



# EYFS Policy



September 2026

EYFS

Next Review February 2027

### **This policy aims to ensure that we:**

- Establish an environment that is nurturing, exciting, full of interesting and challenging activities in which learning can take place.
- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Understand and follow children's interests and provide opportunities throughout our EYFS curriculum to support learning, consolidate and deepen knowledge and ensure children meet their next steps.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- Encourage empathy and understanding of the impact of pupil's behaviour on others whilst ensuring all pupils maintain high self-esteem.
- Give children opportunities to practise, revise and extend knowledge and skills in a consistent and stable environment.
- Enable children to develop characteristics of effective learning, which will enable them to become independent, resourceful and resilient learners
- Develop 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 Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, dated 13 July 2026 and effective from 1 September 2026.

Structure of the EYFS at Golden Hill Short Stay Primary School is a mixed age class of EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 in Eagles Class. We do not have nursery provision. The Eagles Class teacher is Mrs C Jenkinson (EYFS Lead). The Eagles class teaching assistants are Mrs W Slater (HLTA) and Miss A Walsh.

The EYFS and School SENDCO is Mrs Z Towers.

The EYFS curriculum focuses on developing the skills and abilities of all our children. Staff are fully committed to ensuring the needs of our children are met both academically and in regard to their social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

School staff aim to motivate and challenge children to want to achieve their best and to take learning risks without fear of failure.

We seek to make our curriculum meaningful and relevant to all of our children. We effectively use our local environment and the expertise within the school and the wider community to present interactive and engaging teaching and learning. Our aspiration and commitment are for our children to become independent learners, to learn through practical first-hand experiences, creative opportunities, and engagement with school visitors.

At Golden Hill Primary School, we aim to support all children to become independent, confident and successful learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that gives each child the opportunity to develop morally, spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually.

## **Curriculum**

Our curriculum is built around a firm belief that children are uniquely capable, creative and intelligent. We aim to develop and embed the foundations for our children to be successful learners and have a life-long love of learning through wonder, exploration and inspiration. There is a shared aim that every child will fall in love with reading and a recognition among all leaders and EY practitioners, that success in reading is the gateway to learning across the school.

Our ambitious curriculum is designed in a sequential way to ensure progress towards the end of reception goals. These goals are defined as Early Learning Goals (ELGs). The descriptors for these can be found in the appendix.

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers that applies from September 2025. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. 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 prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy

- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Weaving throughout the EYFS curriculum are the three Characteristics of Effective Learning.

- 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

These elements underpin how we reflect on each child’s development and adjust our practice accordingly. Supporting children in their individual learning behaviour and observing the context of children’s play is essential.

*‘What children learn is important, but how children learn is even more important if they are to become learners in today’s society.’* Helen Moylett How Children Learn, Nancy Stewart (2011)

Firstly, we feel it is important to get to know the children emotionally, to enable tailored support for their individual needs. We take time to get to know children’s interests and their likes to support learning. All areas of the EYFS curriculum are followed and planned for to ensure there is a broad, balanced and progressive learning environment and curriculum.

We continually promote and develop social, personal and emotional skills to enable children to play and learn together. Language and communication skills are a key focus, as we feel that this is crucial in children’s development, learning and progress. Alongside this, we recognise the importance of forming positive relationships between children, staff and parents.

Alongside the language and communication skills identified in specific programmes, we continually support all communication difficulties throughout the day. We feel it is important to ensure all staff (not just Early Years Staff) who are in contact with our children are confident in also supporting their communication needs. E.g. at lunchtimes, playtimes, option time.

All children are valued as individuals. We aim to deliver a curriculum that provides memorable experiences and firm foundations for learning to enable each child to thrive. We endeavour to give children the Cultural Capital they need for the future by

giving them the best start in life to enable them to fulfil their full potential and achieve future success.

We offer a broad curriculum with a balance of both adult led and child-initiated activities using books and topics which engage the children. We provide a stimulating environment and exciting opportunities both indoors and outdoors to promote curiosity, problem solving and imagination.

Children in EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside. Our outdoor areas are used all year round and in most weather conditions. We ensure activities support the Characteristics of Effective Learning to ensure learning takes place.

These 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.

### **Planning**

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are taken from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. The planning is based upon themes with discrete phonics, maths and reading directed teaching.

In planning and guiding what children learn, we incorporate the seven areas of learning, as well as considering the different rates at which children develop, and provide opportunities to encourage the 3 characteristics of effective learning. The Early Years Team have a collaborative approach to planning in the Eagles class. Alongside weekly planning, staff observe pupils, reflecting daily on the achievements of the children, and use this information to adjust plans immediately and accordingly to needs. This is then reflected in the environment and a range of stimulating and engaging access independently through child-initiated play. The Early Years team feel it is important to ensure all next steps for pupils are acted upon immediately in order to develop learning for all.

Alongside this, we feel that it is important for any child to have access to individual, intervention programmes where necessary. E.g. emotional literacy, speech and language, gross motor skills.

We provide Continuous Provision throughout the day, allowing children to develop independence, innovation, creativity and problem-solving skills. It is an opportunity for the children to use and develop the skills taught to them on a daily basis.

Our medium-term planning identifies the intended learning for children working towards the Early Learning Goals. Due to the nature of changing interests, this is constantly updated and subject to change.

## **Teaching**

Throughout the day, the Early Years Team in Eagles class provides a range of teaching styles appropriate to meet the needs of the children. This means that the children will experience individual, collaborative, group and whole class teaching. We ensure there is a balance between self-initiated, experiential and focused adult sessions.

One of the main focuses through our teaching is to promote and develop social, personal and emotional skills to enable children to play and learn together. The use and development of language and communication skills is pivotal to our children's development, learning and progress.

At Golden Hill Short Stay School, our teaching styles are also led through the importance of forming positive relationships with the children from the moment they arrive to the moment they leave us. We aim to ensure that all children become secure at our school, through promoting and developing positive relationships throughout the day.

As 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 or returning to their mainstream school.

We need to take into consideration the Stage 4 children, who return to their mainstream school after 12 weeks, and the teaching style/environment they are moving back to. This can mean a shift in teaching and expectations in preparation for the move, and to ensure they are as prepared as possible, and equipped to succeed back at their mainstream school.

## **Teaching EYFS to Children with SEMH**

When planning schemes of work, teachers need to consider how to make the curricular goals accessible and inclusive for all learners. Potential barriers to learning for individuals should be anticipated alongside a pathway to ensure these learners can actively participate in the best possible way. Planning should clearly identify what children and young people will learn. Teachers should consider factors that support each learner's needs, and factors that may inhibit or prevent learning such as use of equipment, environmental sensitivity risks, gaps in knowledge of vocabulary or processes. Teachers should also be mindful of how to balance adult support alongside

opportunities for independent learning, ensuring that tasks are broken down and build incrementally.

Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, we liaise with the school SENCO and ensure relevant services from other agencies are accessed and any specific programmes of work are undertaken.

## **Assessment**

At Golden Hill, staff in the EYFS make regular observations of the children's learning to ensure their next steps are met. We regularly assess where the children are, using 'Development Matters' and then ensure our planning, adult interaction and learning environment; including continuous provision, support children to reach their next steps. We will include interventions for groups or individuals if and when necessary.

Class teachers use observations to make formative assessments which inform future planning and ensure that all children build on their current knowledge and skills at a good pace. Summative assessment compares children attainment to age related expectations using Development Matters. Our assessment judgements have been moderated both in school and externally with local schools.

Depending on when a child is admitted to Golden Hill, the assessments information may be collated from mainstream school. However, we follow all national guidance on assessments:

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.

We ensure that mainstream schools receive the appropriate assessments for the Stage 4 children.

## **Working with parents**

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

At Golden Hill, parents are part of the Admissions Meeting, and then termly meetings to discuss their child's progress, together with an end of year report. 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.

As per the statutory requirement, 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.

There is daily communication with parents/carers and teaching staff through the Seesaw App. Staff also support parents/carers with putting in home targets where appropriate, which are reviewed and amended accordingly. Alongside this, staff ensure regular termly chats with parents to talk about their child, and ensure they feel supported with their child's progress. Throughout the year, we plan in opportunities for parents/carers to be invited into schools for events e.g. picnics, school play, sports day.

### **Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

At Golden Hill, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements and from 1 September 2026, the school has regard to the Department for Education's guidance on children's screen use in early years settings. Screen use in Reception is limited, carefully planned, age-appropriate and linked to a clear learning, communication or accessibility purpose. Children do not access screen content without adult oversight, and screens do not replace high-quality interaction, practical play, stories, physical activity or outdoor learning. Appropriate assistive technology for pupils with SEND is considered according to individual need.

The school's safeguarding arrangements set out how mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices with imaging or sharing capabilities may be used. Digital content is checked before use; advertising, autoplay, algorithm-driven content and unsuitable artificial intelligence tools are avoided in Reception.

The school follows the safer-recruitment and suitability requirements in the EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education. Staff and regular volunteers working directly with Reception children must have the appropriate identity, reference, enhanced DBS and, where eligible, children's barred-list checks before starting. Occasional supervised helpers are managed through the school's risk-assessment and volunteer procedures. Staff and prospective staff must disclose relevant information that may affect their suitability, subject to the legal rules on protected convictions and cautions.

Banned dog breeds within section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, including the XL Bully type, must not be kept or present on the school premises at any time, including where a dog has a certificate of exemption.

The detailed safer-sleep requirements for children under two are not applicable because the school provides Reception provision only. If a Reception pupil needs to

rest or sleep because of a medical condition, disability or other identified need, an individual plan and risk assessment will specify safe supervision and care arrangements.

When Reception pupils attend school-run breakfast or after-school care, the safeguarding and welfare requirements in section 3 of the EYFS framework continue to apply. The learning, development and assessment requirements in sections 1 and 2 do not apply to wraparound-only care for children who normally attend Reception or an older class during the school day.

Further safeguarding and welfare procedures, including child protection, allegations against staff, whistleblowing, online safety, safer recruitment and staff conduct, are set out in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Online Safety Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and associated procedures.

### **Keeping Safe**

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

### **Good Health**

All children have access to a healthy fruit snack every day, as well as water at all times in individual water bottles. They have access to milk at lunchtimes. Through the EYFS curriculum, children learn about healthy lifestyles, oral health, and taking care of their health and wellbeing. We teach children to clean themselves where possible, and how to use the toilets properly.

We follow statutory guidance for safety around supervised tooth brushing. The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our Safeguarding policy.

### **Supervision**

Supervision is a legal requirement for EYFS staff since the revised EYFS Statutory Framework (2017) following a Serious Case Review linked to Little Ted's Nursery in 2010.

It states that 'providers must put appropriate arrangements in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families. Effective supervision provides support, coaching, and training for the practitioner and promotes the interests of children. Supervision should foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork, and continuous improvement, which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.'

It should also provide opportunities for staff to:

- discuss any issues – particularly concerning children’s development or well-being
- identify solutions to address issues as they arise
- receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness

All members of the EYFS team receive regular supervision. This will be half-termly for Wendy Slater and Amy Walsh, and termly for Cheryl Jenkinson.

### **Monitoring arrangements**

It is the responsibility of those working in Eagles to follow the principles stated in this Policy.

The Head Teacher, Mrs Sarah Barrett, will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where statutory requirements change. The next scheduled review is February 2027.

| Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS                                     | Where can it be found?                                                                               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Safeguarding policy and procedures                                             | See child protection and safeguarding policy                                                         |
| Procedure for responding to illness                                            | See health and safety 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    | See child protection and safeguarding policy                                                         |
| Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints                             | See complaints policy                                                                                |
| Children's screen use and use of mobile phones, cameras and electronic devices | See online safety policy, child protection and safeguarding policy and staff code of conduct         |
| Safer recruitment, staff suitability and volunteer checks                      | See child protection and safeguarding policy, safer-recruitment procedures and single central record |

| Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS                                              | Where can it be found?                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Banned dog breeds and premises controls                                                 | See health and safety, visitor and lettings arrangements                    |
| Safeguarding and welfare during school-run wraparound care attended by Reception pupils | See child protection and safeguarding policy and wraparound care procedures |