

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Eden School



Approved by:

The Board of
Governors

Date: 31st of August 2024

Last reviewed on:

1st September 2024

Next review due by:

1st August 2025

Vision Statement

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life, with support that enables them to fulfil their potential."

(EYFS Framework, 2021)

At **The Eden School**, we are committed to delivering an inclusive, engaging, and aspirational Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum. Our approach nurtures curiosity, promotes personal growth, and builds a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- **Broad and Balanced Curriculum:** Every child accesses a curriculum that equips them with the knowledge and skills needed for academic progress and success in life.
- **High-Quality Teaching and Learning:** Consistency and excellence in teaching ensure that every child thrives.
- **Partnerships:** Strong collaboration with parents, carers, and the wider community.
- **Inclusion:** Every child is supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practices.

Legal Framework

This policy adheres to the requirements of the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** (September 2021).

The Curriculum

Our EYFS curriculum is tailored to meet the individual needs of our pupils while reflecting the values and ethos of The Eden School.

Core Features

- **Play-Based Learning:** A blend of child-initiated activities and adult-led instruction fosters creativity, exploration, and critical thinking.
- **Environmental Awareness:** Learning is inspired by our local surroundings, seasons, and cultural diversity, promoting environmental stewardship and global awareness.
- **Language Development:** Emphasis on communication and language skills underpins all learning, in alignment with Development Matters.
- **Love for Reading:** Carefully selected texts introduce diverse perspectives and are integrated across all topics to foster a love for reading and ensure representation.

- **Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED):** Emotional well-being and self-regulation are central to our curriculum, preparing children for the challenges of Key Stage 1.

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Areas of Learning and Development

We follow the **seven areas of learning** in the EYFS framework:

1. Communication and Language

We prioritise developing children's spoken language through rich, interactive experiences. By embedding language across all activities, we cultivate vocabulary and listening skills in contexts that engage curiosity. Regular opportunities for storytelling, role-play, and structured conversations help children articulate thoughts and ideas confidently, fostering comprehension and expressive language as foundational skills for their future learning journey.

2. Personal, Social, and Emotional Development

Through a nurturing and inclusive environment, we teach children how to manage emotions, build positive relationships, and develop resilience. Strategies such as circle time, collaborative activities, and reflection sessions empower children to express themselves and regulate behaviour. This creates a supportive community where every child feels valued, builds self-confidence, and thrives socially and emotionally.

3. Physical Development

We provide a dynamic environment with activities that enhance both fine and gross motor skills. Structured play, such as climbing, balancing, and manipulating tools, is paired with activities like writing, threading, and crafting to ensure holistic physical development. By teaching healthy lifestyle choices and fostering independence, children build strength, coordination, and agility essential for active learning and well-being.

4. Literacy

Early reading and writing skills are nurtured through a systematic approach to phonics and a love for books. Daily phonics sessions are supported by storytelling and writing opportunities that integrate diverse texts, ensuring all children develop fluency and comprehension. Activities are designed to embed literacy across the curriculum, enabling children to express their ideas clearly and confidently.

5. Mathematics

We create a mathematically rich environment where children explore numbers, patterns, shapes, and measures through hands-on activities and problem-solving tasks. Concepts are taught through practical applications, games, and real-life scenarios, encouraging children to investigate and reason. This ensures they build a secure foundation for numerical fluency and logical thinking.

6. Understanding the World

Children develop curiosity about the world through experiences that encourage observation, exploration, and questioning. Activities that link to the seasons, cultural celebrations, and community projects help children connect their immediate environment to the wider world. By fostering an appreciation for diversity, nature, and technology, children build a deeper understanding of their place in society.

7. Expressive Arts and Design

Opportunities for creativity and self-expression are provided through music, dance, art, and imaginative play. Open-ended resources, collaborative projects, and exploration of different mediums encourage children to experiment and innovate. By nurturing imagination and celebrating individual expression, children gain confidence in their creative abilities while building critical thinking skills.

Prime Areas: The foundational skills in communication, PSED, and physical development are given priority to ignite enthusiasm for learning.

Phonics and Literacy

We use the **Twinkl Phonics Programme**, a validated systematic synthetic phonics scheme. The program ensures fidelity, progression, and rigor in phonics instruction. See our Phonics Policy for further details.

Role of the Environment

Our learning spaces are dynamic, evolving with children's developmental needs.

Classrooms and outdoor areas encourage:

- **Open-Ended Play:** Resources such as loose parts and natural materials inspire creativity.
- **Continuous Provision:** Children engage in uninterrupted exploration to achieve deep levels of involvement.

- **Inclusivity:** Spaces are designed to be accessible and stimulating for all, including children with SEND.

Teaching and Learning

Our approach integrates:

- **Child-Initiated Learning:** Encouraging autonomy and curiosity.
- **Whole-Class and Small-Group Instruction:** Ensuring mastery of essential skills.
- **Characteristics of Effective Learning:** Embedded across activities:
 - Playing and exploring
 - Active learning
 - Creating and thinking critically

Assessment

Baseline Assessment

Reception teachers conduct baseline assessments using statutory government guidelines and teacher observations to identify individual needs early.

Ongoing Observations

- Use of **Tapestry** to document significant achievements.
- Observations inform planning and intervention strategies.

End-of-Year Profile

The EYFS Profile assesses whether children meet the Early Learning Goals. This information:

- Is shared with parents during consultations and in written reports.
- Informs transition plans into Year 1.

Inclusion

We provide differentiated teaching for all pupils, including those with SEND. The class teacher collaborates closely with the **SENDCo** to identify needs early and implement targeted interventions.

Safeguarding and Welfare

We prioritize children's safety and well-being through:

- Regular teaching about boundaries and managing risks.
- Healthy eating initiatives, including the provision of free fruit, milk, and universal infant free school meals.
- Robust allergy management systems.

All staff hold **paediatric first aid qualifications** and follow safeguarding protocols outlined in our **Child Protection Policy**.

Parental Engagement

We value parents as partners in education and engage them through:

- Home visits and induction sessions.
 - Regular updates via emails and letters to parents
 - Workshops, consultations, and volunteering opportunities.
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Transition

Starting school is carefully managed to support children's emotional and academic needs:

- Gradual introduction through transition mornings and phased starts.
 - Close collaboration between EYFS and Year 1 teachers to ensure continuity in learning.
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Monitoring and Review

The Early Years lead teacher and governor will:

- Review this policy every two years.
- Monitor the EYFS action plan and ensure alignment with the School Development Plan.