



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Inception Date:	January 2020
Date reviewed:	July 2025
Review Date:	September 2026

Introduction

‘Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.’

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile - Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Phoenix Primary Academy, children are admitted to the Reception year in the September following their fourth birthday.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Phoenix we greatly value the significance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. We also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life linking to our school values. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

Aims & Objectives

We aim to encourage all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will offer a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

At Phoenix Primary Academy, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will support further learning and development in Key Stage 1, enabling choice and decision making, promoting independence and self-confidence.
- Value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Develop relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting children.

- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

Our Early Years Foundation Stage provision is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It recognises the importance of a partnership with parents and carers.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique child

We acknowledge that, every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encourage, as well as celebrate and reward, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion -

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that all children matter. All children at Phoenix Primary Academy are treated fairly regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion or disability. All families are valued within our school community.

- We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all.
- We set realistic and challenging learning opportunities to support and extend the needs of our children.
- We use a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- We offer a safe and supportive learning environment.
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with Special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of

children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds;

- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary (such as referrals to speech therapy) as necessary.
- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.

Positive Relationships

At Phoenix we aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with our children and their families.

Parents as Partners -

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at our stay and play sessions in the summer term, our parent talks and induction meetings offered either a school or home meeting.
- Arranging, visits by the EYFS staff to see children joining us in their childcare provision prior to their starting school.
- Working with the local PVI providers (Private, voluntary and independent sector) to outline cohorts' profile of need.
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home-School agreement.
- Holding a parent consultation early in the academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- Operating an open-door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. For working parents this is done through the Contact book. If staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them, alongside collaborating with the school's inclusion manager and the Schools Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- School newsletters, curriculum newsletters and website.
- Publishing a Creative Curriculum topic map termly.
- Inviting parents to attend workshops about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics.
- In Reception: sending home a 'home learning book' for children to record their lives outside of school and completing topic related tasks. These are shared within class.
- Offering parent/teacher consultation meetings throughout the year where progress is discussed.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each year.

- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, creative class sessions, Christmas productions and sports day etc.

Staff

All staff in the Foundation Stage aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them, being a positive play partner and taking time to listen to them.

Enabling Environments

At Phoenix Primary Academy, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged.

- All children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment with planned continuous provision set up alongside discrete learning opportunities.
- Play-based learning is paramount children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff.
- We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities.
- We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world.
- We encourage independent learning.
- We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.
- We expect children to be prepared for all types of weather therefore parents will be asked to provide a waterproof coat, wellington boots and sun hat. PE kits and plimsolls will also be expected.

Learning and Developing

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

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 three Prime areas are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the inclusion manager and the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Reception pupils also participate in a daily phonics session, following the guidance of "Monster Phonics" document and in line with the school's phonics policy (within the English policy).

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning with work in harmony with the values of the school:

- Playing and exploring - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- Active learning- children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Teaching & Learning

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.

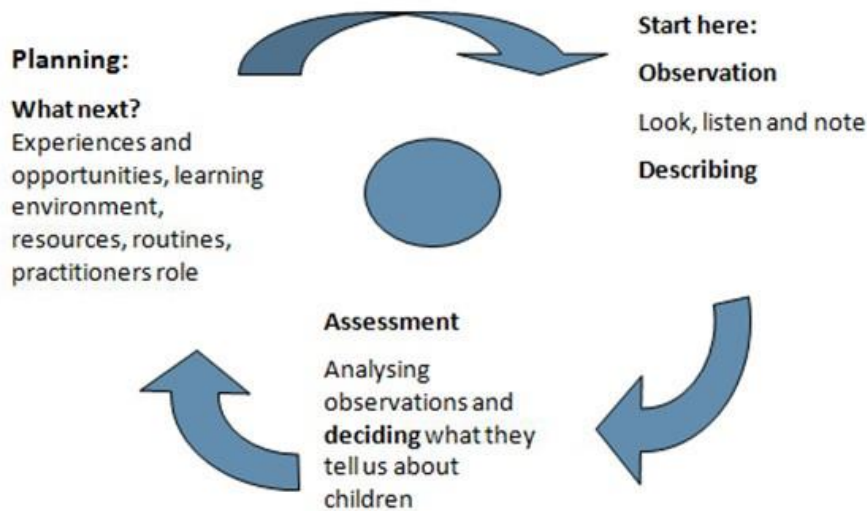
These assessments and plans are based on the adult's observations of the child in that moment and also draw on any previous knowledge of the child. The response is planned in the moment and is uniquely suited to that unique child in the unique moment. The adult will be considering whether they can add anything in that moment to benefit the child. If so, they will respond and interact accordingly supporting the child to develop. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

By planning in the moment, moving children's learning on, will ensure each child's needs and interests will be being met. Therefore, they will make outstanding progress holistically.

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.

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.

Planning for learning cycle



Assessment

At Phoenix, 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 and/or carers for their child.

Throughout the year the children's progress is documented on Insight, alongside the whole school assessment journey.

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

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.

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.

The Learning Environment

The Foundation Stage classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely.

Children have access to both inside and outside area across the day; this has a positive effect on the children's development. The Foundation Stage has its own outdoor classroom area, being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and in different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. All areas of the curriculum can be explored outside.

Teaching & Learning Styles

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the entire school.

Features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, carers and other settings.
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement of children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school;
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the Foundation Stage.

Transition

We plan carefully to support children with transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle into their new class quickly and happily.

Starting Reception

Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an Induction Meeting in the Summer term to learn more about the Reception curriculum. This is an opportunity for staff to

- Go through the school handbook
- Explain about uniform, PE kit and universal school meals
- Explain about holidays and absences
- Explain the Foundation stage curriculum and how parents can support children at home.

New class sessions - The children are given two opportunities to come into school to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class. Parents are welcome to stay in these sessions or can leave their child. This means that before they join their new class the Reception environment is already a familiar place to them.

Arrangements are also made for Foundation Stage staff to visit them in their current nursery and/or home setting.

September Intake

When children join the school in September the following procedures will apply in order that they can gradually adjust to their new surroundings:

- Meeting with child, parents/carers and new class teacher.
- Children start full time unless Foundation staff and parents or guardians agree that it is not in the best interests of an individual child. If this is the case this will be reviewed fortnightly with the expectation that the child will attend full time as soon as possible at least the term after their 5th birthday.

Starting in Key Stage 1 (Year 1)

Throughout the Reception year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in Key Stage and whole school assemblies as well as sharing Lunchtimes with the Key Stage 1 children in Term 6.

Children have the opportunity to meet their new class teacher and spend time in their new class during the summer term.

A workshop is run for Parents to explain the National Curriculum and how to support their child in Transition.

Summer homework is given to support the expectations of Year 1.

Safeguarding & Welfare

At Phoenix Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good oral health as well as good health in general
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children and our statutory requirements.

Keeping Safe

We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits. We follow the school's behaviour systems and policies. 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 are provided with a healthy snack each day. Milk is offered free of charge. They have access to water at all times. Parents are given a free water bottle at the start of the Reception year and are asked to bring it in daily with water. We encourage children to bring in water only. We also talk to the children about their health and the effects of their choices.

Intimate Care

"Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. Intimate care can be provided with permission from the parent or guardian. If a child has an accident, staff will provide help to change the child (gloves will be worn at all times). If the child cannot be cleaned to an acceptable standard parent will be called to assist.

SMSC in the Early Years

We recognise that the personal development of pupils, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. We therefore aim to provide an education that provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive, caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of the cultures.

All curriculum areas within the EYFS have a contribution to make to the child's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and opportunities for this will be planned in each area of the

curriculum. All adults will model and promote expected behaviour, treating all people as unique and valuable individuals and showing compassion and respect for pupils and their families.

As children start in our EYFS they will learn that it is a place where pupils can find acceptance for themselves. Children should learn to differentiate between right and wrong in as far as their actions affect other people. A key part of starting in EYFS is learning about this. They will be encouraged to value themselves and others. Children should understand the need for rules and the need to abide by rules for the good of everyone.

Reception rules reflect, reiterate, promote and reward acceptable behaviour and provide opportunities to celebrate pupils' work and achievements. This is continued throughout the year as the children start to learn all of our special whole school rules. All curriculum areas should seek to use illustrations and examples drawn from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible. This will be reflected in staff's planning and budgeting decisions.

Spiritual Development

We aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Sustain their self-esteem in their learning experience.
- Develop their capacity for critical and independent thought.
- Foster their emotional life and express their feelings
- Experience moments of stillness and reflection.
- Discuss their beliefs, feelings, values and responses to personal experiences.
- Form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships
- Reflect on, consider and celebrate the wonders and mysteries of life.

Moral Development

We aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Recognise the unique value of each individual.
- Listen and respond appropriately to the views of others.
- Gain the confidence to cope with setbacks and learn from mistakes.
- Take initiative and act responsibly with consideration for others.
- Distinguish between right and wrong.
- Show respect for the environment.
- Make informed and independent judgements.

Social Development

We aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Develop an understanding of their individual and group identity.
- Begin to understand the need for social justice and a concern for the disadvantaged.

Cultural Development

We aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Recognise the value and richness of cultural diversity in Britain, and how these influence individuals and society.
- Recognise Christianity as a world-wide faith.
- Develop an understanding of their social and cultural environment.
- Develop an understanding of Britain's local, national, European, Commonwealth and
- global dimensions.

Development in SMSC will take place across all areas of learning, within activities that encourage pupils to recognise the spiritual dimension of their learning, reflect on the significance of what they are learning, and to recognise any challenges that there may be to their own attitude and lifestyle.

All curriculum areas should seek illustrations and examples drawn from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible.

Group discussions and circle time will give pupils opportunities to:

- Talk about personal experiences and feelings.
- Express and clarify their own ideas and beliefs.
- Speak about difficult events, e.g. bullying, death etc.
- Share thoughts and feelings with other people.
- Explore relationships with friends/family/others.
- Consider others needs and behaviour.
- Show empathy.
- Develop self-esteem and a respect for others.
- Develop a sense of belonging.
- Develop the skills and attitudes that enable pupils to develop socially, morally, spiritually and culturally - e.g. empathy, respect, open mindedness, sensitivity, critical awareness, etc.

Provide opportunities to:

- Listen and talk to each other.
- Learn an awareness of treating all as equals and accepting people who are different.
- Agree and disagree.
- Take turns and share equipment.
- Work co-operatively and collaboratively.
- Links with the wider community in EYFS

- Visitors are welcomed into EYFS.
- The development of a strong home-school link is regarded as very important, enabling
- Parents and staff to work in an effective partnership to support the child.
- Children will be taught to appreciate their local environment and to develop a sense responsibility to it. This includes helping to care for our garden areas.

In our setting we will challenge children, staff or parents expressing opinions contrary to fundamental British Values, including 'extremist' views. We will also challenge racism and expect everyone within our community to respect British laws whilst supporting their own culture.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of those working within the EYFS to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher and SLT will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule along with Curriculum leads.

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 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