RICHMOND R.M.S. METHODIST SCHOOL

Doing all the good we can

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That our EYFS curriculum and provision is **'for all',** and is **broad and balanced**, exciting and engaging so children develop a life-long love of learning.
- That **all** children achieve excellent progress and fulfil their individual potentials by learning to **'do all the good they can',** building their confidence and resilience for now and for the future.
- Our EYFS provides **quality and consistency** in teaching, learning and assessment so that every child's learning and development is sequentially and systematically planned for.
- That we provide an **equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that everyone is included, supported, welcome and valued.
- **Positive relationships** and partnerships are trust based, transparent and nurtured between practitioners, children, parents and carers.
- That **child protection** and **safeguarding** is at the heart of everything we do. We acknowledge the strengthening of Safeguarding requirements from 1.9.25.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a5f8e4fb00f3323bf1a23a1/EYFS_group_and_school_based_from_September_2026.pdf

And the guidance within:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64e6002a20ae890014f26cbc/DfE_Development_Matters_Report_Sep2023.pdf

https://birthto5matters.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/Bto5M-PT-LINKS-Aug-Portrait-Landscape.pdf

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-handbook/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-handbook

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6839b752210698b3364e86fc/Early_years_foundation_stage_nutrition_guidance.pdf

https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/safer-sleep

https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Early-years-safer-sleep-booklet_Digital.pdf

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth until the age of five years old. At Richmond Methodist Primary School, children are able to join our EYFS from their second birthday and move into Year 1 in the September after their fifth birthday. Our expectation is that children will move with their peers so they will be assessed against the EYFS profile once. In exceptional circumstances, after discussion and in agreement with parents, a child might remain in our EYFS provision beyond the end of the academic year in which they reach the age of 5. We would take care to make sure this decision does not prejudice the child's personal, social, and emotional development.

Our four guiding principles which shape our practice are:

• 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 independent through **positive relationships**.

• children learn and develop well in **safe** and **enabling environments** with teaching and support from safely recruited, qualified practitioners, who respond to all children's 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.

• the importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. See 'The characteristics of effective teaching and learning' further down.

4. Curriculum

Our curriculum is developed in several ways. However, at its core is the guidance of the stages and ranges of children's development from age two, to the statutory EYFS profile document detailing the Early Learning Goals. This provides our structure. We use: https://birthto5matters.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/Bto5M-PT-LINKS-Aug-Portrait-Landscape.pdf to identify children's next steps in their developmental ranges.

To construct our content around this structure, work in partnership with the children, parents, carers and outside agencies (where appropriate) to promote the sequential learning and development of all children in our care. We ensure that at the end of every child's Early Year's journey, they are ready not just for Year 1 but that they have a solid foundation to begin the rest of their educational journey. The learning and development requirements are informed by the best available evidence on how children learn and reflect the broad range of skills and knowledge children need as foundations for good future progress. We ensure our curriculum provides a secure foundation for the National Curriculum and is mapped in vertical progression from our seventeen areas of learning to the core and foundation subjects begun in Year 1.

For children whose home language is not English, we provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home.

We guide the development of children's knowledge base so that at every stage, they know more, remember more and can do more as a result. This prepares them for this smooth transition into The National Curriculum at Year 1.

Our EYFS learning and development comprises of:

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

Playing and exploring – engagement

'Finding out and exploring' is concerned with the child's open-ended hands-on experiences, which result from innate curiosity. These experiences provide raw sensory material from which the child builds concepts, tests ideas and finds out. 'Using what they know in their play' describes how children use play to bring together their current understandings, combining, refining and exploring their ideas in imaginative ways. Representing experiences through imaginative play supports the development of narrative thought, the ability to see from other perspectives, and symbolic thinking.

'Being willing to have a go' refers to the child:

- finding an interest
- initiating activities
- seeking challenge
- having a 'can do' attitude
- being willing to take a risk in new experiences
- developing the view that failures are opportunities to learn

Active learning - motivation

'Being involved and concentrating' describes the intensity of attention that arises from children engaged in following a line of interest in their activities.

'Keeping on trying' refers to:

- the importance of persistence even in the face of challenge or difficulties
- an element of purposeful control which supports resilience

'Enjoying achieving what they set out to do' builds on the intrinsic motivation that supports long-term success. It refers to the reward of meeting one's own goals, rather than relying on the approval of others.

Creating and thinking critically

‘Having their own ideas’ covers the critical area of creativity – generating new ideas and approaches in all areas of endeavor. Being inventive allows children to find new problems as they seek challenges, and to explore ways of solving these.

‘Using what they already know to learn new things’ refers to the way children use narrative and scientific modes of thought to:

• develop and link concepts

• find meaning in sequence, cause and effect

• find meaning in the intentions of others

‘Choosing ways to do things and finding new ways’ involves children in:

• approaching goal-directed activity in organised ways

• making choices and decisions about how to approach tasks

• planning and monitoring what to do and being able to change strategies

The Seven Areas of Learning and Development.

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape our educational program in our early years. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

These are the Prime Areas:

1. **communication and language**
2. **physical development**
3. **personal, social and emotional development**

We also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. Our Age Two Provision particularly focus on the Prime Areas as a secure foundation for entering Nursery 1 and 2.

The Specific Areas are:

1. **literacy**
2. **mathematics**
3. **understanding the world**
4. **expressive arts and design**

• the 17 early learning goals (see below), which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the Reception year.

4.1 Planning

As a team, our highly experienced practitioners plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. The content and timing of each stage of learning for our bespoke Early Years Curriculum is sequentially mapped out for each term, using the Ranges identified within the Birth to Five Matters document and we identify half termly and termly clear indicators of expected age-related development for each year group.

Our umbrella themes correlate directly with the whole school termly themes and we follow the blocked foundation subject curriculum as the rest of the school do. Our EYFS curriculum is also chronologically linked to 'Celebrations and Seasons' as part of our ongoing Understanding of the World focus and daily we use the children's interests as drivers to engage learning. Our curriculum is planned sequentially and the statutory requirements of the seven areas of learning are revisited continually to ensure children's long term knowledge base is secure. We refer continually to what we know and can remember, we 'practice like champions' and use our 'Learning Journey' wall displays to support our information retrieval.

Our provision particularly ensures the acquisition of a secure foundation of knowledge and understanding in language, early reading and phonics, early writing and mathematics. All opportunities to extend children's vocabulary are taken.

Our provision is also based on a curiosity and investigational model, where children are encouraged to seek their own lines of enquiry and our practitioners work alongside to enhance learning by 'planning in the moment' the children's next steps. 'Mistakes mean learning' and we build resilience and tenacity in all of our children.

Practitioners are experienced and understand the development phases of young children, using the guidance to inform where necessary so they can accurately identify where a child is on that continuum and enhance learning by using this professional knowledge to facilitate each child's next steps. Our continuous provision resources reflect this approach and are accessible, open ended and comprised of 'loose parts' to be incorporated into play-based learning as each child feels appropriate. Our continuous provision also reflects the teaching sequences of the week to enable children to explore and challenge not only their existing knowledge but also that that has just been acquired. We also use the continuous provision to revisit prior learning, so it is retrieved and remembered.

In line with our Methodist ethos, our EYFS curriculum is 'for all'. We also celebrate and encourage the development of spiritual self and the ability to experience awe and wonder, outside of the literal. We also introduce the idea of the possibility of things much larger than ourselves, such as nature and the universe.

All children can access our EYFS curriculum and progress. Where a child may have a special educational need, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with our SEND Inclusion Manager and relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

A review of each week's learning takes place as a team and individual children's next steps are identified through discussion. Staff engage with current research, continually reflecting and evaluating to refine our provision to better meet the needs of our children.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through our engaging and exciting provision. Our children join the practitioners for an adult led skills input in Literacy, Phonics, Mathematics, Knowledge and Understanding, R.E., PSHE and end of day story time. The content and timing of these sessions reflect the developmental stage of the children. In between these short carpet sessions, the children embark on their self-directed learning through play and social interaction. Our continuous provision is both planned and open ended with low threshold and high ceiling learning opportunities maximised. Our members of staff are key resources within this provision model with high quality interactions. The adults then join the children's play or observe, as appropriate to maximize teaching opportunities and therefore learning. Our curriculum knowledge intents are evident in our provision.

Positive relationships underpin all interactions. All children are taught they are valued and respected. Children are taught to respect and value each other, their environment and the wider world, whilst keeping themselves and others safe. Relationships and Health education are taught through a stimulus such as a story, song or a play situation with our practitioners constantly modelling and narrating language, attitude and care for others.

Safety online and digital literacy in general is interwoven throughout our curriculum, which enables technological knowledge but also facilitates blended or remote learning, should that model be necessary.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance very gradually shifts towards increased adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

5. Assessment

At EYFS@ Richmond Methodist Primary School, assessment of where a child is on their learning journey and their next steps is immersed within all play and interactions. Steps of progression are planned so there is no cognitive overload. It is formative, non-intrusive, yet an integral part of the learning and development processes. We form positive relationships with our children, understanding them as individuals. We observe pupils to identify their development stage, interests and learning styles. We celebrate learning and progress with the children, so they

understand not only what learning looks like but how to challenge themselves further.

These observations and developments are shared with parents, via the Tapestry App, and responses are encouraged so a dialogue around each child's learning pathway evolves. We measure progress against the non-statutory 'Development Matters' stages of learning development and then as children move towards five, against the standards within the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

On a daily and weekly basis, the observations are used to shape future planning of progressive and systematic learning sequences. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers to gain a holistic view of each child.

Check points are rigorously incorporated at every stage to review if each child is meeting their age-related expected standards of learning. No child is left behind and keeping up interventions are planned everyday based on identification of gaps in learning.

As children enter our Reception class(es), we use the online digital RBA system to find a baseline assessment for each child.

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than the 30th of June in that term, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for year 1. The Profile reflects practitioners' own knowledge and professional judgement of a child to inform discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults to whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals.

The Early Learning Goals(ELG) are as follows:

Prime areas of learning and their associated ELGs:

Communication and Language

Listening, Attention and Understanding ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions;

• Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding;

• Hold conversations when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

Speaking ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary;

• Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate;

• Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present, and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development Self-Regulation ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

• Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate;

• Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. 25 Managing Self ELG Children at the expected level of development will:

• Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge;

• Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly;

• Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet, and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

Building Relationships ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others;

• Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers;

• Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs. Physical Development Gross Motor Skills ELG Children at the expected level of development will:

• Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others;

• Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing;

• Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing. Fine Motor Skills ELG Children at the expected level of development will:

• Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases;

• Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery;

• Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Literacy Comprehension ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary;

• Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories;

• Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

Word Reading ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs;

• Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending;

• Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

Writing ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed;

• Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters;

• Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

Mathematics Number ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number;

• Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5;

• Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

Numerical Patterns ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system;

• Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity;

• Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Understanding the World

Past and Present ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society;

• Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;

• Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling;

People Culture and Communities ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts, and maps;

• Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;

• Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.

The Natural World ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants;

• Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;

• Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Expressive Arts and Design

Creating with Materials ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form, and function;

• Share their creations, explaining the process they have used;

• Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

Being Imaginative and Expressive ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher;

• Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs;

• Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate try to move in time with music.

Reporting

We as practitioners indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile. Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report and reception teachers provide a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective teaching and learning). This helps inform a dialogue between reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assist with the planning of activities in Year 1.

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

6. Working with parents and carers

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

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development via daily communication, both verbal and via the Tapestry App.

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.

All children and their parents/carers have a Key Worker Adult. In Nursery, each practitioner is named directly as your child's Adult. In Reception, the Reception Teacher and full time Teaching Assistant act as key workers for all children within the class.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

In our setting all staff, including temporary members of staff and students, are aware of the safeguarding reporting process. We raise concerns, however small, with our line managers and then escalate to DSL and/or the DDSL. We record all safeguarding incidences on CPOMS and alert the parents/carers where appropriate. The EYFS lead is a DDSL in addition. All practitioners are alert to any issues of concern in a child's life at home or elsewhere.

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy, this includes actions to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child, action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff, how mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities are used in school and procedures to follow to check the suitability of new recruits.

The school has a separate Whistleblowing Policy which puts appropriate whistleblowing procedures in place for all staff.

All members of staff read 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and receive safeguarding training annually.

Pupil absence is followed up daily. Prolonged absence and patterns are identified. Concerns about a child's welfare, vulnerability and that of their family are always taken into consideration. Our setting works closely with Children's Social Care Services and, where appropriate, the Police. This is detailed in our Attendance Policy. Our contact details are scrupulously kept up to date.

All the above policies are introduced to new staff during 'onboarding' with the Deputy Head (DDSL) and brought to all staff on renewal, to read and acknowledge. Practitioners read: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6aba40e0fceb6fb3a650127d/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2026.pdf

Early Years qualification and skills standards are examined to ensure each member of staff's suitability for their role in our setting. Identity and DBS checks are adhered to and additional criminal records checks are made if necessary. References (made by a required and suitably qualified person) are secured and checked before employment begins.

We follow our legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

Ratios and space requirements are adhered to and we recognise this is different for each child's age and developmental needs.

At least one member of staff who has a current pediatric first aid certificate is present in every room, including our Outside Classroom.

Children are always within sight and hearing of a currently pediatric trained member of staff and always within sight or hearing for eating. We follow the new requirements as detailed in document:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6839b752210698b3364e86fc/Early_years_foundation_stage_nutrition_guidance.pdf

Dietary and Allergy information is shared with all staff within the provision and the school kitchen staff. Action plans are developed with parents where there is an appropriate, profound medical issue.

Staff have the relevant qualifications to prepare food and food is prepared in line with the current anti choking advice. Staff use the guidance in this document: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6839b752210698b3364e86fc/Early_years_foundation_stage_nutrition_guidance.pdf

Detailed records are kept of intimate, sleeping and medicine administration. All incidents of a child being unwell or hurt are always reported to parents.

We promote good health, including the oral health of our children.

We have a strict medicine administration policy.

Our holiday and wrap around care facilities share the same safeguarding robust approach to safeguarding and provision.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the EYFS Lead every two years or at such time new guidance requires a change in policy.

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 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

We have an Intimate Care Policy and Risk Assessments for all classrooms, both outside and inside.