



No Barriers to Excellence



Ambition



Collaboration



Equity

Early Years Foundation Stage

Version	Name	Date
Approved Directors v1.0	Clive Lees, Chair of Directors	Feb 2017
Review 1.7	ACC	May 2025
Review 1.8	ACC	May 2026
This Policy has been reviewed regularly in accordance with our policy schedule.		

Early Years Foundation Stage

This policy should be read alongside the:

- EYFS Foundation Stage Profile Handbook 2024
- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2025
- RBA Baseline Assessment

As a Trust we follow the current Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation stage, setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. This policy outlines our commitment to delivering high-quality teaching and learning in the Early Years and reflects our high expectations for every child.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) covers children who are in Nursery or Reception. Each school within the Trust will develop procedures for teaching EYFS in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

Schools must comply with the Trust's policies on Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions and Child Protection & Safeguarding. Safeguarding practice is also informed by the Department for Education statutory guidance; Keeping Children Safe in Education. Schools must also prepare an EYFS Profile to comply with statutory reporting of Early Years Outcomes for each child by the 30th June.

Procedure for teaching EYFS

The following is provided as an example of a procedure within the Trust: Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (November 2024).

Practitioners will:

- Plan learning experiences based on ongoing assessment
- Provide a balance of adult led and child initiated activities
- Ensure daily learning opportunities both indoors and outdoors
- Deliver a progressive curriculum that builds on children's knowledge and skills.

When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need for today. We also set them up with every chance of success for tomorrow.

Teaching and Learning is driven by the four EYFS Principles

- A Unique Child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

The seven key features of effective practice:

- The best for every child
- High quality care
- The curriculum: what we want children to learn
- Pedagogy: helping children to learn
- Assessment: checking what children have learnt
- Self-regulation and executive function
- Partnership with parents

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

At the Spring Partnership Trust, we recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Spring Partnership Trust schools are treated fairly regardless of gender, race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our Trust. We believe all children should achieve their personal best and planning and provision is adapted to meet the needs of all groups. Our practice should support the child to access our curriculum, education and experiences rather than excluding them. Early identification of Special Needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents at the earliest stage and the school's Inclusion lead/SENDCO is called upon for further information and advice.

'It is vital that we get to know and value all young children. All children learn more in the period from birth to five years old than any other time in their lives. If children are at risk of falling behind the majority, the best time to help them to catch up and keep up, is in the early years. Every child can make progress, if they are given the right support.'

Development Matters September 2023

In our schools we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. We ensure that all children have access to the curriculum and make progress commensurate with their developing abilities including able, gifted and talented, irrespective of their gender, ethnic, social or religious background or special educational needs.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Getting to know our children, through monitoring progress and taking action to provide support so that all children have an equal and best chance of success
- Precision; identifying what barriers to learning children have and planning a curriculum of high-quality early education
- Understanding most needs are temporary; whether needs are short term or longer term, early identification is key, children can overcome them with the right support given promptly. We understand the importance and the need to do more to narrow the gap
- Continuous improvement of our setting to ensure an organised, enabling environment inside and outside for quality play. Including both independent and guided learning opportunities. Making adaptations to provision where needed to meet changing needs.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience, language and interests, developing their self-esteem, self-regulation and confidence
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- Effective, accurate and purposeful assessment on what children can do and know. This will not be time consuming
- Providing targeted support by early identification of needs, supported by the school's inclusion lead/SENCO

It is important to us that all children in the schools 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. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

Welfare

'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 Spring Trust we:

- Promote the welfare of children
- Promote good health, self-care and healthy eating
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe, efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children
- Ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the supervision of EYFS staff. This supervision will provide support, coaching and training for the practitioner and will promote the interests of children
- Follow safer recruitment procedures in line with statutory guidance
- Provide regular staff supervision and safeguarding training

Positive Relationships

'Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.'

At the Spring Trust we aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents/Carers as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and /or carers, and we recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- The teacher and teaching assistant visiting all children in their home setting prior to them starting school to begin to build strong, respectful partnerships
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the summer term before their child starts school
- Parent workshops during the summer term before children start school and during the autumn term, to support parents in how they can help their child at home, as we recognise the significant impact this has

- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress and next steps for learning. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and skills
- Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year
- Encouraging all parents to talk, play and read with their child

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. We have good links with local pre-schools and visit/contact our main feeder pre-schools during the spring and summer term before children start school. We also carry out home visits in the Autumn Term. The EYFS profile provides a comprehensive picture of the children's development and this is shared with parents.

Enabling Environments

“Enabling environments mobilise the energy, attention, curiosity and focus of children.”
Howard Gardner

The Learning Environment

Our EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore, imagine and learn securely and safely while promoting independence. There are areas where the children can be active or be quiet and rest. The classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find equipment and resources independently. The EYFS classes have their own enclosed outdoor area space. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. Outdoor learning is an integral part of the curriculum and is available daily. The children help to plan activities both inside and outdoors that help them to develop in all areas of their learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

On-going assessment is at the heart of our practice at Spring Partnership Trust schools. We make meaningful formative and summative assessments of children's learning from a range of perspectives and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects individual needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation including using sustained shared thinking by all early years' practitioners. Practitioners draw on their own knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. Practitioners are not required to prove this through collection of physical evidence. Baseline assessment is carried out during the first six weeks upon entering the setting. This is an age-appropriate assessment of maths and literacy, communication and language that is delivered in English. The assessment consists of

Mathematics tasks (early number, early calculation, mathematical language and early understanding of pattern. LCL (Communication and Language), consists of early vocabulary, phonological awareness and early comprehension. In the final term of the year (the summer term) in which the child reaches five, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child.

Each child's level of development must be assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals and practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels (emerging'). The report will also give a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three characteristics of teaching and learning (playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically)

Learning and Development

“Development can only take place when children are actively involved, when they are occupied with a high, non-stop degree of concentration, when they are interested, when they give themselves completely, when they use all their mental abilities to invent and make new things and when this gives them a high degree of satisfaction and pleasure.”

Ferre Laevers

Teaching and Learning Style

Our teaching and learning policy defines the features of effective teaching and learning within our schools. These features apply to teaching and learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) just as much as they do to the teaching in the other key stages.

Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, to promote the learning and development so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching
- A curriculum shaped by our children with a focus on development of skill progression and prior knowledge
- The range of approaches use that provide first-hand experience, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities
- Language drives the curriculum; the focus for children to communicate and talk about their play based learning, and to develop independence and self-management
- The support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents
- The good relationships between our schools and the nurseries and pre-schools that our children experience prior to joining our schools

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately.

Playing and Exploring (“Engagement”)

Playing and exploring leads to wonder and awe. We want children to bring their own interests and fascinations into early years’ settings. This helps them to develop their learning.

Children are able to investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’, learning how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. On realising that their actions have an effect on the world, they want to keep repeating them and in doing this are also making choices and exploring different resources and materials. Children respond to new experiences

that skilful practitioners bring to their attention and by doing so, will learn to make independent choices. It is through playing and exploring that children can make sense of the world.

Active Learning (“Motivation”)

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning and begin to correct their mistakes themselves.

As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. Active learning provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning. Resilience is encouraged and children will keep on trying when things are difficult.

Creativity and Thinking Critically (“Thinking”)

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, in order to solve real life problems and concentrate on achieving something that is important to them. This will encourage links in their learning and children can use pretend play to think beyond the ‘here and now’ and to understand another perspective, developing empathy. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and sustained shared thinking.

The Areas of Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape education in EYFS at Spring Partnership Trust schools. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The three prime areas are:

- Communication and Language, where staff support children to express their thoughts and use new words in order to develop a good vocabulary
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The three prime areas are then strengthened and applied through the four specific areas.

The four specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive Arts and Design

Language development underpins all areas of learning.

All of these areas of learning are connected together and equally important. The characteristics of effective teaching and learning weave through them all. Children's characteristics develop as they learn to do new things, acquire new skills, develop socially and emotionally, and become better communicators; the development of language is at the heart of our provision. The curriculum is a top level plan, delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities and is carefully planned to aid progression of knowledge and skills. The curriculum is delivered through a play-based approach both inside, balanced with direct teaching and outside and practitioners are aware that children do not develop in a linear fashion. Children have whole class and small focus group activities.

Enhancements are added into the provision for independent play opportunities and progression of skill development. These change as the children progress throughout the year. As a trust, we follow Read Write Inc. and White Rose maths and Mastering Number to support early maths and literacy development. Identified children are supported through early language interventions such as NELI. We prepare the children for Key Stage 1 by developing confident learners with growing independence.

Continuity and Transitions

We provide a broad and balanced curriculum that fosters the intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children. Transition into year one is initially structured through a mixture of continuous provision and directed teaching, working alongside parents, enabling the children to make a seamless and unproblematic transition. Using consistent practices and having shared high expectations across the school helps to support from one Key Stage to another.

The children visit their new classrooms. The EYFS staff and Year One staff meet during the summer term for a handover meeting. A copy of the Early Years Outcomes and Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning are passed to the Year One teachers. This informs a dialogue between EYFS and Year One staff about each child's stage of development, strengths and gaps and is used as a basis for planning during the Autumn term in Year 1.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a priority in EYFS.

We follow Keeping Children Safe in Education. We ensure all staff receive regular and effective Safeguarding training. There are clear procedures for reporting concerns which are monitored. We are always promoting the children's understanding of safety and risk throughout the curriculum.

Spring Trust

Registered Office: Elmstead Wood Primary School,
Castlecombe Road, Mottingham, London SE9 4AT

T: 0203 837 8637

E: contact@springtrust.uk

