap that exists between children from very early on. It is ambitious in its content and is explicitly linked to learning in KS1 and KS2. The curriculum is a progression model, which begins in EYFS.

Our curriculum has been devised to encourage curiosity and to develop children's oral language, communication and comprehension through engaging, high-quality teaching and resourcing. We focus on enriching and widening children's vocabulary, so that they can confidently think, reason, argue, and participate in the important conversations in life.

Our EYFS curriculum ensures that the EYFS statutory framework (2021) is covered in its entirety. The framework includes seven 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.

These are:

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

The Early Years planning fits into our whole-school approach to curriculum design and provides children with both the substantive and disciplinary knowledge that they need to become confident, powerful and inquisitive learners. Much of the curriculum content provides consideration to transitions and allows for a smooth transition to Key Stage 1.

We use the sequencing of the Primary Knowledge Curriculum to support curriculum planning within Understanding the World. History, Geography, and Science are integrated, with children encouraged to observe and explore the physical world, communities and life both past and

present whilst thinking about what scientists, historians and geographers do, and how they find out what they know. This foundational knowledge helps children to develop disciplinary understanding over time.

5. Planning

Elstow prides itself on providing a quality learning experience for all Early Years pupils. We ensure our staff are all trained in Sounds Write phonics, early maths and in specific areas to support the development of our youngest pupils with a particular focus on communication and language.

When planning our EYFS learning, our teamwork in partnership with our whole school subject leads in order to ensure that we provide a secure foundation in Reception that is then built upon year on year as children progress up through the school.

Our children are given the opportunities to work independently, in pairs, and in groups. During their day, children are able to explore the activities and resources on offer as part of learning through planned, purposeful play and exploration. Much of the learning is practical, allowing the children to develop both their understanding, social communication skills and their fine/gross motor skills.

Practitioners plan activities and experiences that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas. Practitioners also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience.

Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, practitioners consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the diverse ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

6. Teaching and learning

Teachers in Early Years refer to the Teaching and Learning Policy when considering appropriate approaches to deliver content. In addition to this policy the Early Years team also ensure that the pupils receive opportunities to develop characteristics of effective learning that form a firm foundation for their future learning.

The EYFS Framework identifies the following characteristics of effective learning that are embedded into our provision in early years.

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

The EYFS teaching is delivered in part by a number of teacher-led sessions each day. We also ensure that the focus of resourcing in the continuous provision links to teacher led sessions. These are the activities and resources that children have access to consistently throughout the week, term or year.

At the beginning of every lesson, pupils should be given time to orally rehearse the key vocabulary that the teacher has identified from the plans and from their knowledge of the children. The star words are used on multiple occasions throughout the session and within continuous provision. There are opportunities within lessons for partner talk work, where children are encouraged and praised for use of the key vocabulary.

During child-directed time (continuous provision), the pupils may choose to engage with provision that has been carefully selected and prepared by staff who know the curriculum and the children well. Resources are selected for the wealth of learning opportunities they provide, and provision is designed to help children to develop the characteristics of effective learning. Children can engage with continuous provision independently, with peers or with an adult. Examples may include provision for construction, creative play, sand and water play, a reading area, mark-making, roleplay, and small world play.

Our pupils learn through a careful balance of:

- formal carpet sessions
- small group work
- 1-2-1 work
- child led play

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, in readiness for year 1.

7. Assessment and reporting

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and interactions with their peers. These observations are used to shape future planning and adult to child interactions.

In reception, parent/carer consultation meetings take place two times a year. During these meetings teachers describe the progress the pupil is making along with discussion on next steps.

At the end of the year, staff review pupil progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- **Expected** - meeting expected levels of development
- **Emerging** - not yet reaching expected levels

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child and year 1 teachers.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. Development Matters provides non-statutory curriculum guidance for the EYFS. It provides an overall view of how children develop and learn. It guides but does not replace practitioner's professional judgement. As stated in Development Matters, children develop at their own rates, and in their own ways. The

development statements and their order should not be taken as necessary steps for individual children, they should not be used as check lists.

EYFS profile data is submitted to the trust Education Team and local authority.

8. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The parent/carer consultations and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Parents are invited into the setting for family learning events and these focus on core areas such as phonics, maths and reading.

9. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

In EYFS, we adhere to strict safeguarding protocols as set out by the whole school safeguarding policy.

We have additional guidelines in place for pupils that require intimate care and we work in partnership with the school nurse or health visitor to agree an intimate care plan which all staff follow and is reviewed/updated regularly in liaison with the parent/carer.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years. The children learn about the importance of brushing their teeth and following a healthy diet.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher/principal and approved by the Chief Education Officer every three years.

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

APPENDIX I: List of statutory policies and procedure for the EYFS

STATUTORY POLICY/PROCEDURE	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 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