

Watlington Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

October 2025

Next due review: September 2028

Signed: _____ Headteacher Date: October 2025
Gemma Sterjo

Policy has been adopted / reviewed by Governing Body:

Signed: _____ Chair of Governors Date: October 2025
Matt Van de Pette

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum that gives them the 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
- Close partnership working between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage [This policy has been modified in-line with the statutory framework from September 2025.](#)

3. Structure of the EYFS

At Watlington Primary School our Foundation Stage is structured as follows;

Foundation Stage	
Nursery	From the main term after your child turns 3
Reception	During the academic year your child will turn 5

Nursery	
Hours	9am - 3pm – term time only
Funding	Universal 15 hours 30-hour funding available (subject to availability) For parents not eligible for the 30 hours funding, sessions can be booked per term (From Sept 25 at £20 per session – subject to review) Ad hoc sessions available for £28.00 per session (need to be booked in advance, subject to staffing ratios)
Reception	
Hours	8.45am – 3.15pm – term time only

4. Curriculum

Our Early Years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2025 statutory framework.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 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

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and the nursery and reception teachers plan activities with these in mind. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics are:

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas; make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the nursery children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

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, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

Learning outside is valued and children are encouraged to take risks and to challenge themselves outdoors.

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.

Our Early Years team work closely with the Key Stage One team to ensure a smooth transition for the children.

4.3 Learning through Play

Play is a vital part of children's development. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

5. Assessment

At Watlington Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the 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. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

In Nursery practitioners review their children's progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

At the start of the Reception class, children complete the statutory Baseline assessment (RBA). 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
- Not yet reaching expected levels

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 and the Year 1 teacher.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the non-statutory Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

6. Working with parents

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

Parents and carers are welcome in to Foundation Stage grounds every morning (except in term 5 and 6 for Reception), to ask questions or share information. Other means of communication include: open afternoons, parents' meetings, transition meetings, end of year reports and curriculum workshops.

Parents/ carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through conversations and the school website. The progress check and EYFS profile helps 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.

7. Admissions

Our admissions for years Reception to year 6 are in accordance with the Acer Trust primary admission rules and arrangements.

Our admissions for Nursery are in accordance with the OCC document ['Policy for Admission to Local Authority Nursery Classes for admissions from September 2025 onwards'](#).

Both of these documents are available from the school office.

8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our whole school Safeguarding Policy, which is available from the school office and on the school website.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years and hold a 'Healthy Smiles' award.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Early Year Lead and Head Teacher every 3 years.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.

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

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according to the EYFS statutory framework.

Please see whole school policies on the following:

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	Safeguarding Policy
Procedure for responding to illness	Supporting Pupils With Medical Needs Policy Health and Safety Policy
Administering medicines policy	Supporting Pupils With Medical Needs Policy
Intimate Care procedure	On request from school office
Emergency evacuation procedure	Staff handbook Health and Safety Policy Lockdown Procedure Fire Evacuation procedure
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	Safeguarding Policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	Safeguarding Policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	Complaints Policy