



THE ELMS

EST 1614

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy	
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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

2. Legislation

This policy is based on the current Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework and will be reviewed in line with any future amendments to statutory guidance.

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Elms Early Years welcomes Nursery children from the day after their third birthday (subject to school readiness) up until the end of their Reception year.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows a Montessori approach, which is underpinned with the Early Years Foundation Stage as outlined in the latest EYFS statutory framework.

The Elms School aims to nurture the child through the early stages of their development recognising individual talent within an enabling, secure, and richly resourced learning environment that positively encourages self-esteem through rewarding learning experiences. The Elms School

aims to foster an enthusiasm for life and learning whilst developing independence, self-confidence, and polite manners, following our core values of endeavour, perseverance and compassion.

Our practice is underpinned by the four overarching principles of the EYFS: every child is a unique child; children learn through positive relationships; children thrive in enabling environments; and children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. 3 areas, known as 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 prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

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

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

4.1 Planning

The Montessori curriculum at The Elms is underpinned by the Early Years Foundation Stage. The Montessori materials and method provide a tailored, hands on approach to learning which serves to create a stimulating environment in which to learn and develop to their fullest potential.

Staff also 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.

4.2 Teaching

The Montessori teaching approach emphasizes the "Characteristics of Effective Learning" outlined in the EYFS framework, particularly through *playing and exploring*, *active learning*, and *creating and thinking critically*.

In a Montessori EYFS classroom, the environment is carefully prepared to support the seven areas of learning and development identified in the EYFS. Children engage in hands-on activities that

foster independence, concentration, and problem-solving skills, which directly support the EYFS goals.

The role of the Montessori teacher is to observe and understand each child's unique developmental stage, providing tailored activities that align with EYFS objectives. This ensures that the learning is both meaningful and appropriate to the child's needs, while also meeting the specific outcomes set by the EYFS framework. This integration makes Montessori a powerful approach to achieving the holistic goals of the EYFS while respecting each child's individual learning journey.

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

5. Assessment

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 of a child **starting reception**, staff will complete a Baseline Assessment.

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 (expected)
- 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 other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

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.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. Ongoing assessment and the EYFS Profile help to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

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.

Upon joining the EY class, parents will be asked to complete a baseline assessment, highlighting the skills and abilities their child has demonstrated at home.

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 safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

Attendance, registration, collection and signing-out arrangements are managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures. Accurate registers are maintained throughout the day and children are only released to authorised adults.

Staffing:

The school follows its Safer Recruitment and Retention Policy for the recruitment and appointment of all staff and volunteers, including those working within the Early Years setting. All required identity, qualification, reference, right-to-work, DBS and barred-list checks are completed in accordance with statutory requirements before an individual commences employment or volunteering, as applicable.

No individual will be permitted to begin working or volunteering in the Early Years setting until the required suitability checks have been completed, in accordance with the EYFS statutory framework and the school's Safer Recruitment and Retention Policy.

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:

- For children aged 3 and over
 - Where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another approved level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children
 - Where a person with the above qualifications is not working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 8 children
 - We determine ratios guided by all relevant ratio requirements and by the needs of the children within the group

All members of staff responsible for working with and supervising Early Years children hold a Paediatric First Aid certificate (PFA) This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

For all staff working in the EYFS, we ensure that the correct training, qualifications and employment checks have been completed as well as ensuring the suitability criteria has been met.

The school follows current safer sleep guidance. Where children rest or sleep during the school day, staff ensure that arrangements are age-appropriate, safe and appropriately supervised.

Children are supported to develop age-appropriate awareness of personal safety, including online safety, through everyday learning experiences and appropriate use of technology.

Child absences:

As Early Years providers we have a responsibility to follow up on unexplained absences on the day they occur and take appropriate action where concerns arise regarding a child's welfare.

if we are unable to make contact we will follow our Missing Child and Safeguarding Procedures and may contact emergency contacts, the police or other relevant agencies where appropriate.

We require all families in the Early Years to provide us with two emergency contacts, in addition to parent contact details.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's child protection and safeguarding policy.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Head of Early Years and approved by the governing body, annually.

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	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedure for responding to illness	Health & Safety Policy Statement and Handbook
Administering of Medication Policy	Administration of Medication Policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	Emergency Lockdown Procedures
Emergency lockdown procedures	Emergency Lockdown Procedures
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	EYPP Emergency Procedures Policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	Complaints Policy

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the following :

EYPP Equal Opportunities Policy

EYPP Teaching and Learning Policy

EYPP Smoking, Vaping and Substance Misuse Policy

EYPP Registration and Signing Out Policy

EY Intimate Care Policy

EYPP Code of Professional Conduct

EY Acceptable Use Policy

Complaints Policy

Staff code of conduct

Equal Opportunities Policy

EY SEND Policy