

Early Years Foundation Stage



A Guide for Parents

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age 5 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 together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children develop a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life” (EYFS, DFE)



What is EYFS?

The EYFS is a stage of children’s development from birth to the end of their first year in school.

The EYFS Framework is different to the National Curriculum. It describes how early year’s practitioners should work with children and their families to support each child’s development and learning to ensure that your child achieves the most that they can in their earliest years of life.




Teaching and Learning

Teachers will consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child and use this information to plan an appropriately challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.





What will my child learn in EYFS?

The areas of learning and development

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early year’s settings. All 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. These three ‘prime’ areas are:

	Communication and Language
	Physical Development
	Personal, social and emotional development.

Children must also be supported in four specific areas through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

	Literacy
	Mathematics
	Understanding of the World
	Expressive Arts and Design

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Day to Day Routines

At the start of EYFS, each day will bring something new – remember, we are here to help!

The classroom door will open at 9am for drop off. This is a great time to catch us for a brief moment. If you want to speak to us in more detail, we are more than happy to make an appointment after school.

Sharing Home Learning



We love to share our learning. As the term progresses, you will have the opportunity to share in our Learning Journals.

We also love to celebrate things that have been learnt at home – riding a bike, making the bed or winning an award for swimming for example. Things that link with our topic are warmly welcome too.

We do ask that children do not bring in toys as they may get lost or broken.









Reading Books



Children will bring home a 'book banded' reading book. These are for you to share and read with your child every night.

We will listen to your child read at least weekly but if you need to change your child's book in the meantime, please let a member of staff know.

Things to bring to school every day:

	Water Bottle (labelled)
	PE Kit
	Coat – we do go outside if it is raining.
	Wellies
	Healthy snack (no nuts)
	Reading book

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Learning in EYFS

Educational research continues to inform us that children learn best when they are active and engaged in learning. In planning and guiding children's activities teachers reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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; and

creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for things.



Types of Activities:

- **Teacher input** – this is usually a short carpet session where the teacher will introduce the learning to the children. This will often be practical and the children will be encouraged to participate in the session.
- **Focus activity** – the teacher or nursery nurse will work with small groups of children reinforcing and extending the learning.
- **Teacher directed activity** – this is an activity that has been set up in preparation to support the learning from the teacher input. A small group of children will be directed there to work independently. The teacher only intervenes to support the learning or correct any misconceptions.
- **Child initiated activities** – this is when the children are given the opportunity to 'play', accessing resources independently and doing what interests and engages them. Adults will listen, observe, support and challenge children's play but will never guide the learning away from the child's own ideas and interests. For a child, play is a time to reflect on their own learning, put ideas into practice in their own way and clarify their own understanding.

'Play is work for the child.' Froebel 2008

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Learning Phonics

Our practice in EYFS includes teaching children to read using guidance from 'Letters and Sounds' incorporating synthetic phonics. There are 6 stages to learning phonics which will be covered in EYFS and beyond into Year 1 and Year 2.

Phase 1

Activities are divided into seven aspects, including environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and finally oral blending and segmenting.



Phase 2

Learning 19 letters of the alphabet and one sound for each., Blending sounds together to make words. Segmenting words into their separate sounds. Beginning to read simple captions.

My Phase 2 Sound Mat

s	a	t	p	i	n	m	d
g	o	c	k	ck	e	u	r
h	b	f	ff	l	ll	ss	

Phase 3

The remaining 7 letters of the alphabet, one sound for each. Graphemes such as ch, oo, th, representing the remaining phonemes not covered by single letters. Reading captions, sentences and questions. On completion of this phase, children will have learnt the 'simple code', i.e one grapheme for phoneme in the English language.

j	v	w	x	y	z	zz	qu
ch	sh	th	ng	ai	ee	igh	oa
oo	oo	ar	or	ur	ow	oi	ear
air	ure	er					

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Early Reading and Writing

Terms to help you with phonics

Phoneme: The smallest unit of sound. There are approximately 44 phonemes in the English language (it varies depending on accents). Phonemes can be put together to make words.

Grapheme: A way of writing down a phoneme. Graphemes can be made up from 1 letter e.g. p, 2 letters (digraph) e.g. sh, 3 letters (trigraph) e.g. tch.

Oral Blending: This involves hearing phonemes and being able to merge them together to make a word. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to blend written words.

Blending: This involves looking at a written word, looking at each grapheme and trying to work out which phoneme each grapheme represents and then merging these phonemes together to make a word. This is the basis of reading.

Oral Segmenting: This is the act of hearing a whole word and then splitting it up into the phonemes that make it. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to segment words to spell then.

Segmenting: This involves hearing a word, splitting it up into phonemes that make it and working out which graphemes represent those phonemes and then writing those graphemes down in the write order. This is the basis of spelling.



Ideas for helping with Early Reading

- Create a love of books – enjoy reading and make it a happy time.
- Read to your child as well as them reading to you.
- Spot words that your child knows in a book.
- Find words that your child can segment and blend by themselves – set them up to impress you.
- Read everything – books, cereal packets, signs, number plates, posters, etc.



Remember...

We all make progress with reading and writing at different speeds. Some children will be ready to learn to read and write at the start of EYFS and some children may need more time to develop.

We are all here to work together, if you are worried about helping your child learn to read and write, please speak to us.

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Early Maths

Early maths at home involves number, shape and measure. By the end of EYFS, children need to read, write and order the numbers from 0 to 20. The suggestions below will help you to support your child at home.

1	Be aware of your own attitude towards maths. Negative attitudes towards maths can easily trickle down from parents, teachers and peers. Eliminate the 'I can't do maths' phrase from your vocabulary and show children that everyone is capable of doing and enjoying maths.
2	Encourage mistakes. Help children to see that mistakes are positive learning opportunities, not something to be embarrassed about. Children often worry about not doing something the right way, which prevents them from trying. It's okay to get stuck - perseverance, resilience and determination are all key skills that will help them.
3	Start with what they know. Boost children's self-esteem by starting with what they already know. Try questioning them further on topics they are already comfortable with to extend their knowledge.
4	Play maths games. By playing engaging and interesting maths games that children enjoy, you can help to overcome initial negative attitudes by putting maths into a context they enjoy and look forward to. This can be a mix of oral and mental games, physical board games, online activities and games and quizzes on apps.
5	Make the connection between maths and real-life. Show that maths isn't just something confined to the classroom. Maths is all around us so don't forget to point out the connections with real everyday examples.
6	Practise, practise, practise. Reinforcing the basic maths principles is one of the best ways to improve a child's confidence. Practising maths will help develop their fluency and recall, impacting on other areas of the maths curriculum they might be struggling with.
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8	Use what children love. If you have children gripped by a certain video game or the latest film, don't be afraid to incorporate this into your lesson. Work out ways in which you can use parts of the narrative to set maths challenges and get them to solve the problems.