



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Date:	March 2026
Review Date:	March 2027
Responsibility:	Headteacher
STATUTORY	Yes
Checked against Equality Policy	Yes

Agreed by Governors: Brendan Gibbs	Date: March 2026
Headteacher: Rebecca Mitchell	Date: March 2026

Enjoy

Persevere

Succeed

“It is vital that we get to know and value all young children. All children learn more in the period from birth to five years old than any other time in their lives. If children are at risk of falling behind the majority, the best time to help them catch up and keep up is in the early years. Every child can make progress, if they are given the right support.”

“When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we can give them what they need tomorrow. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow” (Development Matters 2020)

Contents

1. Aims	2
2. Legislation	3
3. Structure of the EYFS	3
4. Curriculum	3
5. Assessment.....	6
6. Working with parents.....	7
7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures	8
8. Monitoring arrangements	9
Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS.....	9

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 and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

At Emsworth Primary school, the Early Years Foundation Stage is viewed as a distinctive phase of education which integrates the care and education of our youngest children. We believe that all children are unique and bring with them a diverse range of previous experiences and learning which must be acknowledged and built upon. It is vital that parents are valued as children’s first educators and that they are active partners in their child’s school education.

We provide highly effective teaching and learning within a culture of challenge, nurture and support. We support all children to progress to be the best they can be. Our curriculum enables as many children as possible to achieve a Good Level of Development by the end of their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and we build on this in subsequent years.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) updated for 2025.

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Structure of the EYFS

Our Early Years is based on a 60 cohort provided for in 2 classes. We have a staff of 2 teachers and 2 LSAs who work as a team across both classes.

Our EYFS policy is directly related to our school vision, values and curriculum statement. It documents further aims and strategies we employ in order to address the four overarching principles of EYFS:

- 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 independently 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.
- We recognise the importance of all areas of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. Our practice is informed by the EYFS framework and covers the education and care of all children in EYFS, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

4. Curriculum

Our carefully planned curriculum, quality interactions and use of assessment ensures that we address the **seven key features of effective practice**:

- Providing the best for every child.
- Offering consistent, high-quality care for all our children.
- Planning a curriculum with a focus on what we want children to learn.
- Using a range of different approaches to ensure our pedagogy is effective in helping children to learn.
- Implementing a range of assessment strategies to check what children have learnt in order to inform future planning.
- Supporting children to develop their self-regulation and executive functions.
- Developing a strong partnership with parents through positive and regular communications.

When planning we respond to the transition information received from pre-school settings and design a well sequenced and tailored curriculum that is adapted to meet the needs of all children.

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2025 EYFS statutory framework. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected sections. 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 3 prime areas are:

- **Communication and language**

- Listening, attention and understanding
- Speaking

- **Physical development**

- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills

- **Personal, social and emotional development**

- Self-regulation
- Managing self
- Building relationships

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- **Literacy**

- Comprehension
- Word reading
- Writing

- **Mathematics**

- Numbers
- Numerical patterns

- **Understanding the world**

- Past and present
- People, culture and communities - The natural world

- **Expressive arts and design**

- Creating with materials
- Being imaginative and expressive

4.1 Planning

Our staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. Staff 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. Areas of learning are planned through a series of topics, initiated by the pupils' interests, each of which offers experiences in all seven areas of learning. These plans then inform short-term weekly planning, alongside observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Adult focused and independent activities are planned on a weekly basis. Children have the opportunity to work in each of the learning areas within the classroom and outdoors. Whole class, group and individual activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum, as appropriate.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, our early years practitioners interact and question to challenge children. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.

We uphold the view that learning is underpinned by the characteristics of effective learning. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

The 3 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

- **creating and thinking critically**

- children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

All these areas interlink throughout the curriculum and adults make the most of opportunities to interact with children to develop their playing, thinking and learning. Adults also recognise that there are times when they need to take a step back to enable children to think critically and solve a problem by trial and error or perseverance.

It is our aim that children leave the EYFS with:

- a positive 'can do' attitude to learning
- a willingness to take risks and make mistakes

- high levels of engagement in a task where they can practise and build up concepts, ideas and skills
- perseverance
- a love of learning
- ideas of their own, that they can plan and follow through
- an ability to express fears to relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

4.2 Teaching

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

We recognise that teaching can take place at all times of the day through directed teaching sessions, through times of play and inside and outside the classroom. We encourage all of these. We strive to make our environments irresistible to children and encourage our staff and volunteers to seize every opportunity for teaching. Our enabling environment promotes independence through zoning and accessible resources.

Weekly and daily planning formalises this and aims to ensure a balance of formal and informal learning. Staff are encouraged to think carefully about their questions and interventions in children's learning to optimise this.

Learning should be personalised by building on the child's interests and involving them fully in reflecting on what they have learned and how they may build on their skills.

At appropriate opportunities the adults will:

- Question, respond to questions and engage the child in extended conversations that support sustained shared thinking
- Extend vocabulary, knowledge and skills
- Encourage independence
- Add resources that stimulate, motivate and engage the learner
- Demonstrate, model and work alongside the children
- Help children to see links in their learning
- Support and encourage the children
- Encourage children to be problem solvers, problem setters and investigators
- Re-direct the play if necessary
- Help children to learn how to negotiate and resolve conflict
- Promote children's well-being
- Observe and assess learning
- Record judgements and plan for next steps in learning
- Provide feedback to child/other adults/parents
- Ensure the environment is safe and secure and that the Welfare Requirements are in place

5. Assessment

At Emsworth Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of 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). This is a statutory assessment which the school receives no feedback against.

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.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with network meetings run by the county, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. Schools are also moderated externally by the local authority on a rolling basis, Emsworth Primary School was last moderated externally last academic year.

The EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority in June.

We hold parent consultations twice a year, in November and March and provide a written report to parents in July. This contains a summary about how each child learns and a summary judgment against each of the seven areas of learning.

6. Working with parents and carers

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

We know what an important role parents/carers play in their children's learning journey and we aim to involve them as much as possible in school life. We recognise the huge contribution that parents make to their child's learning and we work hard to develop and sustain links with parents. We seek to start building relationships with parents from the term before their child starts school, through clear communication and the initial visits and information sessions. We do this in a range of different ways, which range from communication with home to inviting parents into the school setting. These include:

- Parent tours of the school and introductory meeting
- Stay and play sessions

- Reading books shared between home and school
- Weekly newsletters
- Parent workshops
- Seesaw-online platform for sharing messages, achievements, photos
- Parents consultations

Parents and/or carers are kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development through parent consultations and an end of year report.

At Emsworth Primary School we work closely with the local pre-schools to ensure that we have detailed information about the children prior to them starting school. The Early Years staff meet with the pre-schools in the summer term prior to the children starting school. The Early Years teachers observe all of the children in their pre-school settings and we invite the children to join us for two sessions in the summer term. Early Years staff carry out Home Visits during the first week of the Autumn term and ensure that information obtained from these helps to support the environment and planning for the first few weeks.

As the children prepare to enter KS1, the Year 1 teachers observe the children in the Early Years setting during the summer term. The Early Years teachers also meet with the Year 1 teachers to discuss the end of year data within a Pupil Progress Meeting in order to ensure a smooth transition into Year 1. These discussions help the Year 1 teachers to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children. The children will also spend time with their new teacher in the Year 1 classrooms.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We recognise that children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow the school's safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff:child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. We comply with infant class size legislation and have 1 teacher to 30 pupils.

We have at least 2 people with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's child protection and can be found within the policies on our website:

<https://www.emsworthprimaryschool.co.uk/>

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the governing body annually.

9. Appendix 1. List of Statutory Policies and Procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where it can be found
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See our Child Protection and Safeguarding policies on our website
Procedure for responding to illness	See our Administering Medicine and Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs policy and our Health and Safety policy, available on our website
Administering medicines policy	See our Administering Medicine and Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs policy on our website
Emergency evacuation procedure	See our Health and Safety policy, Fire Evacuation Plan and Critical Incident and Emergency Planning policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See our Child Protection and Safeguarding policies on our website
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See our Child Collection policy on our website
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See our Complaints policy on our website