

George Mitchell School
Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



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Produced by	Nihal Rashid

George Mitchell School's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy reflects our vision to provide children with the best possible start to the beginning of their learning journey through the school.

1. Aims of the policy:

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a **broad, balanced, and in-depth curriculum** that gives them a range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and to become educated citizens. **The curriculum is ambitious, flexible and thematic.**
- That children are provided with an enabling environment, which reflects and celebrates **local diversity and improves children's cultural capital.**
- **Close partnership** is established between practitioners and families.
- Every child is **unique** and is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- That children are **healthy, safe and secure** and develop positive relationships with adults in a stimulating and safe environment.
- That the development of children's **communication and language skills** as well as vocabulary development is of paramount importance and is interwoven across all the areas of the curriculum and teaching.

In addition, at George Mitchell Early Years we strive to ensure:

- The curriculum is designed and adapted to meet the needs, interests and developmental stage of all children. It is designed to develop knowledge and skills to prepare children for future employment and citizenship.
- Practitioners form strong positive relationships with children so that all children thrive in their confidence and skills.
- A rich, enabling environment is provided to the children in order to stimulate learning; particularly the development of communication and language skills.
- We promote British Values which are embedded in the EYFS curriculum.
- Staff members have secure knowledge of child development in the Early Years and use this knowledge to support children.

2. Legislation:

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DfE 2024:](#)

The Early Years education we provide is founded on the following principles from the EYFS Framework:

- **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 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.
- **Learning and Development:** the importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates.

3. Structure of the EYFS:

The EYFS at George Mitchell School consists of a Nursery class (morning and afternoon sessions) and two Reception classes.

3.1 Nursery

Children are accepted into Nursery in the term the child turns 3. There are 30 places available in George Mitchell Nursery. The sessions offered are:

- AM sessions: 8:40-11:40am
- PM sessions: 12:00-3:15pm (Monday to Thursday); 12:00-2:00pm on Friday.
- Full-time: 8:40am-3:15pm (Monday to Thursday); 8:40am-2:00pm on Friday.

All children aged 3 and 4 are entitled to 15 hours of free Nursery education per week. Some families are entitled to 30 free hours (a full-time place). You can check your eligibility for a 30-hours place using this link: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

Alternatively, you can also make payments of £15 per session for a full-time Nursery place at George Mitchell School.

Please see section 10 (Admissions) or click on this link to find out more about admissions to George Mitchell Nursery: <https://georgemitchellschool.com/admissions-3/>. Please note that enrolment in George Mitchell Nursery does not guarantee automatic admission into George Mitchell Primary School. Please see the Admissions Policy for more information.

3.2 Reception

Children in Reception are aged 4 or 5. The school day runs from 8:40am-3:10pm (Monday to Thursday) and 8:40am-1:15pm (Friday).

Most children start Reception full-time in September after their fourth birthday. If you do not think your child is ready to start school in September, they can start later. For example, if your child only turns 4 in August, you might decide to wait before sending them to school. But they must be in full-time education by the time they reach 'compulsory school age'.

Your child must start full-time education once they reach compulsory school age. This is on 31 December, 31 March or 31 August following their fifth birthday - whichever comes first. If your child's fifth birthday is on one of those dates then they reach compulsory school age on that date.

3.3 Staff teams and Key worker system:

Every child at George Mitchell Nursery is assigned a key worker. A key worker in Nursery is either a Teacher or a Nursery Nurse. In Reception, the class teacher is the key worker for all children. The key worker liaises with parents and families and ensures that the care of their children is tailored to meet their individual needs and the child is offered a secure attachment. Key workers are responsible for monitoring children's development and progress through observations, photographs and uploading the examples of their learning in *Tapestry* for parents to view. All adults within the Early Years setting actively seek to form positive, respectful relationships with the children in their care.

4. Curriculum:

Our Early Years curriculum 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. However, 3 areas - known as the prime areas - are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The **prime areas** are:

Communication and language

Physical development

Personal, social and emotional development

The **specific areas**, which strengthen and apply the prime areas, are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the world

Expressive arts and design

At George Mitchell School, we follow the **United Curriculum Scheme**, which is carefully sequenced to ensure progression from Nursery to Year 6. Adaptations are made, considering the local context to ensure that the curriculum is fit for purpose.

4.1 Curriculum Intent:

To ensure that all children are nurtured as confident, capable learners with:

- **robust language**, knowledge and skills, which is influenced by rich texts and varied experiences.
- **enthusiasm, ambition and love of learning**, and are ready for school beyond Reception.
- have enhanced **culture capital** developed through rich texts (literary), parent partnership and wider experiences (non-literary).
- **High expectations** of themselves and others, showing self-regulation skills as well as set of positive traits (PRIDE) that guide their conduct.
- the ability to read using phonics and to read for enjoyment.
- opportunities to develop their executive function through **retrieval**, adult interventions during play as well as explicit teaching and increased challenge.

4.2 Planning:

At George Mitchell School, practitioners use core texts and themes to plan carefully for the year and each half term. Planning is produced to invoke and respond to children's interests, extend thinking across all areas of learning and facilitate an inspiring continuous provision. Teachers adapt planning to ensure that it is accessible and inclusive to all children, including those with SEND or English as an Additional Language (EAL).

Children learn best when they pursue their own interests in an enabling environment, supported by skilful staff. Our planning and teaching is flexible to follow children's interests and next steps. Planning meetings are held to ensure that personalised experiences and learning opportunities are provided for children according to the information provided by assessment for learning. The practitioners follow the traditional cycle of observation, assessment and planning every time they interact with a child. We work in this way because, through child-initiated activities, children show high levels of involvement and their brains are most active. This leads to rapid progress and development in all the areas of learning. This approach has been recommended in *Development Matters* and current research.

4.3 Language, Communication and Vocabulary:

The development of children's language skills underpins the planning and curriculum development in all areas of learning:

- Long term and short-term planning ensure that children learn new vocabulary based on books and topics.
- Adults have frequent and high-quality sustained interactions with children. These interactions include, back and forth conversations, commenting and echoing back what children say using the new vocabulary added as well as modelling correct grammar.
- Adults talk to children about the world around them and stories.
- The learning environment is language-rich and stimulating. It provides children with ample opportunities to apply the newly learnt vocabulary in practical contexts.
- Adults read aloud to children every day and children are provided with opportunities to re-tell and role play stories, hence becoming comfortable with using a rich range of vocabulary and story structures.
- A strong partnership is established with parents to utilise the strong linguistic connections that children have in their home language, in order to support the development of English language.

4.4 Phonics and Early Reading:

At George Mitchell School, we follow the Read Write Inc programme to teach phonics and early reading lessons.

Phonics in Nursery:

Children are taught phonics skills through group activities and continuous provision. Phonics is also taught through play and is part of our continuous provision, which helps children to practise and apply their phonetic skills independently.

Phonics in Reception:

Children are taught phonics systematically through the 'Read Write Inc.' programme. In Reception, this involves daily, discrete phonics lessons. In addition, phonics is also taught through writing, reading and other cross-curricular play-based activities. Children learn to spell and read words which are phonetically irregular i.e. tricky words. Children use these words in their writing as well as in their reading. By the end of Reception, children are expected to read and write sentences and phrases using the phonemes that they have learnt.

4.5 Shared Reading:

At George Mitchell school we ensure that the **love of reading** and **language comprehension** is promoted at every opportunity.

We achieve this by:

- Reading stories aloud to the children every day. Children are provided with opportunities to listen to the same stories repeatedly to develop their comprehensions skills as well as becoming confident at using the newly learnt vocabulary during play. Story sessions are carefully planned to develop comprehension skills and directionality of print.
- Using carefully chosen texts to inform planning and teaching.
- Working closely with our parents to inform them about the importance of reading stories at home.
- Providing workshops for parents to upskill them in their phonics and reading skills.
- Providing opportunities to role play stories and retelling stories.
- Providing high quality phonics and fiction/non-fiction books to be read at home.

4.6 Reading areas (book corners):

Reading areas are enticing, stimulating and well-maintained by adults and children. Books of a variety of genres are available for children to read and explore. Books are organised by genre and displayed attractively to encourage children to engage with them.

The number of books kept in the area is limited, so that children find it easy to make choices. Adults emphasise and promote respect for books and how to look after the reading areas. Reading areas are regularly updated and children are provided with opportunities to explore books around the topics for each half term.

4.7 Writing - including handwriting and spelling:

Development of Early Writing is directly linked with spoken language and reading. We endeavour to develop children's writing skills by:

- Planning and maintaining a stimulating and enabling environment, rich in print, with quality story books and non-fiction texts.
- Modelling writing skills through whole-class and group sessions, as well as during play.
- Teaching letter formation using RWI mnemonics.
- Establishing a well-resourced outdoor learning environment that promotes writing in all areas through play.
- Providing writing opportunities through play. Each class has a stimulating writing area based on children's interests or the termly theme. The writing areas in each class are well resourced and children are encouraged to access the resources independently during self-chosen play.
- Children learn to write letters of their names in Nursery.
- Books that are linked to the theme and children's interest are displayed and are available for children to read.

Spelling:

Children in Reception are taught grapheme-phoneme correspondences and how to use them to read and spell. By the end of Reception, they will have learned at least one way of spelling each of the 44 phonemes used in English. Children are taught to blend sounds to read and to segment to spell. At the same time, they are introduced to words which are not phonically regular ('tricky words') and learn that they must be able to recognise these on sight.

Children are encouraged to see themselves as writers from an early stage and to 'have a go' at writing, using the sounds they can hear in a word. In its initial stages, successful spelling depends on good phonological awareness: children must have finely tuned listening skills. Practice is provided in a range of contexts: music, dance, PE and story (for example). Children are exposed to rhyme, rhythm and alliteration, attuning their ears to listen carefully to the parts of a word. This stage of phonics begins in Nursery and continues in Reception. Many Nursery children are interested in learning to write their own name and have opportunities daily to see it in print and can use their name card as a prompt for writing it.

4.8 Cultural Capital:

At George Mitchell Early Years, the development of children's cultural capital is embedded in everyday practice by:

- Providing families an extensive transition program in order to get to know our families personally.
- By working closely with the local feeder nurseries.
- Providing children with rich beyond-school experiences which expose them to awe and wonder.

- Using fiction and non-fiction texts which promote the development of inclusion, diversity and British Values.

5. Teaching:

The EYFS framework references characteristics of effective teaching and learning. Nursery and Reception teachers plan activities with these in mind. These characteristics highlight the importance of children's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics 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.

Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

5.1 Play:

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the EYFS. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences which interest and inspire them to learn. In doing so, we can provide children with stimulating, active play experiences through which they can explore and develop their learning and make sense of the world. They can practise skills, and build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Our adults take an active role in children's play through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language. Adults support children's play by modelling play skills and use of language and teaching self-regulation skills when carrying out interactions with the children.

5.2 Outdoor Learning:

Children in Early Years have opportunities throughout the day to complete indoor and outdoor activities. The aim is to make outdoor and indoor learning work together. Indoor and outdoor activities broadly complement each other where outdoor activities take place at a larger scale. Free-flow outdoor play is encouraged during all types of weather.

5.3 Learning Environment:

The learning environment at George Mitchell School is carefully planned to provide children with opportunities and spaces to thrive. We believe that an enabling learning environment not only constitutes the physical features of the environment but also supportive and responsive adults who care for children and adapt the resources and teaching approaches according to children's interests.

Home corners are set up to be stimulating and foster children's linguistic skills in an inquisitive manner. Home corners are organised to provide an opportunity for children to apply their reading and writing skills during play and a space for children and adults to have meaningful 'to and fro conversations.' Reading opportunities are provided both indoors and outdoors. Reading areas are calm, aesthetically stimulating and provide children a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books.

The outdoor learning environment complements the learning taking place indoors. Children are provided with opportunities to explore the natural world and develop creative ideas at a larger scale. The outdoor learning environment is carefully planned for high-quality play; adults sensitively support and extend children's learning by responding, guiding, leading and joining in with children's play.

Children and adults take mutual responsibility for developing the learning environment and to keep it organised and tidy. This helps children to foster co-regulation and self-regulation skills.

6. Inclusion:

At George Mitchell Early Years, we are committed to provide inclusive educational practices for all. Through a child-centred approach, we aim to ensure that education is accessible and relevant to all our learners, to respect each other and to celebrate diversity and difference.

We ensure inclusion by promoting a broad and wide curriculum accessible to all pupils regardless of gender, religion, abilities, cultures and ethnicity.

In addition, we work hand in hand with other professionals, such as the educational psychologists and speech therapists, who can assess individual child's needs and offer advice.

We use the *SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 years* as statutory guidance to support and include children with SEND needs.

Our staff use the SEND 'Assess, Plan, Do and Review cycle' to ensure that children with additional needs are supported, and their progress is monitored regularly.

7. Assessment:

Assessment is an essential part of children's learning and development in the EYFS. Assessments are made primarily by observing children when they are involved in child-initiated learning activities and when children work in small groups with an adult. These group and whole class observations are recorded on their online Learning Journals on *Tapestry* to be shared with parents. As well as observing the type of activity children are engaged in, staff also specifically observe their level of involvement and social interactions, as well as monitoring which characteristics of effective learning they are demonstrating.

Teachers make assessment judgements by using their knowledge of individual children and analysing their progress against the curriculum.

Accurate assessment requires a two-way flow of information between the school and home. We welcome and encourage contributions from home to be included in the children's online Learning Journals on *Tapestry* so that we have a complete picture of children's learning and development.

Parents are informed of their children's progress and attainment at 'Parents' meetings' as well as through less formal interactions and open mornings. Teachers are always keen to speak to the parents about their child's learning and development. Parents receive a written report at the end of the academic year that outlines their children's progress and attainment.

Summative assessment is carried out at the end of each term (at least 3 times in a year). Children's progress is reviewed during termly pupil progress meetings. During these meetings, the team discusses the strengths of and next steps for individual children, and then adapt the curriculum and provision accordingly.

7.1 Statutory Assessment in the EYFS:

Below is a summary of the statutory assessments that schools are required to administer in the EYFS.

7.1.1 Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA):

The Reception Baseline is a statutory assessment that children have to take within the first 6 weeks of starting Reception. The purpose of the assessment is to provide the starting point for a progress measure that will help parents understand how well schools support their pupils to progress between Reception and Year 6.

The RBA is a short, interactive and practical assessment of your child's early literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills when they begin school, using materials that most children of your child's age will be familiar with.

The RBA is not about judging or labelling your child or putting them under any pressure. Your child cannot 'pass' or 'fail' the assessment. Its main purpose is to create a starting point to measure the progress schools make with their pupils.

The data from the assessment will only be used by the Department for Education when your child has reached the end of Year 6, to provide the baseline to measure the progress of your child's year group from Reception to Year 6. The data from the assessment, including numerical scores, is not shared with parents, pupils, teachers, or external bodies, including schools, and there will be no published scores at pupil, school or national level.

Your child will answer questions verbally or by pointing at or moving objects. The assessment has been designed to ensure that it is inclusive and accessible to as many children as possible, including those with special educational needs or disability (SEND), or English as an additional language (EAL). The teacher can pause the assessment at any time if your child needs a break. There are also modified materials available for children with visual and hearing impairments.

7.1.2 Good Level of Development (GLD):

Children are defined as having reached a 'Good Level of Development' at the end of Reception if they are assessed as having achieved the Early Learning Goals in the following areas of learning:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical development
- Communication and language
- Maths
- Literacy

7.1.3 EYFS Profile:

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile must reflect practitioners' own knowledge and professional judgement of a child to inform discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. Practitioners indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels.

At the end of Reception, a written report is given to the parents and Year 1 teachers. The end of year report:

- summarises attainment in all areas of learning.
- comments on general progress including the characteristics of effective learning.

Parents are invited to discuss the outcomes of the Profile of their child's attainment, and are encouraged to stay involved in their children's assessment and learning process by making regular contributions to the online Learning Journey on *Tapestry*.

8. Parent Partnership:

Parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore we work very closely with them to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel that they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting.

We aim to establish a strong bond with parents as soon as they become a part of our school community. We ensure this by:

- Organising stay and play sessions for parents to spend time in their child's class, before they begin in Nursery or Reception.
- Before children start in Reception and Nursery classes, holding parents' meetings to support parents in preparing their child for the EYFS.
- Holding regular parents' workshops throughout the year, which enable parents to support their children in different areas of learning such as reading, phonics and maths.
- Using *Tapestry* as an online tool to develop children's Learning Journeys with a vision of receiving regular contributions from parents as partners.
- Holding regular parents' meetings throughout the year.
- Our SENCO and EYFS Leader working closely with outside agencies to plan provision for children with additional needs.
- Inviting parents to stay for regular parent open sessions in both Nursery and Reception.
- Communicating with parents via *Tapestry* and *Class Dojo* messaging services.

9. Transition:

"Transition should be seen as a process, not an event, and should be planned for and discussed with children and parents" (*The Practice Guidance for the EYFS* Page 10 Para 1.30).

For many children and parents, transition can be an anxious and emotional time. They may be unclear about what happens in an early years setting or what to expect in terms of the environment and curriculum. For children it is often the first time they may have been away from their home environment and is the first step towards independence.

Research points to the fact that, just like adults, children find transition and change stressful and that this stress can have a significant impact upon their emotional well-being and academic achievements.

As practitioners, we therefore have a huge responsibility to ensure that we get our approach to transition right and ensure that it is smooth for children and their families.

We have put the following procedures in place to ensure smooth Transition in George Mitchell Early years. Below is a brief guide to transition within and out of the EYFS at George Mitchell; however, as we treat each child as a unique individual, these procedures can be adjusted according to children's and families' requirements.

9.1 Transition into Nursery:

- Parents are invited to attend two stay and play sessions with their child before they are offered a place at George Mitchell Nursery. The sessions are free of charge and can be booked via the school office. During the sessions, the EYFS Lead meets with the family.

- Individual parent meetings are held with the EYFS leader before the child starts Nursery.
- Additional meetings are held with the School Inclusion and Safeguarding Team, if required.
- Our practitioners carry out home visits for any child who is new to our Nursery.
- Children start Nursery at different days and in small groups. This gives the children and their families opportunities to form close relationship with their child's key person.
- Key worker meetings take place within the first 6 weeks from the child's start date.

9.2 Transition into Reception (start of year):

- School tours take place between October and January for entry the following September.
- Transition in Reception begins a term before children start school in September.
- During the Summer Term, parents are invited to a parent information and registration meeting with our EYFS Lead.
- Parents are also invited to attend a small group stay and play session with their child.
- Parents and children are invited for an additional 'meet the teacher' session.
- Nursery Key workers meet with the Reception teachers for a detailed hand over, for children already attending George Mitchell Nursery.
- During the Summer Term, a staff member visits the nursery settings of those children who are new to George Mitchell.
- Reception teachers carry out home visits for children who are new to George Mitchell School.
- Children start school in September following a flexible staggered start provision.

9.3 Transition into Reception (in-year):

- Once an in-year admissions form is received from the Local Authority, the school contacts parents to fill in a registration form.
- An induction meeting is held with parents and relevant school leaders (including members of the Inclusion and/or Safeguarding Teams where appropriate).
- At this meeting, a start date is agreed and the child is introduced to their new class and teacher. Where appropriate, stay and play sessions or a staggered start may be arranged.
- Teachers and the EYFS Lead communicate regularly with the child's parents/carers after their start date to ensure that the child settles well into school.
- If the child is new-to-country or is new to school, they will complete the Reception Baseline Assessment in the first six weeks of their entry to George Mitchell.
- If the child has previously attended a school in England, Early Years staff will contact their former school to discuss any relevant assessment or pastoral information.

9.4 Transition into Year 1:

- Reception teachers share children's EYFS profiles with the Year 1 teachers to ensure that the Year 1 teachers have an accurate understanding of children's progress and attainment.
- Reception children undergo a structured transition programme in the Summer Term of their Reception year, to begin to get them ready for the transition to Year 1. This includes meeting their new teachers and spending time in their new classrooms.
- The EYFS Lead liaises with the Year 1 team to ensure that children who have not met any Early Learning Goals receive appropriate, targeted intervention to support them to reach age-related expectations.
- Parents/carers are communicated with throughout the transition programme, and at the start of Year 1, to ensure that they are familiar with the change from EYFS into Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2).

10. Admissions:

Information about admissions to George Mitchell School, including the Admissions Policy for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 academic years, can be found here:

<https://georgemitchellschool.com/admissions-3/>

10.1 Admissions to Nursery:

Admissions to Nursery are accepted in the term a child turns 3. For Nursery, parents should apply directly to the school by phoning the Primary office, speaking to our Primary office staff in person or emailing early-years@georgemitchellschool.co.uk.

10.2 Admissions to Reception (start of the year):

Admissions to Primary take place when a child is 3 or 4 years old and ready to start in Reception the following September. Primary admissions are managed by Waltham Forest and applications take place by January each school year. Further details and the admissions form can be found here:

<https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/schools-education-and-learning/apply-primary-school>

10.3 Admissions to Reception (in-year):

In-year admissions are possible for those moving house or schools and can take place in any year group at any time of year provided there is a space available. Further details and the admissions forms can be found here:

<https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/schools-education-and-learning/apply-school-place/year-admissions>.

11. Safeguarding at George Mitchell Early Years:

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 (*Statutory framework for EYFS, 2017*).

At George Mitchell Early Years, we follow our whole school Safeguarding Policy which is available on the school website:

<http://www.georgemitchellschool.co.uk/about-the-school/policies>.

We also use the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework as guidance to ensure that the children at our setting are happy, healthy, safe and secure.

Children at George Mitchell Early Years enjoy learning and growing in confidence in a safe and stimulating environment.

Some of the key points of our school policy are:

- We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all of its pupils. Each pupil's welfare is of paramount importance.
- All staff are responsible for safeguarding and learning of all children.
- We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school and who is therefore likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult. This includes volunteers, supervised volunteers and staff employed by contractors. It also includes undertaking interviews and checks with the [Disclosure and Barring Service](#).
- At George Mitchell School we have designated practitioners who take lead responsibility for safeguarding children. The lead practitioners are responsible for liaison with local statutory children's services agencies. They provide support, advice and guidance to any other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required.

- All staff at George Mitchell are trained to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures and have an up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. Our regular safeguarding training enables staff members to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way.
- We follow the Early years Foundation Framework to ensure that staff/child ratio is appropriate under all circumstances.
- No child will be handed over to the care of any adult other than a parent/carer or person nominated by the parent and known to the Reception/Nursery class staff.
- At least one member of staff with current paediatric first aid training is on the premises or on an outing at any time.
- We ensure that our premises, including overall floor space and outdoor spaces, 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).
- We advise parents to provide us with three emergency contact numbers for their children.
- It is important to note that all adults including members of staff, parents, volunteers, and students on placements do not use their **mobile phones** or personal handset devices in the classroom and are advised against taking photographs with their personal handsets. When taking photos or videos during school events, parents must not share those on any online platforms. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.
- We take all accidents seriously and always log and phone home immediately if a child suffers a head injury.
- We also discuss any marks or wounds that a child might present from home.
- We encourage all children to start school without nappies but will support any children struggling with this due to additional needs. We acknowledge that young children often have 'accidents' (i.e. wet themselves) and have spare Nursery clothes to change anyone who needs it. We also ask parents to help keep our stocks of clothes high by returning anything their child has borrowed. We encourage parents to send spare clothes with the children so that they can be changed into their own clothes.
- Children are changed in the open area outside the toilets. Staff follow the George Mitchell Intimate Care Policy.
- We follow whole school procedures and policies for child protection, prevent duty, e-safety and FGM (see separate policies and protocols).

11.1 Staff/Child ratios in the EYFS:

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.

Nursery class: We have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children.

Note: Where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another approved level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children. At least one member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification.

When a person with Qualified Teacher Status is not present, there is at least 1 staff member for eight children.

At least one member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification.

Exceptionally, and whilst maintaining the care and safety of children, changes to ratios may be made. These will be agreed and authorized by the Headteacher, where necessary.

Reception classes: We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils.

11.2 Trips and Outings:

- Parents sign a written consent form for trips when their child enrolls at George Mitchell school. This covers them for their whole time at school.
- At least one person who has a current pediatric first aid (PFA) certificate accompanies children on outings.
- Parents are informed about trips in advance.
- Before educational visits take place, a risk assessment is carried out, which is signed by the Headteacher. Risk assessments are not carried out for routine local walks which involve no more than everyday level of risk.
- Our adult to child ratio follows the guidance set out in the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*, published by the Department for Education in 2024. For children aged 3 years and above the ratio is 1 adult to every 5 children; for children aged 4 to 5 the ratio is 1 adult to every 6 children. All EYFS trips include a member of staff who is pediatric first aid trained.
- Staff take a list of children with them with full medical details and contact numbers of parents.
- Staff take a mobile phone on outings, and supplies of tissues, wipes, pants etc as well as a mini first aid pack, snacks and water. The amount of equipment will vary and be consistent with the venue and the number of children as well as how long they will be out for.
- Vehicles in which children are being transported, and the driver of those vehicles, are adequately insured and DBS checked.

11.2.1 Parent Helpers/Volunteers:

On certain occasions, it may be necessary to ask for parent helpers or volunteers to accompany an EYFS trip. On these occasions the following procedures also apply:

- Parent helpers/volunteer helpers must not take children to the toilets unless accompanied by a member of staff. This is clearly explained before departure.
- Parent helpers/volunteer helpers must not take photographs or videos of the children on the trip. This is clearly explained before departure.

12. Policies and protocols for the George Mitchell EYFS Phase:

The following non-exhaustive list of policies and protocols are applied in the EYFS. These policies can be found here: <https://georgemitchellschool.com/policies/>.

- Safeguarding Policy
- Administering Medicines Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy
- Fire and Emergency Evacuation Protocols
- Physical Intervention Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Educational Visits Protocol

- Health and Safety Policy
- Home Visits Protocol

This policy has been produced in line with and follows George Mitchell Primary and Secondary School Policies and Procedures.

**Reviewed:
May 2025**