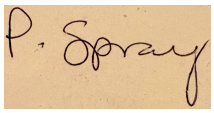
Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

STATUS:	DATE AGREED:	REVIEW DATE:
Policy: Statutory/Recommended/Additional	November 2025	October 2027
WRITTEN BY:	**GB SIGNATURE:**	
Rhian Davey		

CONSULTATION:

Teachers, Leadership Team, Early Years Team, Governors

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES:

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2024

Links to other policies: Admissions Policy, SEN, AGT, H&S, Literacy & other subject policies, Assessment, Admissions Policy

PURPOSE

"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 catch up and keep up is in the early years. Every child can make progress, if they are given the right support."
"When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we can give them what they need tomorrow. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow"
(Development Matters 2020)

At Spurcroft Primary and Nursery School, the Early Years Foundation Stage is viewed as a distinctive phase of education which integrates the care and education of our youngest children. We believe that all children are unique and bring with them a diverse range of previous experiences and learning which must be acknowledged and built upon. It is vital that parents are valued as children's first educators and that they are active partners in their child's school education.

At Spurcroft Primary and Nursery School, we provide highly effective teaching and learning within a culture of challenge, nurture and support. We support all children to progress to be the best they can be. Our curriculum enables as many children as possible to achieve a Good Level of Development by the end of their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and we build on this in subsequent years.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Head Teacher Is Responsible For:

- Ensuring all statutory requirements are in place
- To monitor and report to the Local Authority and Governors baseline and end of Early Years assessment data
- Monitoring admission procedures
- Monitoring teaching, learning and the assessment and tracking of pupils
- Monitoring teaching and learning and supporting practitioners to develop practice
- Co-ordinating assessment and tracking of children
- Communicating with parents on whole team issues
- Supporting staff to moderate assessment judgements across the team and with other Early Years settings in local schools

The Inclusion Team Responsible For:

- Supporting staff with meeting the needs of children with SEND
- Supporting families of children with SEND

- Monitoring the impact of Individual Behaviour and Learning Support Plans
- Liaising with outside agencies where appropriate

The Admin Team are Responsible For

- Supporting high quality communication between home and school

The Early Years Staff Are Responsible For:

- Ensuring the smooth running of the Unit on a daily basis
- Continuing to improve provision within the Unit
- Ensuring that children settle well into school and make good progress
- Setting up and maintaining good lines of communication between home and school
- Ensuring the emotional and developmental needs of children are met
- Assessing children and appropriately matching work to their needs

Governors Are Responsible For:

- Ensuring all of the appropriate policies are followed
- Supporting in the strategic direction of the Unit

PROCEDURE STATEMENT:

Our EYFS policy is directly related to our school vision, values and curriculum statement. It documents further aims and strategies we employ in order to address the four overarching principles of EYFS:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to 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.
- We recognise the importance of all areas of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. Our practice is informed by the EYFS framework and covers the education and care of all children in EYFS, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Effective Practice in relation to each of the four overarching principles of EYFS, the seven key features of effective practice and the characteristics of effective teaching and learning is detailed in the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (link below)



Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Our carefully planned curriculum, quality interactions and use of assessment ensures that we address the **seven key features of effective practice**:

- Providing the best for every child.
- Offering consistent, high-quality care for all of our children.
- Planning a curriculum with a focus on what we want children to learn.
- Using a range of different approaches to ensure our pedagogy is effective in helping children to learn.
- Implementing a range of assessment strategies to check what children have learnt in order to inform future planning.
- Supporting children to develop their self-regulation and executive function.
- Developing a strong partnership with parents through positive and regular communications.

The Areas of Teaching and Learning

Our Early Years setting follows 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 sections.

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 3 prime areas are:
● **Communication and language**
- Listening, attention and understanding
- Speaking
● **Physical development**
- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills
● **Personal, social and emotional development**
- Self-regulation
- Managing self
– Building relationships

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:
● **Literacy**
- Comprehension
- Word reading
- Writing
● **Mathematics**
- Numbers
- Numerical patterns
● **Understanding the world**
- Past and present
- People, culture and communities
- The natural world
● **Expressive arts and design**
- Creating with materials
- Being imaginative and expressive

We recognise that teaching can take place at ***all*** times of the day through directed teaching sessions, through times of play and inside and outside the classroom. We promote all of these and encourage children to learn in both structured and play based sessions. We strive to make our environments desirable to children and encourage our staff and volunteers to seize every opportunity for teaching. Weekly and daily planning formalise this and aim to ensure a balance of formal and informal learning. Staff are encouraged to think carefully about their use of questioning and use of interventions in order to optimise children's learning. Learning should be personalised by building on the child's interests and involving them fully in reflecting on what they have learned and how they may build on their skills.

At appropriate opportunities the adults will:
• Question, respond to questions and engage the child in extended conversations that support sustained shared thinking
• Introduce and develop vocabulary, knowledge and skills
• Encourage independence
• Add resources that stimulate, motivate and engage the learner
• Demonstrate, model and work alongside the children
• Help children to see links in their learning
• Support and encourage the children
• Encourage children to be problem solvers, problem setters and investigators
• Re-direct the play if necessary
• Help children to learn how to negotiate and resolve conflict
• Promote children's well-being, including their ability to self-regulate

• Observe and assess learning
• Record judgments and plan for next steps in learning
• Provide feedback to child/other adult/parents
• Ensure the environment is safe and secure and that the Welfare Requirements are in place

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We uphold the view that learning is underpinned by the characteristics of effective learning. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

The 3 characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:
• **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; and
• **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

All of these areas interlink throughout the curriculum and adults make the most of opportunities to interact with children to develop their playing, thinking and learning. Adults also recognise that there are times when they need to take a step back to enable children to think critically and solve a problem by trial and error or perseverance.

It is our aim that children leave the EYFS with:
• a positive 'can do' attitude to learning
• a willingness to take risks and make mistakes
• high levels of engagement in a task where they can practise and build up concepts, ideas and skills
• perseverance
• a love of learning
• ideas of their own, that they can plan and follow through
• an ability to express fears to relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

Early Language, Reading and Mathematics

At Spurcroft Primary and Nursery School, we provide a language-rich environment in which high quality talk is valued.

All staff model good communication skills in their interactions with pupils and each other. For early phonics teaching, the school follows the Read Write Inc. (RWI) phonics scheme to ensure that we are effective in teaching children to be successful early readers. Home reading materials ensure that the children are given reading books that reflect their phonic knowledge, so phonics is the only strategy used for decoding. The children start by taking home sound blending books and when ready, then take home RWI reading books. The school also places an importance on the development of early comprehension skills; in line with the Revised Framework to ensure that children are able, to comprehend what they read and listen to. This sits alongside the development of children's speaking, listening and language skills which are crucial for developing children's comprehension and vocabulary, with a specific focus on closing the vocabulary gap for children starting school with less experience of a language rich environment. Adults also strive to promote a love of reading though daily story time sessions and with carefully chosen books that match the children's interests and enrich their vocabulary. Teachers closely monitor children's progress in reading through regular phonics assessments and place children in progress groups to ensure that they experience success. For those children who need support to keep up with the programme, interventions are implemented to address gaps in learning promptly. Advice is sought from the Early Reading Lead where these do not prove successful.

Maths is taught through a range of experiences including counting as part of the daily routine; discreet teaching with follow up group activities and play based opportunities and experiences through the learning environment. We recognise that Maths can take place in any environment and we promote the use of learning maths skills through play-based opportunities. As with phonics, children experiencing any difficulties are identified early and support measures are put into place. Teachers target specific questions at individuals in whole class teaching, extending the children's understanding, allowing key mathematical concepts to be revisited and developed across the year. We adopt the White Rose Maths approach to our teaching, which ensures progression and coverage throughout the year.

Play

We believe that it is vitally important for adults to support children's learning through play. We believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is the fundamental way in which young children learn. When playing, children behave in different ways. Sometimes, their play will be lively and interactive, sometimes they will describe and discuss what they are doing, and sometimes they will be quiet and reflective as they play.
Through play, children will be developing skills across all the Prime and Specific areas of learning, working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals, the desired outcomes for the end of the EYFS. Opportunities for play occur during the 'Independent Learning' part of the Early Years school day.

Planning

The teachers responsible for Reception use the EYFS statutory Framework. From this and from analysis of data and on-going assessments, areas of learning are planned through a series of topics, that build a foundation of knowledge and which offers experiences in all seven areas of learning. These plans then inform short-term weekly planning, alongside observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Adult focused and independent activities are planned on a weekly basis. Children have the opportunity to work in each of the learning areas within the classroom and outdoors. Whole class, group and individual activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum, as appropriate.
We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, our Early Years practitioners interact and question to challenge children. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.

Assessment

At Spurcroft Primary and Nursery School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the 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. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and carers. The Reception Baseline Assessment is carried out within the first four weeks of a child starting in Reception. We also use a range of assessments, both formative and summative, with individual pupils at various points including half termly phonics assessments and ECAT (Every Child a Talker) to identify gaps in children's communication skills.

At the end of Reception, teachers 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 among teachers working with the children. The results of the profile are shared with parents and carers. EYFS profile data is submitted to the Local Authority (LA) in the summer term when these are requested. The LA is under a duty to return this data to the relevant government

department. We hold Parent Meetings twice in the year, to discuss pupil's progress and share their targets and next steps and formally report to parents towards the end of the academic year. The report in July is a detailed, written summary and contains information about ***how*** each child learns and an assessment against each of the main five areas of learning; Personal Development, Communication, Writing, Reading and Maths.

Safety & Supervision

At Spurcroft Primary and Nursery School, we believe children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure. Children's safety and welfare is paramount to us. We create a safe, secure and welcoming environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence. We provide a curriculum that teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. Our whole school Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy is in place to safeguard children. Our Behaviour and Anti-bullying Policy underpins the way we encourage and children to operate in safe ways and to keep them safe. We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, promoting dental hygiene, and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident. See Intimate Care Toileting Policy, and Appendix 1 of this policy. As part our daily routines, pupils are offered healthy, nutritious snacks in the form of fruits or vegetables and milk or water to keep them hydrated. Practitioners are familiar with the EYFS framework linked to food safety and how to provide the necessary steps to keep pupils safe and well when handling and preparing food. See Procedures for handling and preparing food in Appendix 1 of this policy.

Inclusion

We value all of our children as unique individuals at Spurcroft Primary and Nursery School, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children meet the expected levels of development against the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies. At times, it is necessary to work with children in a small group or on an individual basis outside of the learning environment to allow for specialist input e.g. Speech and Language support. However, whenever possible, support is provided within the classroom context.

Relationships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

We know what an important role parents/carers play in their children's learning journey and we aim to involve them as much as possible in school life. We recognise the huge contribution that parents make to their child's learning and we work hard to develop and sustain links with parents. We seek to start building relationships with parents from the term before their child starts school, through clear communication, stay and play sessions and information meetings. Throughout the year, we use a range of different ways, to build relationships with parents/carers and to promote home learning. These include:

- Half termly open afternoons for parents or family members
- Reading books shared between home and school
- Parent workshops
- Parents consultations

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible. We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings, for example to the local Church, and inviting members of the community into our setting.

Transition

At Spurcroft Primary and Nursery School we work closely with the local pre-schools and nurseries to ensure that we have detailed information about the children prior to them starting school. The Early Years Teachers visit pre-

schools or nurseries in the summer term prior to the children starting school where they observe the children in the setting and talk to the key staff that know them well. We invite the children and parents/carers to join us for three Stay and Play sessions in the summer term and offer one session where children stay for a morning without a parent/carer. Early Years teachers carry out Home Visits at the start of the autumn term, where they gather relevant information about the child and begin to build a trusted relationship with both the parent and with the child . As the children prepare to enter KS1, the Year 1 teachers observe the children in the Early Years setting during the summer term. The Early Years teachers also meet with the Year 1 teachers to discuss the end of year data within a Pupil Progress Meeting in order to ensure a smooth transition into Year 1. These discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children. The children will also spend time with their new teacher in the Year 1 classroom.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING:

This policy will be monitored by the Headteacher and Governors and will be considered successful if the following criteria are observed:

- The statutory aspects of the EYFS framework are being followed.
- The outcomes for pupils are in line with outcomes identified in the school's Raising Achievement Plan.

Appendix 1

Procedures for when children are ill

- Children who are unwell should not be brought to school. If parents bring children who are unwell to Nursery, they will be asked to take them home again.
- Parents who are unable to care for their own child when they are unwell must have adequate alternative arrangements in place.
- Parents must notify staff if their child has been unwell at the weekend or in the night, and if they have been given any medicine prior to coming to school.
- Any child who has had sickness or diarrhoea must not return to school until at least 48 hours have elapsed from the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea, and they are eating normally.
- Where children have been prescribed antibiotics for Tonsillitis or Conjunctivitis, parents are asked to keep them at home for 48 hours before returning to the setting.

Procedures when children become ill whilst they are in the setting

- When a child becomes ill at school, the child will be looked after by staff and their condition observed.
- If staff feel that the child in too unwell to be at school, or suspect that the child may have a contagious illness, every effort will be made to contact the parents, who will be requested to collect their child as soon as possible, or send an authorised carer to collect the child on their behalf.
- Parents must ensure that the school is able to contact them, or a person nominated by them, at all times.
- If staff suspect a temperature, the child's temperature can be taken using a digital thermometer.
- While waiting for parents, staff will supervise the child in a comfortable place, away from other children, until parents arrive
- In extreme cases of emergency, an ambulance will be called or the child may be taken to the nearest hospital and the parent informed.

Procedures for when pupils fall asleep

- Naps are not part of our daily routines for children in Nursery or Reception.
- There are times that children fall asleep while at school due to illness or if they are in the early stages of dropping a day time nap.
- If a child falls asleep, staff will ensure that the child is comfortable and the area around them is safe. This will include ensuring that they are not on any surfaces where they could roll and fall, that equipment around the child is cleared and other children are removed from the area.
- If possible, a staff member will ensure that the child is laying down and that all outdoor clothing, such as; coats and wellies are removed.
- Parents/carers will be notified at the earliest opportunity that their child has fallen asleep and if staff suspect the child is unwell parents/carers will be asked to come to school to collect them.
- If a child has fallen asleep and is not unwell, staff will take advice from the child's parent regarding the length of time for them to nap. Staff may suggest that they try and wake the child after half an hour. If they do not wake, they will try again every 10 minutes.
- Staff members will conduct physical checks on sleeping children to ensure they are breathing normally, have not been sick and they are not too hot or cold.
- A staff member will always be in close proximity to the child sleeping
- A sleeping child will be frequently checked. This will be checked at every 5 minutes and will be recorded on a 'Sleeping Child Record' – together with times/date/child's name and signature of member of staff checking the child.
- When a child has a sleep, the length of time will be shared with parents/carers when they collect.

Procedures for handling and preparing food

1. Planning and Preparation

- Ensure snacks meet **nutritional guidelines and form part of a child's recommended 5 a day**
- Know the **allergies, dietary restrictions, and cultural preferences of all pupils** and have this information accessible to all staff.
- Follow **food hygiene** standards by washing hands, using clean utensils, and storing food properly.
- Prepare snacks in a **clean and designated area** of the EYFS kitchen.

2. Snack Time Routine

- Children should wash their hands before and after eating.
- Set up the snack area with appropriately sized tables and chairs.
- Serve snacks in a **calm and organised manner**, encouraging independence where possible (e.g., self-serving or pouring drinks).
- Supervise children at all times to ensure safe eating and prevent choking hazards.
- Encourage **good manners** and social interaction during snack time.

3. Food Safety and Hygiene

- Ensure all food is **fresh and stored properly** at the correct temperature.
- Regularly clean tables, chairs, and utensils before and after snack time.

4. Inclusive and Encouraging Environment

- Make snack time a **positive experience**, allowing children to try new foods without pressure.
- Use snack time to **promote healthy eating habits** and educate children about different foods.
- Allow children to **make choices** where appropriate, such as picking between two healthy options.

5. Cleaning and Waste Management

- Dispose of leftovers and food waste appropriately.
- Clean and sanitize tables, chairs, and utensils after snack time.
- Ensure proper handwashing for both staff and children post-snack time.

6. Record Keeping and Communication

- Document and report any concerns related to food allergies or reactions.