



EYFS Policy 2025-2026

(This document is available in an alternative format and in an alternative language on request)

**Reviewed: September 2025
Date of next Review: September 2026**



Statement of intent

At Cragside Church of England Primary School, we greatly value the importance of the EYFS in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development. We aim, from the very first days in our school, to help every child to 'shine bright' in all they do.

We are committed to fostering metacognition, holistic development, and independence in our early years setting. We believe that by prioritising these areas, we support children in becoming confident, self-aware learners who are well-prepared for future educational and personal growth.

We use the characteristics of effective learning to guide the children's learning experiences. The characteristics of effective teaching and learning in EYFS include active learning, where children engage deeply with activities; playing and exploring, which encourages curiosity and creativity; and creating and thinking critically, which helps children solve problems and make decisions. We believe these characteristics promote an environment where children are motivated, independent, and able to explore and understand the world around them.

Implementation

To put these principles into practice we:

- Value the importance of in the moment, child initiated learning.
- Provide an environment in which the children can be independent and make their own choices.
- Plan adult led tasks to develop children's knowledge based on observation and assessment.
- Promote a love of reading through high quality text choice.
- Plan opportunities to talk about learning with the children.
- Value the uniqueness of every child in our setting.
- Work in partnership with parents to promote the learning and development of every child to ensure that they are ready for the next stage of education.

The EYFS curriculum and learning environment

The EYFS provision and practice is based on observations of children's needs, interests and stages of development. Learning and development in school are planned to reflect these interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging, enjoyable and memorable experience.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape education programmes in EYFS settings. These are split into two important and interconnected sections – prime and specific:

The 'prime' areas of learning and development 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 'specific' areas of learning and development are:

- 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

Our learning environments are organised to ensure that children can explore and learn independently in a safe and interactive environment. Our resources are arranged to encourage children to self select and be in charge of their own learning. A real emphasis is put upon 'in the moment' learning opportunities, where the adults observe, scaffold and extend learning where appropriate.

Our outdoor environments provide unique experiences; focussing on supporting children's problem solving skills, nurturing creativity and encouraging independence. Children are able to freely access a range of resources to support their gross motor skills, as an integral part of children's development. We use natural resources to support this such as tyres, wooden building blocks and crates. We place emphasis on promoting a sense of well-being, respecting nature and sensory experiences in the outdoor environment.

Children have access to an enclosed outdoor environment, and daily access to the outdoor environment is planned. Children take part in a variety of large scale outdoor activities to help develop their gross motor skills - for example, climbing frame play equipment, large tyres, den building, large construction tools, bikes and scooters, mud kitchen, large scale water play. Children are encouraged to dress themselves for outdoor learning in the most appropriate way. If they decide to play in the water, children know they will need to select wellies and waterproof clothing. Children interact with the natural world in our safe enclosed environment, they notice birds, plants, weather and seasonal changes.

All children take part in weekly forest school sessions to promote critical thinking, problem solving, resilience and independence. Children are taught fire skills and learn to cook on the fire, use tools, make dens and explore our natural environment safely.

Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping us to recognise children's progress, understand needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support. Parents are kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development, and our EYFS lead addresses any learning and development needs in partnership with parents.

Ongoing formative assessments are used to assess the day-to-day learning and development of children in the EYFS. Practitioners interact and observe children to understand their interests and learning needs, and will use this information to inform practice and provision for each child.

The EYFS setting will undertake a summative assessment of the level of each child's development at certain stages.

These are:

- Reception Baseline Assessment – a short assessment which is taken within the first six weeks of a child starting our Reception year.
- The EYFS Profile (Passport) – a comprehensive assessment completed at the end of the EYFS to provide a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, attainment against the early learning goals (ELGs), and their readiness for Year 1.

At all times, we ensure that teachers actively engage with children, their parents and other adults who have significant interaction with specific children in their assessment processes. In this ongoing work, we aim to provide a well-rounded picture of the development and attainment of every child. All practitioners within our setting know the importance of spending time with the children in the moment of their learning. We have ensured that assessment processes do not prevent teachers and practitioners from this: we focus directly on supporting learning and development. Teachers are not required to record or document evidence to prove children's level of development; however, they may decide to record particularly noteworthy achievements in order to plan teaching and where this is beneficial for building knowledge of children.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to the assessment process for children with SEND as appropriate. We support SEND learners within the EYFS curriculum by:

- Using our ongoing formative assessments and knowledge of the children to plan and deliver interventions and opportunities across our broad and varied curriculum
- Building strong relationships with parents and carers to ensure each child is at the heart of what we do and targets and next steps are shared between home and school
- Maximising our time for outdoor learning and forest school experiences

Our EYFS lead discusses any causes for concern in a child's progress with the child's parents, especially where this concern relates to the prime areas of learning. A strategy of support will be agreed upon and consideration will be taken as to whether the child may have SEND which requires additional support.

We take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children with EAL to use their home language in play and learning whilst also ensuring that these children have sufficient

opportunities to reach a good standard of English. During assessment, if it is found that a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, the EYFS lead will contact the child's parents to establish their home language skills to establish whether there is cause for concern about a language delay.

Inclusion

All children are valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy ensures all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible. SEND in the EYFS setting is monitored and managed by the school's SENCO.

The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.

Interventions we use in our EYFS include:

- RWInc Phonics
- Talk Boost
- Speech and Language and talk opportunities
- Numeracy support
- Social Stories
- Pencil control and fine motor skills
- Social and emotional support

Parental involvement

All of our Early Years practitioners understand the importance of working alongside parents and carers to support every child's learning and development. We know that it is crucial to have strong and respectful partnerships with families. We believe that it is our responsibility to:

- work hard to reach every family, and where appropriate, work harder to reach families who are less engaged.
- be available to all parents and carers at the start and end of the school day. And also, be available to meet with parents at a time convenient to them.
- invite parents to termly parents meetings over the year.
- share half-termly curriculum newsletters. School newsletters from our Head Teacher, Joanne Parker, are emailed directly to parents.
- in reception we use reading diaries to communicate reading progress and key information.
- use tapestry to capture WOW learning moments and share with parents
- use tapestry as a communication tool to keep parents updated on a weekly basis with learning or events being held in school
- encourage parents to post home news on tapestry for children to share in school

- share and invite parents to our family collective worships

Transition periods

We aim to make transitions in school exciting and successful for every child.

We facilitate transition making information available to parents/carers including:

- The planning and delivery of our curriculum
- Daily routines
- Sharing learning moments with parents and carers
- Supporting special educational needs and disabilities
- Provide opportunities to visit, meet staff and visit the EYFS setting
- Visit the children in their Nursery/home settings where possible
- Supporting transition into Year One

Health and safety

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements are outlined in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Our Early Years Foundation Stage Staff are as follows:

Reception:

Lynsey Clarke - Reception Class Teacher, Early Years Leader, Deputy Designated Safeguard Lead
 Nicole Halliday - Reception Class Teacher
 Paula Gray – HLTA
 Bethany Johnson Green - LSA

Nursery:

Molly Kinghorn – Nursery Teacher
 Aimee Gray– HLTA
 Emma Lewis - LSA
 Rebekah Perry - LSA

Joanne Parker- Head Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Leader
 Caroline Bilton – Deputy Head Teacher and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leader
 Ellie Harris - SENCO

- Staff ratios

Legislation outlines that in a normal teaching session, a school must employ sufficient school teachers to enable it to teach its infant classes in groups of no more than thirty per school teacher.

- Health and Dietary Requirements- We aim to promote the good health of children in the EYFS, including the promotion of good oral health at all times.

All accident and illnesses are recorded in class accident books and details are shared with parents. First Aid Boxes are located in each Early Years classroom.

All practitioners will respond to children who are ill and take the necessary steps to inform parents and prevent any spread of illnesses.

For School policy on the administration of medicines please refer to whole school Administrations of Medicines Policy policy.

Staffing

A robust Safer Recruitment Policy is in place, which aims to ensure that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable.

Upon employment, all EYFS staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection and health and safety.

Staff will be supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience.

All members of staff who have contact with children and families will be supervised by the EYFS lead. The supervision will provide opportunities for staff to:

- Discuss any issues, particularly concerning the development or wellbeing of children, including any child protection concerns.
- Identify solutions to address issues.
- Receive coaching to improve their effectiveness.

Nicole Halliday will provide cover for the EYFS lead in their absence and is deemed fully qualified to do so by the EYFS lead and Headteacher.

All EYFS staff hold current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificates.

The school provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'. Only members of staff with level 2 English and maths qualifications will count towards the staffing ratios at level 3.

The school adopts the following staffing ratios:

- For children aged three and over:

- Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, there is one member of staff for every 13 children, and at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
- Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is not working directly with the children, there is one member of staff for every 8 children, and at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
- For children in Reception classes:
 - Class sizes will be limited to 30 children per school teacher.

Only under exceptional circumstances, and where the quality of care and safety of children is maintained, will changes be made to the ratios. Parents will be informed about staffing arrangements.

Each child is assigned a key person whose role it is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The EYFS lead will inform parents about who their child's key person is and will explain the role of the key person when their child begins attending the school.

Safeguarding and welfare

All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well. Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.

The DSL is Joanne Parker (headteacher). The deputy DSL is Caroline Bilton (deputy headteacher). The EYFS lead Lynsey Clarke is also a DSL.

The DSL is responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate. The deputy DSL will undertake the duties of the DSL in their absence, but overall responsibility for safeguarding will remain with the DSL. The DSL and deputy DSL will undertake child protection training as required.

Staff will receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2021) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
- DfE (2022) 'Early years foundation stage profile: 2025 update'

- DfE (2023) 'Development Matters'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2015) 'The Prevent duty'
- Early Education (2021) 'Birth to 5 Matters'
- UK Council for Internet Safety (2020) 'Education for a Connected World'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Administering Medication Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Policies for all NC subject areas

The governing body is responsible for:

- Ensuring there is a policy in place to safeguard children that includes an explanation of the action to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child, the use of mobile phones and cameras, and staff safeguarding training requirements. These issues are addressed in part in this policy and in further detail in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Photography Policy.
- Ensuring there is a policy in place in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (including supply staff) or a volunteer. These issues are addressed in the school's Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

The EYFS lead, in conjunction with the deputy headteacher and headteacher, have responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.

Staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers, are responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy.
- Remaining alert to any issues of concern in children.

Mobile phones and devices

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'mobile phone' refers to any electronic device that can be used to take images or record videos.

Use of personal mobile phones by staff members

Staff members must not use personal mobile phones or cameras when children are present. Staff may use mobile phones on school premises outside of working hours when no children

are present. Staff may use mobile phones in the staffroom during breaks and non-contact time. Mobile phones are safely stored and in silent mode whilst children are present.

Staff may take mobile phones on trips, but they must only be used in emergencies and should not be used when children are present. Mobile phones must not be used to take images or videos at any time during trips.

Staff may use their professional judgement in emergency situations.

Use of mobile phones by parents, visitors and contractors

On entry to school, visitors are given guidance to ensure that they understand that they are not permitted to use a mobile phone.

Parents, visitors and contractors are not permitted to take photographs or record videos without prior permission. Parents may take photographs and videos only containing their own child during school events. Parents may take group photographs at school events but only with the informed consent of the parents of the children involved.

The school strongly advises against the publication of any photographs or videos taken at the school or school events on social media. Staff must report all concerns about parents, visitors and contractors to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Use of the school cameras

Staff are provided with a school device so that school devices are used to take photographs and videos. School devices have passcode protection.

School devices are only used for work related matters, for example recording and documenting a child's learning.

Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the governing board and the Headteacher.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

All members of staff directly involved with the EYFS are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is October 2026.