



Early Years Policy

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents/carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

3. Structure of the EYFS

Strathmore Early Years consists of one Nursery class and two Reception classes. Our Nursery offers 15 hour sessions 5 days a week and we charge pupils £3 for an additional lunch hour. Pupils in receipt of 30 hours receive a free lunch hour with a total of 20 hours funded at our setting.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 EYFS statutory framework.

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

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

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

Planning for Nursery and Reception follows our 6 key enquiry questions, exploring one key question for each half term. Planning for each half term includes key knowledge and skills mapped out to support the children's development. At the beginning of each unit the children are also invited to share their questions and interests to inform the planning for the half term.

For further information on our planning, please view our medium term plans and Early Years curriculum.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-directed, adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

High quality first teaching is the most important intervention for all pupils and all adults within the unit are trained to deliver high quality interactions with pupils that support pupils to reach their next steps.

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.

5. Assessment

At Strathmore, 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/or carers.

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/carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#) and Birth to 5 Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

6. Working with parents/carers

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

Parents/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.

We use Tapestry to share observations with our parents. This supports the development of Communication & Language as it supports discussion and vocabulary development at home and informs the parents of the learning their child has undertaken at school. Weekly letters are sent to parents via Google Classroom, to support parents to continue the child's learning at home and to strengthen the partnership between home and school.

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.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The importance of healthy eating
- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- The importance of visiting the dentist regularly
- Inviting people in from the local community to teach the children how to be healthy

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Early Years Lead every two years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See <i>Child Protection policy</i>
Procedure for responding to illness	See <i>Health and Safety policy</i>
Administering medicines policy	See <i>Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy</i>
Emergency evacuation procedure	See <i>Health and Safety policy</i>
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See <i>Child Protection policy</i> See <i>Child Protection policy</i>
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See <i>Attendance Policy</i>
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See <i>Complaints policy</i>