



**Parkhead
Community
Primary School**

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Date of Policy:	September 2025
Date approved by Governors:	
Next annual review date:	September 2026

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- A secure, stimulating and caring environment is provided, where children can learn through play and exploration.
- 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
- Promote the four EYFS Principles
 - a) Every child in a unique child
 - b) Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
 - c) Children learn and develop well in enabling environments.
 - d) Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.
- 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
- All statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements are fully met.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for the EYFS (DfE, effective September 2025)

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of Reception. In our school children can join us from their third birthday, if spaces are available or at the beginning of the school year in which they turn four. Key Stage One begins for our children at the beginning of Year One.

We believe that the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is important, both in its own right and for preparing children for the later transition into Key Stage 1 and beyond. Children change and develop more rapidly in the first five years than at any other stage of their life. We have a 39 place Nursery and offer both part-time and full-time places for 3/4 year olds in our nursery class. Children in the nursery class are not guaranteed a reception class place at the school - the criteria is outlined in our admissions policy.

In order to ensure continuity and to enable each child to reach their full potential, we make a clear commitment to ensuring that the transition between Nursery and Reception is made smoothly, so laying secure foundations for future learning. The early years education we offer is based upon The Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework leading to the Early Learning Goals, which establish targets for most children to reach by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

All children begin school with a variety of learning experiences from home and other settings. In the early years, **how** children learn is as important as **what** children learn. Practitioners in the Early Years Foundation Stage have to take on the challenging task of building on that learning and experience.

4. Curriculum

Our early years curriculum reflects the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework effective from September 2025.

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

We aim to provide a quality teaching and a learning environment that is committed to raising standards and ensuring appropriate challenge for all children. In the Early Years Foundation Stage we realise that the way in which children engage with other people and their environment, underpins the learning and development across all areas.

The characteristics of effective learning are:

- Playing and exploring – engagement
- Active Learning – motivation
- Creating and thinking critically – thinking

The three areas support the children to sustain their motivation and effectiveness as learners.

5. Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus

strongly on the three prime areas. Staff also consider 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, responding to children 'in the moment' as they take on the role of play partner and learn together alongside the children.

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.

Our enabling environment and warm, skilful adult interactions support the children as they begin to link learning to their play and exploration. Our curriculum recognises the skill development for each child providing opportunities for the children to rehearse, consolidate, apply and extend their learning, through our daily 'Plan, Do, Review' approach to child-initiated learning. We encourage children to develop as confident and capable learners, who enjoy exploring their own ideas and theories, whilst practitioners observe, support, discuss, challenge, extend and scaffold learning.

Much of our school day is dedicated to child-initiated learning (play) where staff respond to, extend, scaffold and engage in quality talk to support the children's learning through the medium of 'Plan, Do, Review' and an 'in the moment' approach to planning.

"Babies and young children are experiencing and learning in the here and now, not storing up their questions until tomorrow or next week. It is in that moment of curiosity, puzzlement, effort or interest – the 'teachable moment' – that the skilful adult makes a difference. By using this cycle on a moment-by moment basis, the adult will be always alert to individual children (observation), always thinking about what it tells us about the child's thinking (assessment), and always ready to respond by using appropriate strategies at the right moment to support children's well-being and learning (planning for the next moment)."

From National Standards document Learning, Playing and Interacting P.22 - 23

By supplementing our 'in the moment approach' with carefully planned developmentally appropriate small group activities, enhanced provision and individual support our aim is that every child may grow to their fullest potential as an individual. Play is the building block of a child's intellectual, social, emotional, physical and language skill development.

We recognise the importance of providing a meaningful language-rich environment; we want our children to be able to express themselves and engage in conversations with their friends and adults. We share core stories, poems and sing songs throughout the day, as well as using language to support vocabulary and thinking-skills.

Our teaching of reading and writing is based on a systematic synthetic phonics approach supported by the Read, Write, Inc Phonics programme.

Mathematical ideas are developed using the White Rose and NCETM 'Mastering Number' Programme as we aim to deepen understanding and build the number sense of smaller numbers. Children also have the opportunity to discuss and experiment with larger numbers so that they understand them in context, with children's developing knowledge explored through stories and focused around a child's contextual understanding and real life experiences. Mathematics is embedded into our daily routines such as 'Welcome Time' to support the development of fluency in early number sense. Our provision allows opportunity to explore and investigate and develop their understanding of shape, space and measure.

We value imagination and creativity and seek to create a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning through continuous indoor and outdoor provision.

6. Teaching

OFSTED 2015

“Teaching should not be taken to imply a ‘top down’ or formal way of working. It is a broad term that covers the many different ways in which adults help young children learn. It includes their interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play and activities: communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges. It takes account of the equipment adults provide and the attention given to the physical environment, as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations”

At Parkhead Community Primary school we ensure each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help ensure a successful transition to year 1.

The features of effective teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage are:

- the fostering of a close partnership between practitioners and parents, so that our children feel secure at school from the onset and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that our practitioners have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- the regular identification of training needs of all practitioners working within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Playing and Exploring - Engagement

We believe well-planned play both indoors and outdoors, is a key way in which children learn with enjoyment and challenge during the Early Years Foundation Stage. Through play that is planned in a secure environment and with effective adult support, children can:

- explore, develop and represent learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world;
- practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills;
- learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules;
- be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk and express their feelings;
- take risks and make mistakes;
- think creatively and imaginatively;
- communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems;
- express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

We aim to make learning for young children a rewarding and enjoyable experience during which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the Early Years Foundation Stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

Active Learning - Motivation

“Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.” Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Thinking Critically

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

7. The Learning Environment

At Parkhead Community Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children’s development. This begins with the children and

assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Nursery and Reception classes share their own outdoor learning environment (OLE) and the children have free-flow access to this area for the majority of the day. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunities to explore using their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

Our most valuable resource in both the indoor and outdoor environment is the group of adults playing alongside the children. The adults are there to teach, they do this though observing and interacting. We ensure that our adults receive training so that they can spot a 'teachable moment' while the children are engaged, they know the children very well and have a sound understanding of child development. This ensures that the adults enhance and extend the learning at the appropriate level for each unique child. Generally, the adults go to the children. The children become involved in activities of their choice. The adults observe the children carefully, join them, when appropriate, and engage in quality interactions (teaching) to move the learning on. They "teach" through modelling, suggesting, providing vocabulary or resources, explaining or encouraging. In this way, if a child encounters a challenge, then they will not give up. Rather they will be supported to persevere, overcome the challenge and move forward in their learning.

We work in this way because high level involvement occurs in child initiated activity. When children show high levels of involvement, that is when there is progress and development occurring – when the brain is at its most active. High level involvement occurs most often when children are able to pursue their own interests in an enabling environment, supported by skilful staff.

8. Assessment

At Parkhead Community Primary School we believe that 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 shared with parents using Tapestry and used to shape interactions in the moment and future planning. Parents/carers are encouraged to share observations of their child outside of school to support staff in building up an accurate representation of what children know and can do.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception 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 ('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 Birth to Five Matters document) and in partnership with other local

schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority. The EYFS Profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').

The profile will be shared with parents/carers and Year 1 teachers along with a summary of the child's skills in relation to the three key characteristics of learning.

9. 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/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The 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. "Parents are children's first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together in early years settings the results have a positive impact on the child's development and learning. Therefore, each setting should seek to develop an effective partnership with parents." (DfEE 2000)

Parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We believe that it is important that all early years practitioners work in close partnership with parents and other adults. When parents and practitioners work together the results have a positive impact on a child's development and learning. Valuing and building on children's previous learning helps to promote these partnerships. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- the children having the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress;
- having an 'open door' policy;
- sharing each child's learning journey through Tapestry, an online, secure system;
- encouraging parents to access, view and comment on their child's learning journey regularly;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- inviting parents to a formal meeting for parents each term, at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- having flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parents to become secure, and by allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents;

- encouraging parents to comment on progress in reading through the use of the reading diary;
- encouraging parents to contribute to their child's Early Years Foundation Stage Journey through home observation and commenting on their general progress on their online learning journey;
- inviting parents to curriculum evenings to discuss the kind of work that the children undertake in the reception class;
- inviting parents to phonics sessions to give guidance on how to support their child at home.

10. Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

Through our PSED programme we promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

10.1 Safeguarding

We follow all guidance in KCSIE 2025 and our school's Safeguarding policy.

We understand that we are required to:

- Have and implement a child protection policy, and procedures, to safeguard children. See Safeguarding policy
- Designate a member of staff to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children within our setting.
- Train all staff to understand our safeguarding policy and procedures, and ensure that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues.
- Have regard to the government's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2025) statutory guidance.
- Whistle-blowing arrangements are clearly communicated to all staff and volunteers.

10.2 Safer Recruitment

We understand we are required to obtain and verify two written references before employment.

Enhanced DBS and identity checks must be completed for all staff, students and volunteers.

Records of vetting and qualifications are kept on the school's single central record.

10.3 Supervision, Ratios and Qualifications

- We ensure the staff: child ratios meet the requirements for each age group of children as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2025

- We ensure at least one member of staff who has a current paediatric first aid certificate is on the premises and available at all times when children are present, and must accompany children on outings.
- students and trainees are not included in the ratios unless they meet qualification and PFA requirements.

10.4 Child Absence and Attendance

- Attendance is recorded daily.
- The school follows up any unexplained or prolonged absence promptly.
- At least two emergency contacts are held for every child.
- Persistent or concerning absence is referred to the DSL.

10.5 Health, Safety and Safer Eating

- Meal-times are supervised face-to-face by staff who know the children well.
- Food and drink provided are suitable for each child's age and stage of development.
- Allergy and dietary information are kept up-to-date and shared with relevant staff.
- Children are encouraged to sit while eating. Food sharing is discouraged.
- A PFA qualified member of staff is present whenever food is served.
- We ensure there is a first aid box accessible at all times with appropriate content for use with children. We keep a written record of accidents or injuries and first aid treatment and inform parents and/or carers of any accident or injury sustained by the child on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable, of any first aid treatment given.
- Promote good health, including the oral health, of children preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill. (See First aid policy)

10.6 Intimate Care and Toileting

- Children's privacy and dignity are respected during toileting and changing.
- Changing areas are clean, safe and age-appropriate.
- Procedures are designed to balance privacy with safeguarding: staff never work in isolation where this would place them or the child at risk.
- Records are maintained of all nappy changes and personal care incidents.

10.7 Staff Training and Development

- All staff receive induction and ongoing training in safeguarding, health and safety Early Years pedagogy.
- Training meets the criteria of the EYFS (2025) ensuring learning is applied effectively in practice.
- The EYFS lead, monitors the impact of CPD on provision quality.

11. Inclusion and SEND

We follow the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and DfE SEND and AP Improvement Plan (2023-2025)

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

In accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy all children within the Early Years Foundation Stage at Parkhead Community Primary School must be given full access to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff will endeavour to help all children to reach their full potential irrespective of race, gender, age or ability.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year, and some progress beyond this point.

We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able and are gifted or talented, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We do this by ensuring:

- Early identification and intervention are priorities.
- Individual Support Plans are developed where appropriate.
- We work closely with parents, the SENDCo and external agencies.
- Reasonable adjustments are made to support participation and progress.