



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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Introduction:

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the time they reach the age of 5.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Read Academy, we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

Structure of the EYFS:

At Read Academy, our Early Years provision includes a Nursery for 3–4-year-olds allowing up to 40 children and a reception class which can also allow up to 40 children. Our Nursery class has a large room for their sole use as well as a garden that the nursery shares with the reception class. Our EYFS classes are open during term time between the hours of 8am – 3pm. Our reception class also has their very own classroom which is connected by a shared area as well as outdoor garden.

Aims & Objectives:

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

At Read Academy, our aims are:

To develop each child personally, socially and emotionally by:

- Offering a safe and secure environment
- Making each child feel valued and helping the child form stable relationships
- Encouraging a sense of responsibility and consideration for others
- Developing a positive self- image increasing confidence, independence and control
- Developing an awareness that there are similarities and differences among all groups of people
- Providing resources that reflect different types of multicultural and gender backgrounds
- Developing a curriculum that includes different religions, cultures and languages.

To develop the child intellectually by:

- Providing a stimulating environment in which each child can learn through first-hand experience
- Promoting the use of language
- Stimulating the child's curiosity and encouraging active learning
- Giving opportunities for children to make their own decisions

- Encouraging self-evaluation.

To develop the child physically, improving skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement by:

- Enabling children to use their bodies effectively by providing space for learning experiences both indoor and outdoor.
- Developing fine motor skills through activities such as modelling, painting and construction.
- Developing an awareness of their physical ability.

To develop the child aesthetically by:

- Providing a stimulating environment in which creativity, imagination and expressiveness are valued.
- Providing opportunities to experiment with a variety of materials
- Providing opportunities for children to use and explore their senses
- Encouraging children to express themselves through various sounds, movement, role-play and art activities.

To establish a smooth transition from home to school by:

- Starting from the child, taking into account previous pre-school experience.
- Adopting an admissions procedure that eases the transition from home to school.
- Involving parents with their children's learning by informing them that they can see the profiles, having opportunities for sharing parent's expertise and experiences.

We will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall aims of the EYFS are to help young children achieve the five 'Every Child Matters' outcomes of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and eventually achieving economic wellbeing.

The EYFS principles that guide the effective work of all practitioners are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

• A Unique Child

Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

• Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

• Enabling Environments

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers.

• Learning and Development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in the Early Years, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

A Unique Child

At Read Academy, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matter. All children at Read Academy 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.

Positive Relationship

At Read Academy, we believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want

parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting.

Throughout the year we host a variety of events in which we encourage parents or carers to attend, for example stay and plays, curriculum workshops, phonics presentations, observations sessions and open classrooms.

Enabling Environments

At Read Academy, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff.

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- Talking to parents and their child before their child starts school.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our classes.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There are opportunities for parents to meet with the teacher to discuss the child's progress
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourages collaboration between children, school and parents

All staff involved within the EYFS work hard to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen and understand them.

Learning and Development

The Curriculum:

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are important and included in the delivered curriculum and provision. There are three prime areas, which are seen to underpin the fundamental skills children require. These prime areas also support the development of the specific areas of the curriculum.

The Prime areas are:

- Communication and Language – Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking
- Physical Development – Moving and Handling and Health and Self Care
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Making Relationships, Managing Feelings and Behaviour and Self-confidence and Self-awareness

The Specific areas are:

- Literacy – Reading and Writing
- Mathematics – Numbers and Shape, Space and Measure
- Understanding the World – People and Communities, The World and Technology
- Expressive Arts and Design – Exploring and Using Media and Materials and Being Imaginative

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Playing and Exploring – Engagement

Through play children develop, extend and reinforce their learning experiences. Play and exploration is supported and nurtured by skilled staff and the provision reflects the children's needs. Access to learning experiences and resources is carefully planned and monitored to extend and consolidate play and learning.

Active learning - Motivation

An environment that motivates and takes account of children's' interests, encourages and challenges children in active learning is provided. Due to the individualised needs of the children, support is provided to stimulate children to develop these skills.

Creating and thinking critically - Thinking

To develop active learning, and creative and critical thinking a range of methods and resources are used. Staff support children in generalising their skills in play situations and making connections between different experiences and environments. Children engage in many different activities and begin to actively think about what they are doing. This helps them to develop an awareness of their own thinking and learning

Planning:

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers use the national schemes of work, where appropriate, to support their planning for individual children. The planning objectives within the setting are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. The planning is based upon themes with discrete phonics, maths and reading directed teaching. However, planning, which is based upon a different topic which is identified as vehicle of interest to deliver the children's next steps in learning, also therefore responds to the needs, achievement and interest of the children.

Observations:

Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's Learning Journeys/Tapestry.

Assessment:

Assessment All children are assessed on entry to enable their starting point to be identified and their learning needs identified. Assessment plays an important part in helping parents/carers and staff to recognise children's progress, understand their needs and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves staff observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. In their interactions with children, staff respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share. Parents/carers are kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development through the year.

Assessment at the end of the EYFS

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five and, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents/carers and staff with a clear picture of each child's development, knowledge, understanding and abilities, as well as their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1.

The Profile will reflect upon:

- the school's on-going observation
- all relevant records
- discussions with parents/carers
- discussions with any other adults whom the teacher judges can offer a useful contribution.

The child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. The teacher will determine whether the child is meeting the expected levels, exceeding them or is not yet reaching the expected levels of development (emerging). This is the EYFS Profile. Additional information is also provided via the Learning Journeys and end of year Transition report. Year 1

teachers are given a copy of the profile report and end of year report together with a short commentary on each child's skill and abilities in relation to effective learning, preparing them for each individual child's readiness, needs and next steps.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. The EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Transition:

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

HOME VISITS: Before the child starts Early Years, two members of the Early Years team will visit the child at home, or child minders, if this is easier. The home visit lasts for about 20 minutes and allows time for forms to be filled in, at the same time as providing an opportunity for staff to begin to build a relationship with the parent and their child. We find this makes for a positive start to a child's life at school.

Covid 19 Addendum: Home Visits are to be held virtually where possible.

STAY AND PLAY: Parents are invited to stay for the first 1 hour of the first day with their child. This offers the opportunity for the parent and child to familiarise themselves with staff, children and routines as well as have some fun together.

SETTLING PERIOD: Every child is unique and some children will settle quickly while others take longer. The aim of the Early Years staff is to ensure the child feels happy, safe and secure without the parent/carer. On the first day the child will need to be accompanied by a parent or carer who will stay with them for the first hour. It is a time which allows the child to meet the children they will be in class with and to see the physical environment. On the child's second day in Early Years, parents will be asked to leave after 20 minutes unless the class teacher deems it necessary for the parent/carer to stay longer.

- **Children starting Early Years, for the first week will finish at 11.00am.**
- **During the second week they will stay on for lunch and finish at 12.00pm.**
- **During the third week, children will start full time.**

This is to enable staff to support each child most effectively in settling in to the school.

Covid 19 Addendum: Parents will be asked to stay during the settling in period for a limited time and at staggered times in order to maintain the social distancing rules.

Safeguarding & Welfare:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for EYFS is Miss Ghaida Mustafa

The latest 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' booklet has been issued to all staff. All staff are trained in the latest Safeguarding Children procedures and have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues.

'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.'

At Read Academy, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Keeping Safe - It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards.

Good Health - All children are taught the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They also have access to water at all times.

Intimate Care - "Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene and it is good practice for the school to inform necessary staff of all children requiring intimate care.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. No intimate care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or guardian of that child and all parents and guardians will be asked to provide that permission when their child joins the EYFS setting at Read Academy.

First Aid

All staff hold a first aid qualification. All of the staff in the EYFS are trained in paediatric first aid. At least one member of staff who has a current paediatric first aid certificate is on the premises at all times when children are present. A paediatric qualified member of staff accompanies children on trips and visits away from the school. Paediatric first aid training is updated every three years.

Ratios

Staffing arrangements must meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. The school ensures that children are adequately supervised and deploys staff to ensure children's needs are met. Children are usually within sight and hearing of staff and always within sight or hearing.

For children aged three and over where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher status or another full and relevant level 6 qualification, an instructor, or a suitably qualified overseas trained teacher, is working directly with the children:

- for classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5 or older within the school year, there must be at least one member of staff for every 30 children
- for all other classes there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children
- at least one other member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.

For children aged three and over where there is no person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher status or another suitable level 6 qualification, no instructor, and no suitably qualified overseas trained teacher, working directly with the children:

- there must be at least one member of staff for every eight children
- at least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification
- at least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

Inclusion

As part of the larger school community, we adopt the whole school policy for Inclusion and Equal Opportunities Policy.

The core values of our school emphasise the need to value and respect everyone in our community. Our aims:

- To be an inclusive school, making equality of opportunity a reality for all children in their everyday lives
- To develop the children's awareness of the pluralistic and diverse society in which we live and to teach positive attitudes that will equip them to take their place within society
- To educate our children so that they have a good understanding of equal opportunities
- To provide children with differing and appropriate levels of support for them to succeed
- To eliminate any actions, words or practices that contribute to inequality, whether intended or not
- To develop children's appreciation of the positive and enriching experiences that can be gained from living and working in a multi-faith, multi-race and multi-cultural society.

In order to be inclusive, we will have due regard to the needs of different groups within our school:

- Gender, minority ethnic groups.

- Children who need support to learn English as an additional language.
- Children with special educational needs or disabilities.
- Gifted and talented children.
- Any child who is at risk of disaffection or exclusion

For more information, refer to the 'Inclusion and Equal Opportunities Policy'.

Monitoring and Review:

It is the responsibility of those working in the EYFS setting to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headship team will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. **This policy will be reviewed every year or when necessary.**