



Elmsleigh
INFANT & NURSERY SCHOOL

Grow to be the best we can be

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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All staff at Elmsleigh School are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and are aware of procedures for reporting concerns.

1. Aims

“Giving children what they need so that they can succeed.”

At Elmsleigh Infant and Nursery School we believe that all children deserve the best possible start in life and their education. All children deserve an education full of awe and wonder, memorable experiences and an education that provides them with the skills they need to succeed in life. We know that children enter our school with varying life experiences and we aim to plan teaching and learning opportunities in order to provide all children with their cultural capital that they need in order to succeed. Through a carefully planned curriculum, based on what our children need, we endeavor for all children to be happy, confident and resilient individuals, ready to take on the ever changing world around them.

Early language and communication skills are at the forefront of our provision at Elmsleigh. By the end of foundation stage we aim to ensure that all children leave with a strong foundation of early language and communication skills. That they are confident communicators in a range of situations, regardless of ability. That children will be able to express themselves effectively, speaking in full sentences and that they will develop their vocabulary and expressive language skills. We aim to ensure all children have the essential early reading and writing skills they need in order to thrive in their next stage of learning.

We aim for our children to become respectful citizens who are ready to go forward onto their next stage of learning and life. It is our mission to ensure that children believe in themselves, believe that they can achieve their dreams, ambition and potential.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), effective from September 2025. It also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Key statutory duties include:

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- Ensuring children learn and develop well.
- Providing safe and secure care in enabling environments.
- Working in partnership with parents and carers.

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Elmsleigh Infant and Nursery School, our provision is designed to meet the needs of children at every stage of development within this age range. The structure of our EYFS reflects our commitment to inclusive, high-quality early education for all children.

- **Nursery provision** includes 20 part-time places (10 morning, 10 afternoon, 15 hours per week) and 16 full-time places (30 hours per week).
- **Reception provision** includes two Reception classes, one adapted class, and an Enhanced Resource (ERS) unit for children with an EHCP. Places for ERS are arranged through the local authority.
- **Curriculum design** is based on *Birth to 5 Matters* (non-statutory guidance), enriched with cultural capital opportunities to strengthen children’s life skills and future learning readiness. This structure ensures that every child at Elmsleigh Infant and Nursery School has access to high-quality early education, tailored support where needed, and a curriculum that provides the best possible foundation for lifelong learning. Progress is monitored closely to ensure all children are prepared for the next stage of learning. By the end of Reception, children are assessed against the **17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs)** set out in the EYFS statutory framework. These ELGs define the level of development expected for most children by the end of the EYFS, across the prime and specific areas of learning.

4. Principles into Practice

The EYFS is based upon four guiding principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

4.1 A Unique Child

At Elmsleigh Infant & Nursery School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates.

Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Elmsleigh Infant & Nursery School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we give all of our children the opportunity to 'grow to be the best that they can be'. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. We ensure that we plan experiences based on what the children need in order for them to acquire their cultural capital to be successful in life and move on to their next steps in learning.

We have an Enhanced Resource Diagnostic & Assessment facility within our nursery unit for children with SEND. We also have an enhanced resource facility for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder with places designated for Reception children and KS1 children. (See Admissions policy)

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of all children, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Ensuring a language rich environment exposes children to high quality interactions from the very beginning of their early years' experience at Elmsleigh Infant and Nursery School.
- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary through early intervention.

4.2 Positive Relationships

At Elmsleigh Infant & Nursery School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through developing secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the

children and their families. Through establishing positive relationships and getting to know the child, we build knowledge on the child throughout the year which informs our expert professional judgment. This knowledge is largely based on day-to-day observations and interactions with the child and communication with parents.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We actively encourage parents to be fully involved in school life and their child's education.

We do this through:

- Home visits are organised for all new starters in Nursery and any new families to school in Reception.
- We talk to parents about their child before their child starts in our school, parent questionnaires are sent out with an 'all about me' section to help teachers get to know the children.
- We encourage parents to talk to their child's teacher if there are any concerns making full use of our open door policy.
- There is a formal meeting for all our Nursery and Reception parents in the Autumn and Spring terms in which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress.
- All parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the Nursery and Reception

Nursery

- Upon enquiring about a space for their child in our nursery parents are contacted by our admin staff who will discuss your child's needs and offered a home visit.
- A home visit will be carried out by the Nursery Lead Teacher and the Pastoral Lead.
- Following a home visit, parents and children are invited to a stay and play session so the child can become familiar with their new classroom.
- There is an opportunity for Nursery parents to have contact with the Nursery Lead at the beginning and end of each session.

Reception

- All Reception parents are invited to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- All Reception children have the opportunity to attend our whole school transition sessions.
- Any new families to school are offered a optional home visit prior to starting Elmsleigh.
- Reception children and their parents are invited to a stay and play 'session get to know their new teacher and ask any questions about starting school in September. This session focus on establishing positive home and school routines and also support the transition to school. Parents are encouraged to take part in the sessions to gain further knowledge on how to support their child at home with routines, teeth brushing, toileting etc. and also share any information that helps us as practitioners support their child in school;
- Reception parents are invited into school throughout the year to celebrate their child's learning during our whole school celebration assemblies and class assemblies.
- Throughout the year parents are invited into school to take part in curriculum workshops/meetings and open sessions.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children and parents, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS teacher acts as a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the Teaching Assistants, in our nursery unit children take part in key worker adult led activities, so they have opportunity to develop relationships when in a smaller group. Where children attend other settings in a day, we aim to ensure continuity and coherence by sharing information about the children.

4.3 Enabling Environments

At Elmsleigh Infant & Nursery School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. By knowing the children well, and assessing their starting points we plan purposeful learning opportunities within our provision and adult led activities. We ensure our classrooms are

calm and promote language and vocabulary development. Activities are planned to be engaging, challenging and achievable. Experiences may be planned or may be spontaneous in response to the child's learning, interests and progress. Classes are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active or be quiet. The classrooms are set up in learning areas/zones, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Foundation Stage classes have their own enclosed outdoor area, this is a shared area across all foundation stage classes. The area gives children access to a range of learning environments including our garden and a range of climbing equipment to develop their gross motor skills. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

4.4 Learning & Development and Curriculum

The EYFS is made up of 7 areas of learning and development. (3 Prime areas and 4 specific) Our curriculum design supports these and ensures we are meeting the requirements and experiences required as outlined in the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (2024)

Prime Areas

1. Communication and Language
2. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
3. Physical Development

Specific Areas – *prime areas are strengthened and applied.*

4. Literacy
5. Mathematics
6. Understanding of the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

None of the areas of learning are taught in isolation; each is interconnected and equally important. The prime areas are particularly significant in sparking children's curiosity, enthusiasm, and capacity to learn, as well as in supporting the development of relationships and resilience. At the start of the year, teachers focus on securing these foundations so that children can build upon them as they progress. These prime areas are then reinforced and extended through the specific areas of learning.

Each area of learning is underpinned by the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs), which set out what most children are expected to achieve by the end of the EYFS (Statutory Framework 2025). To reach a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of Reception, children must achieve the ELGs in the following areas:

Prime Areas:

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

Specific Areas:

- Literacy – Reading
- Literacy – Writing
- Mathematics

Learning is delivered through a balance of adult-led teaching and child-initiated play. Through practical experiences, exploration, stories, discussion, and first-hand activities, children make sense of the world around them. We set realistic yet ambitious expectations for all, carefully planning to meet the needs of every learner.

At Elmsleigh Infant School, we recognise that children learn in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning equally and understand that progress is often holistic, with areas of development overlapping and reinforcing each other.

5. Assessment

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process at Elmsleigh Infant and Nursery School. Staff observe children to identify their achievements, interests, and preferred learning styles. These observations inform future planning and teaching, ensuring learning is tailored to each child. Staff also consider observations shared by parents and carers.

Our curriculum planning is based on Birth to 5 Matters and our knowledge of the children. This provides a framework for progression throughout the EYFS and into Key Stage 1. Each cohort is assessed, and curriculum plans are adapted termly to respond to children's observed needs and interests, ensuring they gain the cultural capital and life skills necessary for success. Early language development and literacy are central, with phonics taught explicitly from Nursery following our whole school Sounds-Write scheme. Teachers and support staff are encouraged to follow children's interests and adapt learning in response to observations.

Children's learning is documented through ongoing observations and assessments. Staff use professional judgment and developmental checkpoints from *Birth to 5 Matters* to identify strengths, progress, and any children at risk of delay. Observations are recorded in various ways and inform planning, interventions, and the final EYFS Profile.

Within the first six weeks of starting Reception, children complete the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) to establish a starting point for their learning journey.

At the end of the Reception year, staff complete the EYFS Profile for each child. Children are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and are identified as either:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

6. Staff

6.1 Staff training

We will:

- Train all staff in safeguarding procedures in line with Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance
- Support all staff to feel supported and confident in implementing our safeguarding policy and procedures
- Renew training every 2 years, or more often when it's needed to help maintain skills; keep up to date with any changes to our safeguarding procedures; or because of any safeguarding concerns
- Outline how training is delivered, and how staff are supported to put it in place, in our child protection and safeguarding policy

Our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will:

- Provide ongoing support, advice and guidance to all staff
- Attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework
- Liaise as needed with local statutory children's services agencies and our local safeguarding partners

6.2 Safer recruitment

When recruiting staff, we will follow the procedures set out in the latest EYFS framework guidance on checking the suitability of new recruits, including:

- Obtaining a reference for any member of staff before they are recruited
- Recording information about staff qualifications and identity checks, vetting processes and references

6.3 Whistleblowing

- We make sure that all staff are aware of our whistleblowing procedures; feel able to raise concerns about any poor or unsafe practice; and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.
- In the event that a member of staff feels that they need to blow the whistle on misconduct, they should report their concern to a member of SLT. If the concern is about the head of school or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to Kim Peace the chair of governors.
- See Esteems whistleblowing policy for details on our procedures for handling whistleblowing.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

7.1 Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe' and feel safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries and rules and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See whole school Safeguarding Children Policy)

Children's attendance in school is monitored by our School Attendance team in line with our attendance policy.

7.2 Safeguarding

All personal mobile phones, cameras, and electronic devices with image capabilities are kept in a secure location away from children.

Staff may use school devices, including iPads, to record children's learning. Permissions for image use are obtained from parents/carers, and staff are aware of these. iPads used by children have child safety settings and are supervised at all times. EYFS follows the same Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and safeguarding procedures as the whole school. Please refer to the school's Safeguarding Policy for full guidance.

7.3 Attendance

EYFS follows the school's attendance procedures. Absences are followed up promptly. For prolonged or unexplained absences, staff make contact with parents/carers and emergency contacts. Wherever possible, the school holds at least two emergency contact numbers per child.

7.4 Supervision of Staff

All EYFS staff receive termly performance management reviews in line with EYFS supervision requirements, promoting a culture of support, teamwork, and continuous improvement. Staff receive coaching, training, and attend key stage meetings once a term to discuss concerns, share information on child development, and improve professional effectiveness.

7.5 First Aid

We keep a first aid box (which contains appropriate items for children) always accessible in every classroom. We keep a digital record of accident or injuries and any first aid treatment.

We will inform parents or carers the same day as, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, of any:

- Accident or injury sustained by the child
- First aid treatment given

We will notify the relevant authority of any serious accident, illness, or injury to, or death of any child while in our care and inform them of the action taken, as soon as reasonably practicable.

7.6 Toileting and Privacy

During nappy changes and toileting, we will balance children's privacy with their safeguarding and support needs. We make sure that there are:

- Enough toilets and hand basins available for the children
- Suitable and hygienic nappy changing facilities
- An adequate supply of necessary items
- Separate toilet facilities for adult

See the Intimate Care Policy.

7.7 Behaviour

Children's safety and welfare are prioritised. The curriculum teaches children to make safe choices and assess risks. Behaviour procedures are outlined in our Behaviour Policy.

7.8 Safer Eating

While children are eating, there will always be at least 1 member of staff in the room with a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate (from a course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the latest EYFS framework). All children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating, and seated safely.

Before a child joins our school, we will get information on their:

- Dietary requirements and preferences
- Food allergies and intolerances
- Health requirements

We will share this information with all staff involved in food preparation and handling. At each mealtime and snack time it will be clear which staff member is responsible for checking that the food meets all the requirements for each child.

We will consult with parents/carers to:

- Create allergy action plans for their child – with the help of health professionals, where appropriate
 - We will also keep this information up to date and share it with all staff

We will prepare food in a way that:

- Prevents choking
- Meets each child's individual developmental needs
- Is in line with the DfE's [Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance](#)

In the event of a choking incident that requires intervention, we will record details of the incident and make the child's parents/carers aware. We will periodically review the records to identify whether we can change anything in our practice to make eating safer, and then take action as appropriate.

7.8 Oral health and tooth brushing

We actively promote good oral health—and overall wellbeing—in the early years by working with our local dentist, who visits to share guidance and encourage healthy habits. We also follow the Smile4Life early years toothbrushing programme.

Children are supported to learn about:

- The impact of eating too many sugary foods
- Why it is important to brush their teeth regularly

Our supervised toothbrushing routine helps children develop healthy habits for life. We follow [government guidance on supervised toothbrushing](#) on supervised toothbrushing to ensure the approach is safe, effective, and evidence-based.

8. Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the Foundation teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor has the opportunity to discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Executive Head teacher, Head of School and subject coordinators carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation, work sampling and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

This isn't an exhaustive list of policies and only includes policies specific to the EYFS. For a full list of our policies, see our [website](#).

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS
Safeguarding policy
Health and Safety policy
First Aid Policy
Attendance Policy
Complaint Policy