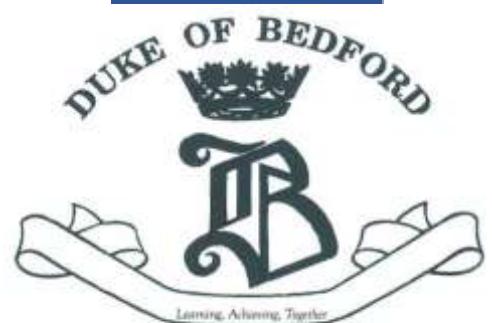


# Early Years Policy

Pre-School and Reception (Early Years  
Foundation Stage)

January 2026



PRIMARY SCHOOL

Thorney  
Peterborough

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## 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

## Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) for 2023.

## Structure of the EYFS

Our Pre-School offers places for approximately 40 children aged 2-4 years. Funded places are available for those children eligible as well as paid places.

We offer flexible session times 9-12; 9-3.00 or 12-3.00. With an option of finishing at 3:15 for those parents who require it.

Pre-School is in a self-contained building across the playground from the Reception classroom but within the school grounds. It has one large classroom and a large, enclosed garden/outdoor area.

Preschool has a manager, a deputy manager and pre-school assistants with the relevant qualifications who run it on a day-to-day basis.

Our Reception class offers 45 full-time places. The Reception class has 2 teachers (1 of which is the EYFS Phase Leader) who job share the class 60/40%. There is 1 full-time teaching assistants and a part time teaching assistant who supports a child with an EHCP. The EYFS Phase Leader role involves working closely with the pre-school manager and staff, guiding and supporting the implementation of the EYFS Statutory Framework 2023.

## Curriculum Aims of the Early Years

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 are equally important and interconnected. 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

## Planning

Our staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff 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, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

In Pre-school and Reception, quality books are at the centre of our learning with vocabulary at the HEART of the planning to ensure a love of Reading and to support communication and language development. The long term plan has been put together with children's interests, significant events and traditional topics in mind. The planning is flexible and will be adapted to the needs of the children to ensure ongoing progress.

## Teaching

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

Teacher/practitioners reflect on the different ways of learning and refer to the Characteristics of Learning outlined in the EYFS Statutory Framework 2023.

These Characteristics of effective learning are:

- **Playing and exploring** – Children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'.
- **Active learning** – Children concentrate and keep trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
- **Creating and thinking critically** – Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, develop strategies for doing things.

When in Reception, as the 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.

We aim to assist children to become independent, creative thinkers who are ready for future learning throughout their school life and beyond.

## Assessment

At the Duke of Bedford Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning.

When a child is **aged between 2 and 3**, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

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:

Meeting expected levels of development

Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

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.

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

## Inclusion/Special Educational Needs

Throughout the early years, if we are worried about a child's progress in any prime area, we will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. We will consider whether a child needs any additional support, including whether they may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support. Please refer to our SEND policy.

## Working with parents

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

To settle the children, transition events are put into place for example: visits and meetings to get to know the staff and environment as well as sessions where children spend time in the setting with a parent followed by spending a short time in the setting without a parent.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. 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.

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. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

Preschool – parent consultations twice a year and a written report based on 7 areas of learning.

Reception – Parent consultations in Autumn and Spring term and a written report in Summer term.

Each term the reception class holds an open classroom event as an opportunity for parents to gain insight into their child's day at school and their learning. A curriculum letter is sent to parents termly outlining the terms learning.

## Staff

### 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 [this can be found on the school website]

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

### **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 safeguarding policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures [Our safeguarding policy can be found on the school website].

### **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 governing board].

See our whistleblowing policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures and more detail on our procedures for handling whistleblowing [Our Whistleblowing policy can be found on the school website].

### **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.

## **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 are able to 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 (on our website) for more information.

### **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).

### **Investigating the concern**

When a concern is received by the designated safeguarding lead – referred to from here as the 'recipient' – they will:

- Meet with the person raising the concern within a reasonable time. The person raising the concern may be joined by a trade union or professional association representative or other accompanying person
- Get as much detail as possible about the concern at this meeting, and record the information
- Establish whether there is sufficient cause for concern to warrant further investigation. If there **is**, then:
  - Arrange a further investigation into the matter, involving the [Headteacher, deputy head teacher and governing body], if appropriate. In some cases, the recipient may need to bring in an external, independent body to investigate. In others, they may need to report the matter to the police
  - Inform the person who raised the concern about how the matter is being investigated and give an estimated timeframe for when they will be informed of the next steps

### **Outcome of the investigation**

Once the investigation – whether this was just the initial investigation of the concern, or whether further investigation was needed – is complete, the investigating person(s) will prepare a report detailing the findings and confirming whether or not any wrongdoing has occurred.

The report will include any recommendations and details on how the matter can be rectified and whether or not a referral is required to an external organisation, such as the local authority in line with local reporting procedure, or police.

They will inform the person who raised the concern of the outcome of the investigation, though certain details may need to be restricted due to confidentiality.

Beyond the immediate actions, the headteacher, governors and other staff, if necessary, will review the relevant policies and procedures to prevent future occurrences of the same wrongdoing.

While we cannot always guarantee the outcome sought, we will try to deal with concerns fairly and in an appropriate way.

### **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 children aged 2, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 5 children
- For children aged 3 and over: we have at least 1 member of staff for every 8 children
- For classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5 or older within the school year, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 30 children
- We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils.

### **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.

### **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

## 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 [on the school website] for more on this, including our expectations of parents/carers to report child absences.

## Oral health and tooth brushing

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

- Encouraging an understanding of healthy eating
- Discussing the effects of eating too many sweet things
- Teaching the importance of brushing your teeth

## 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 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.

## 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.

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.

### **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.

### **Toileting and privacy**

We make sure that there are:

- Enough toilets and hand basins available for the children
- Suitable and hygienic nappy changing facilities
- An adequate supply of necessary items such as clean bedding, towels and spare clothes
- Separate toilet facilities for adults

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

## **Electronic devices**

This covers all electronic devices able to take pictures, record videos, send or receive calls and messages. This includes cameras, mobile telephones, tablets and any recording devices including smartwatches and call/message enabled Fit Bits.

Personal mobile phones and devices will not be worn or used near the children, they will be stored in another location. Smart watches must be put into airplane mode, this allows the wearer to see the time and count steps but will not allow messages or camera use. They may be used when staff have a break or lunchtime in a location that is away from the children.

Only school devices will be used to take photos or videos of the children's learning. Parental permission will be obtained before children are photographed. Photos or videos of the children may be used for display purposes or to share with parents/carers on Seesaw. Any content will be used and then deleted from the school device in a timely manner.

## **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the early years foundation stage leader every 2 years. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

## Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found? Many policies/procedures can be found on our school website.
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy / first aid 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	School website – Procedure for children not collected. CME Policy.
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy
SEND Policy	SEND Policy
Mobile phones	Mobile Phones Policy