



We Care. We Aspire. We Belong

Milverton Community Primary and Pre-School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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School Vision

Inspiring every child to achieve their full potential. Nurturing our children to become resilient, respectful and responsible global citizens.

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to the learning and development of all children from birth to the end of the Reception Year.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just a preparation for the next stage but is vitally important in itself.

For children, learning is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the Foundation Stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

Aims and Objectives

At Milverton Community Primary and Pre-School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent learners. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and carers to help every child reach their full potential.

As outlined in the 'Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage (Group and School-Based Providers) 2026':

'All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.'

Statutory Framework of EYFS

At Milverton Community Primary and Pre-School we follow the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage (Group and School-Based Providers) 2026. We adhere to the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and 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.

- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates.

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven curriculum areas, using play as the vehicle for learning;
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support;
- Work in partnership with parents and carers;
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment and by the children's own ideas and interests;
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated, child-initiated and adult supported;
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors.

Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

Our curriculum is designed to ensure that children's entire early years experience contributes positively to their brain development, wellbeing and readiness for Key Stage 1. Practitioners are ambitious for all children and carefully consider children's individual needs, interests and stages of development when planning meaningful learning experiences. Particular emphasis is placed on developing language and extending vocabulary across all areas of learning.

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve the Early Learning Goals. We use Development Matters as non-statutory curriculum guidance to support the delivery of our curriculum and the requirements of the EYFS. We recognise that providers are free to determine how they deliver the learning and development requirements.

All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.

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, both in the EYFS and into Key Stage 1. These three areas are the **prime** areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

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

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

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

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

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively and be active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

Children will engage in whole group and small group activities alongside their independent learning. The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS framework: *'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'*.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those which are planned by adults. During children's play, the adults interact when appropriate to stretch and challenge them further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and build these into our practice. We create a stimulating learning environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and outdoors as far as possible.

Children's Screen Use

Technology is used purposefully to enhance learning and development when appropriate. We have regard to Department for Education guidance regarding children's screen use and ensure screen-based activities are balanced with rich opportunities for physical activity, social interaction, talk, outdoor learning and hands-on experiences

Observation and Assessment

Reception children complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) within the first six weeks of starting school. The assessment provides a starting point for measuring progress across primary education and is administered in accordance with Department for Education guidance. RBA outcomes are not used to judge children's attainment and children cannot pass or fail the assessment.

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. Practitioners carry out ongoing formative assessment through daily interactions and observations. Assessment does not require extensive written evidence and professional judgement remains central to understanding children's progress and next steps.

2 Year Old checks are carried out by key workers in pre-school and overseen by the EYFS lead and Early Years SENDCo. At the end of pre-school, key workers assess the child's level of development as 'on track' or 'not on track', ready for starting school, holding transfer meetings for those moving up internally, or completing forms for those moving elsewhere.

At the end of the reception year children are assessed against the expected level of development known as the Early Learning Goals (ELGs). These are the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn 5. Our reception class teachers make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development and their readiness for Year 1. These judgements are made using the teacher's knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement.

Health & Safety (including Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements)

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount at Milverton Community Primary and Pre-school. We have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure their safety. The school monitors attendance carefully and follows up unexplained or prolonged absences promptly in line with safeguarding procedures. Attendance expectations are shared with parents and carers and concerns regarding attendance patterns may be referred to appropriate safeguarding agencies where necessary.

Within Pre-School and the Reception class, we provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to take risks, follow rules and stay safe. We comply with the welfare requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and understand that we must:

- Promote the welfare of all children;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately;
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the environment is safe and all equipment and furniture is fit for purpose
- Ensure all children have a challenging and enjoyable learning experience.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, access to water throughout the day, allocating significant time for physical development and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident. This also includes the development of positive oral health habits and healthy lifestyles through national initiatives. Smoking, vaping and e-cigarette are prohibited on the premises.

We maintain robust procedures regarding the use of mobile phones, cameras and electronic devices. Staff and visitors do not use personal devices in areas accessed by children. Images of children are only captured using approved school equipment and stored in accordance with safeguarding and data protection requirements. Online safety is embedded throughout safeguarding practice.

Milverton Community Primary and Pre-School has robust systems in place to ensure that all practitioners who have regular contact with children are suitable for their role (see Safeguarding & Recruitment Policy).

All EYFS staff hold the Paediatric First aid qualification.

The Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy is in place to ensure the safety of all stakeholders at Milverton Community Primary and Pre-School. Backing up this policy is a dedicated safeguarding team, included a designated Early Years Safeguarding lead. Staff have access to the 'My Concern' safeguarding system to log any concerns regarding any aspects of safeguarding and behaviour. All staff are vigilant in reporting concerns.

Whistleblowing

The school operates clear whistleblowing procedures which enable staff, volunteers and students to raise concerns regarding unsafe practice or safeguarding concerns. All concerns are taken seriously and addressed through appropriate channels

Food Safety and Allergies

Information regarding children's allergies, dietary needs and intolerances is obtained before admission and reviewed regularly. Staff are aware of allergy management procedures and individual healthcare plans where appropriate. Children are supervised closely during mealtimes and snacks to minimise choking and allergy risks. Staff are trained to administer adrenal pens.

Sleep and Rest

The school recognises that adequate sleep and rest are essential for young children's health, wellbeing and development. Where children require sleep or rest during the day, this will be provided in a safe, comfortable and suitably supervised environment that meets their individual needs. Staff work closely with parents and carers to establish and maintain appropriate sleep routines, taking account of children's age, stage of development, home routines, health needs and family preferences. Children who are sleeping will be monitored regularly and accurate records of sleep times and welfare checks will be maintained and shared with parents. All staff involved in supervising sleeping children are appropriately trained, including paediatric first aid, and follow the school's safeguarding, health and safety

procedures at all times. The school promotes safe sleep practices and works collaboratively with families to support children's wellbeing, ensuring that every child's dignity, safety and individual needs are respected. Please see the Safer Sleep policy for further details.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve the Early Learning Goals.

The school has clear arrangements to identify and support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The SENDCo works closely with staff, families and external agencies to ensure children receive appropriate support and intervention. The school has regard to the SEND Code of Practice (0-25 years).

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/carers and outside agencies. We have a qualified SENDCo within the school, as well as a designated EY SENDCo within pre-school, who work closely together to ensure appropriate support is provided in a timely manner.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We value and support children's home languages and cultural backgrounds. Where appropriate, children are encouraged to use their home language in play and learning as part of their developing sense of identity and communication skills. We ensure that all children have sufficient opportunities to learn and develop English language skills so they are prepared for Key Stage 1. Where concerns arise regarding a child's language development, practitioners will work closely with parents and carers to understand the child's communication skills in both English and their home language.

The Role of Parents & Carers

We recognise the central importance of parents/carers as children's first educators. We believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child. We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents/carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

- Holding getting to know you visits prior to the child starting pre-school.
- Holding information evenings before the children start school;
- Talking to them about their child's interests and needs during our introductory sessions in school and pre-school;
- Being welcoming and approachable and having an open-door approach for parents to voice concerns/ask questions;
- Inviting them to a parent consultation in the Autumn and Spring Terms to discuss how their child has settled and share progress and next steps for learning;
- Valuing parents' contributions to learning journeys;

- Encouraging parents to read with their child at home and make comments in their reading record books;
- For pre-school children's parents we provide a noticeboard highlighting the experiences the children have been enjoying daily;
- For reception children's parents we provide curriculum planning overviews for each topic, each term, highlighting how they can support their child at home;
- Delivering a phonics and maths presentation for reception parents;
- Welcoming parents as volunteers into our school;
- Providing reception class parents with an end of year summary report detailing achievements and their child's EYFS profile;
- We also draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting to talk about their lives, work and experiences.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned and significant time is given to ensure continuity of learning and care. At times of transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings. Children attend a number of introductory sessions to develop familiarity with the settings and practitioners. Our Reception staff also visit the local nurseries and preschools in return, to familiarise themselves with the children.

Parents/carers are encouraged to take up the offer of a home visit welcome meeting with the reception class teacher at the beginning of September. This is a valuable time to talk 1:1 with them and answer any concerns/queries they may have.

At the end of the EYFS, our Reception teacher meets with the Year 1 teacher to liaise with them and discuss the individual children and their specific needs. The children's assessment data and maths and writing books are sent with them to Year 1 so that their new teachers are able to plan for their 'next steps in learning' from the moment they enter their new class. Children spend a number of sessions towards the end of the school year in the Year 1 classroom or with the Year 1 teacher in the Reception Class to ensure that they are familiar and comfortable with their new teachers and are 'next year ready'. Throughout the year, there are many opportunities for Reception children to build relationships with Year 1 staff.

Monitoring of the EYFS

We are committed to providing the best possible experiences for our children. The EYFS Coordinator is responsible for monitoring provision, teaching and learning and children's progress across the pre-school and reception class. Information is shared with the Headteacher and the whole early years team as appropriate and any necessary actions are taken.

All practitioners receive induction training covering safeguarding, child protection, emergency procedures, health and safety, and their role within the EYFS. Safeguarding

training is renewed annually and all staff receive regular updates. Staff supervision and professional development opportunities support continuous improvement in practice.

All adults in the early years team have a key role in children's learning and development. Therefore, they are required to be knowledgeable and skilled in the EYFS curriculum. Any training needs for existing or new members of staff are identified and addressed as part of performance management targets.

Milverton Community Primary and Pre-School is committed to maintaining high-quality early years provision that promotes children's learning, development, welfare and wellbeing. We continually review practice against statutory requirements and current research to ensure every child receives the best possible start to their education.

Documents related to this policy include those listed below:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2026
- Positive Relationships & Behaviour Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy
- Safer Sleep Policy