

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY



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Vision

At Spinfield School, we believe every child deserves the very best possible start in life. We are committed to providing a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment where children feel valued, confident and inspired to become independent, curious and resilient learners.

Our Early Years curriculum recognises that children develop rapidly during the Reception year. Through high-quality interactions, purposeful play and carefully planned teaching, we support every child to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for lifelong learning.

We value each child as a unique individual and work in close partnership with parents and carers to ensure every child is supported to achieve their full potential.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- every child accesses a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that provides the knowledge, skills and experiences needed for future success;
- teaching is of consistently high quality so that every child makes strong progress from their individual starting points;
- positive partnerships between school and home support children's learning and wellbeing;
- children are nurtured within a safe, inclusive and enabling environment where diversity is celebrated;
- all children are supported through inclusive practice and equality of opportunity;
- the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are fully met.

Legislation

This policy has been written in accordance with:

- the current [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers](#);
- the [Children Act 1989](#) and [Children Act 2004](#);
- the [Equality Act 2010](#);
- the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years \(2015\)](#);
- statutory guidance relating to safeguarding and child protection, including [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Medicines Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Equality Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception Year.

At Spinfield School, children join Reception in the academic year in which they turn five. We recognise that every child arrives with a unique range of experiences, interests, knowledge and skills. Our curriculum builds upon these foundations whilst broadening children's experiences and developing the confidence, independence and resilience needed for future learning.

We provide an environment that is welcoming, stimulating and inclusive, where children feel safe to explore, investigate, take appropriate risks and develop positive attitudes towards learning.

Our practice is underpinned by the four guiding principles of the EYFS.

The Four Principles of the EYFS

A Unique Child

Every child is a unique and capable learner who is continually developing and learning in different ways and at different rates.

At Spinfield School we recognise children's individual strengths, interests and personalities. We develop warm, trusting relationships that enable children to feel secure, confident and valued.

We promote a Growth Mindset across the school, encouraging children to embrace challenge, develop resilience, persevere when learning is difficult and celebrate effort as well as achievement.

Adults use consistent language, praise and encouragement to develop children's confidence, self-esteem and independence whilst promoting positive attitudes towards learning.

Positive Relationships

Children learn best through secure, positive relationships.

Our practitioners develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with every child and their family. High-quality interactions are central to our practice and adults carefully support children's language development, thinking and emotional wellbeing throughout the school day.

We recognise parents and carers as children's first and most enduring educators and value the important contribution they make to their child's development.

Enabling Environments

Children thrive within environments that are safe, stimulating and responsive to their needs.

Our indoor and outdoor learning environments are carefully planned to promote independence, curiosity, creativity and exploration. Continuous provision enables children to revisit learning, practise new skills and apply their understanding in meaningful contexts.

Practitioners observe children's interests and use these to extend learning through carefully planned enhancements and high-quality adult interactions.

Learning and Development

Children learn through a combination of play, exploration, direct teaching and meaningful experiences.

Teaching is carefully planned to ensure progression across all seven areas of learning whilst responding to children's interests and individual developmental needs.

Our curriculum promotes communication and language, early reading, mathematical thinking, physical development, creativity and a love of learning whilst preparing children successfully for Year 1.

Inclusion, Equality and SEND

At Spinfield School every child is valued as an individual.

We are committed to providing an inclusive learning environment where every child has equal access to a rich and ambitious curriculum regardless of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, disability, family background or additional need.

Planning is adapted to meet the needs of all learners through high-quality inclusive teaching and, where appropriate, targeted support and intervention.

Practitioners work closely with parents, carers, the SENDCo and external professionals to identify additional needs at the earliest opportunity and ensure appropriate support is provided.

Children who demonstrate higher levels of attainment are equally challenged through ambitious learning opportunities that deepen thinking and extend understanding.

Our curriculum reflects the diversity of modern Britain and promotes respect, tolerance, kindness and equality.

Safeguarding and Welfare

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Spinfield School is committed to providing a safe, secure and nurturing environment where children's welfare is paramount.

All practitioners understand their responsibilities under current safeguarding legislation and receive regular safeguarding and child protection training.

In accordance with the current EYFS Statutory Framework, we are committed to:

- promoting the welfare and safeguarding of every child;

- promoting good physical and emotional health;
- promoting good oral health;
- preventing the spread of infection and responding appropriately when children become unwell;
- managing behaviour positively and appropriately for children's stage of development;
- ensuring all adults working with children are suitable to do so;
- maintaining safe premises, equipment and learning environments;
- providing stimulating, inclusive and challenging learning experiences;
- maintaining all statutory records, policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the setting.

Children are encouraged to develop an understanding of keeping themselves safe, managing appropriate risks and developing healthy lifestyles through everyday experiences and planned learning opportunities.

All safeguarding procedures operate in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Parents and Carers as Partners

At Spinfield School, we recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most influential educators. We value the knowledge they have of their child and believe that strong, respectful partnerships between home and school are fundamental to children's wellbeing, development and achievement.

We are committed to establishing positive relationships with families from the outset, ensuring that parents and carers feel welcomed, listened to and actively involved in their child's education.

We promote effective partnerships by:

- meeting with parents and carers before children begin Reception to share information and answer any questions;
- providing opportunities for children to visit their new classroom before starting school;
- offering a carefully planned transition programme that supports children to settle confidently into school life;
- inviting parents and carers to an induction meeting prior to admission to Reception;
- holding curriculum workshops, including reading, phonics and early writing, to enable families to support learning at home;
- maintaining open communication through newsletters, class emails and regular updates;
- encouraging parents and carers to speak with class staff whenever they have questions or concerns;
- holding formal parent consultation meetings during the year alongside opportunities for informal discussion;
- providing an annual written report outlining each child's progress and attainment;
- welcoming parents into school for curriculum events, stay-and-play sessions, celebrations and other shared learning experiences;
- recognising and celebrating children's achievements both in school and at home;
- ensuring parents know who their child's class teacher and supporting adults are and how they can communicate with them;
- providing a welcoming and confidential environment where parents and carers feel comfortable discussing their child's needs.

Parents are encouraged to share significant achievements, interests and experiences from home so that these can be reflected within children's learning and contribute to practitioners' knowledge of each child.

Strong partnerships between home and school ensure children experience consistent support and high expectations throughout their Reception year.

Enabling Environments

We believe children learn best within environments that are safe, stimulating, inclusive and inspiring.

Our classrooms and outdoor learning areas are carefully organised to promote curiosity, independence, collaboration and creativity. Resources are accessible, inviting and regularly reviewed to ensure they meet children's developmental needs and interests.

Continuous Provision forms an important part of our curriculum. It enables children to revisit previous learning, practise newly acquired skills and apply their knowledge independently through purposeful play.

Both our indoor and outdoor environments provide opportunities across all seven areas of learning and encourage children to:

- investigate and solve problems;
- develop independence and resilience;
- communicate confidently with others;
- become creative thinkers;
- develop physically;
- explore mathematical concepts;
- apply their early reading and writing skills in meaningful contexts.

Practitioners carefully observe children's interests and use these observations to enhance provision, extend learning and introduce new experiences that broaden children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

Outdoor learning is valued equally alongside indoor learning and provides opportunities for children to develop confidence, physical coordination, teamwork, curiosity and resilience throughout the year.

Learning and Development

Our curriculum follows the current Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.

The curriculum is carefully designed to provide ambitious learning opportunities whilst recognising that young children learn best through a balance of play, exploration, investigation and direct teaching.

The seven areas of learning are interconnected and are delivered through meaningful experiences that encourage children to become confident, capable and enthusiastic learners.

Prime Areas

The prime areas underpin all future learning and include:

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

These areas receive particular emphasis during children's early experiences in Reception and are continually strengthened throughout the year.

Specific Areas

The prime areas are developed further through the specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Learning opportunities are planned to enable children to make meaningful connections across the curriculum while developing increasingly secure knowledge and skills.

Religious Education is taught in accordance with the Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus.

Curriculum Planning

Planning is responsive, ambitious and informed by ongoing assessment.

Practitioners consider each child's interests, previous experiences and stage of development when planning learning opportunities.

Planning ensures:

- progression across all seven areas of learning;
- appropriate challenge for every child;
- opportunities for sustained shared thinking;
- rich vocabulary development;
- high-quality interactions;
- purposeful play experiences;
- opportunities for investigation, creativity and problem solving;
- inclusive practice that enables every child to succeed.

Children with additional needs receive appropriate support through adaptive teaching and, where necessary, targeted intervention planned in collaboration with the SENDCo and external agencies.

Children working beyond age-related expectations are challenged through opportunities that deepen understanding, extend thinking and encourage independence.

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

At Spinfield School we recognise that how children learn is as important as what they learn.

Our curriculum promotes the three Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning by encouraging children to:

Playing and Exploring

Children investigate, explore, experiment and develop confidence to have a go, make choices and take appropriate risks in their learning.

Active Learning

Children are encouraged to concentrate, persevere, develop resilience and experience the satisfaction that comes from achieving their goals.

Creating and Thinking Critically

Children develop their own ideas, make links between experiences, solve problems, evaluate their thinking and develop strategies for future learning.

These characteristics underpin all aspects of our curriculum and support children in becoming confident, independent learners.

Teaching

High-quality teaching and positive interactions are central to successful learning in the Early Years.

Adults carefully balance child-initiated learning with purposeful adult-directed teaching to ensure children make strong progress whilst maintaining the joy and curiosity that characterise effective early learning.

Practitioners:

- model rich and ambitious vocabulary;
- ask thoughtful questions that deepen children's thinking;
- encourage sustained conversations;
- provide timely support and challenge;
- observe carefully and respond to children's interests;
- scaffold learning appropriately;
- promote independence and resilience;
- celebrate effort as well as achievement.

Early reading is prioritised through the systematic teaching of **Monster Phonics**, ensuring children develop secure phonological awareness, decoding skills and a lifelong enjoyment of reading.

Early mathematical understanding is developed through practical exploration, mathematical talk, reasoning and problem solving within both adult-led teaching and Continuous Provision.

Writing opportunities are carefully planned throughout the environment so children develop confidence in mark making, drawing, writing and recording their ideas for meaningful purposes.

As children progress through Reception, teaching gradually becomes more structured to prepare them successfully for the transition into Year 1 while maintaining opportunities for purposeful play and independent learning.

The quality of teaching is monitored regularly through professional dialogue, lesson observations, learning walks, work scrutiny and ongoing evaluation to ensure all children receive the highest quality education.

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of effective teaching and learning in the Early Years. At Spinfield School, assessment is continuous, purposeful and informs future planning to ensure that every child makes strong progress from their individual starting points.

Practitioners use ongoing professional observations, discussions with children, children's independent learning, adult-led activities and examples of children's work to build an accurate understanding of each child's development. Assessment focuses on what children know, understand and can do, enabling staff to identify next steps and adapt provision accordingly.

The school uses **Sonar Tracker** alongside practitioners' professional judgements to monitor children's progress and attainment across the EYFS curriculum.

Parents and carers are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning by sharing significant achievements, interests and experiences from home. These contributions help practitioners to develop a well-rounded understanding of each child.

Reception Baseline Assessment

Within the nationally prescribed assessment window, all children participate in the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). This assessment provides a starting point from which progress to the end of Key Stage Two is measured and does not provide attainment information for parents or schools.

EYFS Profile

At the end of the Reception Year, practitioners complete the EYFS Profile for every child.

Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals and are judged as either:

- **Meeting the expected level of development**
- **Emerging (not yet reaching the expected level of development)**

Assessment judgements are based upon practitioners' ongoing knowledge of each child and are informed by observations, day-to-day interactions, discussions with parents and carers and evidence gathered throughout the year.

Assessment is moderated internally and, where appropriate, in partnership with other local schools to ensure consistency and accuracy. EYFS Profile data is submitted to the Local Authority in accordance with national requirements.

Assessment information is used to support a smooth transition into Year 1 and informs future curriculum planning.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

At Spinfield School every child is valued, respected and included.

We are committed to providing equality of opportunity and ensuring that every child can access an ambitious curriculum regardless of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion or belief, disability, language, family background or socio-economic circumstance.

Learning environments, resources and experiences reflect the diversity of modern Britain and promote respect, kindness, tolerance and inclusion.

Practitioners adapt teaching to meet the needs of individual children, ensuring appropriate support and challenge so that every child can flourish.

Health, Safety and Welfare

The health, safety and wellbeing of every child is of paramount importance.

Robust procedures are in place to ensure children learn within a safe, secure and stimulating environment.

Regular risk assessments are undertaken to identify and minimise potential hazards both indoors and outdoors. Additional risk assessments are completed for educational visits and activities where appropriate.

The EYFS environment is reviewed regularly to ensure that resources, equipment and learning spaces remain safe, well maintained and appropriate for children's developmental needs.

Medicines

Medicines are administered in accordance with the school's Medicines Policy and the requirements of the current EYFS Statutory Framework.

Written parental consent is obtained before any medicine is administered unless emergency treatment is required in line with statutory guidance. Accurate records are maintained and parents are informed whenever medication has been administered during the school day.

First Aid

At least one person holding a current Paediatric First Aid certificate is always present when children are on the premises and accompanies children on educational visits where required.

First aid equipment is readily available and all accidents, injuries and first aid treatment are recorded in accordance with school procedures.

Food and Drink

Fresh drinking water is available throughout the school day.

Children are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits through snack times, curriculum experiences and the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

Dietary requirements, allergies and medical needs are recorded and carefully managed to ensure children's safety.

Behaviour

Positive behaviour is promoted through warm relationships, consistent expectations and a nurturing approach.

Adults model respectful behaviour and support children to develop self-regulation, resilience, empathy and independence.

The EYFS Lead is the named practitioner responsible for behaviour management within the Early Years and works closely with staff, parents and the SENDCo where additional support may be required.

Transition

Successful transition is essential in helping children feel secure, confident and ready to learn.

Transition into Reception

Prior to children starting school we:

- invite parents and carers to an induction meeting;
- provide opportunities for children to visit their new classroom;
- gather information from previous settings and professionals where appropriate;
- liaise closely with nurseries, pre-schools and childminders;
- offer additional transition opportunities for children requiring enhanced support;
- encourage families to complete an 'All About Me' booklet to support staff in getting to know each child.

These arrangements enable practitioners to build positive relationships with children and families before entry into school.

Transition into Year 1

Transition into Year 1 is carefully planned throughout the Summer Term.

Reception and Year 1 staff work collaboratively to ensure continuity in children's learning and wellbeing.

Transition arrangements include:

- regular professional dialogue between Reception and Year 1 staff;
- sharing of assessment information and EYFS Profile outcomes;
- opportunities for children to visit their Year 1 classroom;
- transition activities that promote confidence and familiarity;
- adapting the Year 1 curriculum to build upon the learning approaches developed in Reception.

These arrangements ensure children experience a positive and successful transition into the next stage of their education.

Monitoring and Review

The quality of Early Years provision is monitored continuously to ensure the highest standards of teaching, learning and care.

Monitoring activities include:

- lesson observations;
- learning walks;
- scrutiny of planning and assessment;
- pupil voice;
- professional dialogue;
- moderation activities;
- monitoring of children's progress;
- evaluation against the School Development Plan.

The EYFS Lead works closely with the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body to evaluate the effectiveness of the provision and identify priorities for further development.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner should statutory guidance or school procedures change.

Conclusion

At Spinfield School we are committed to providing an exceptional start to every child's education.

Through ambitious teaching, purposeful play, nurturing relationships and strong partnerships with families, we aim to develop confident, resilient and independent learners who are well prepared for the next stage of their education and who develop a lifelong love of learning.