

Cockton Hill Infants' School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



	Date	Name	Position
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Reviewed	12/3/2026	Tom Cuthbertson	Head Teacher
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Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to reflect the school's philosophy on the implementation of the Foundation Stage. This policy refers to children between the ages of two and five years within our Nursery and our two Reception classes.

Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a crucial phase of education. While preparing children for future learning, we also recognise that early childhood is a unique stage of life with its own intrinsic value. We believe that young children learn best through first-hand experiences.

We aim to:

- foster personal, social and emotional well-being,
- support the transition to and between settings,
- promote an inclusive ethos,
- provide opportunities for each child to become a valued member of their group and community,
- develop a strong self-image and self-esteem,
- promote positive attitudes and dispositions to learning,
- develop enthusiasm for knowledge and learning,
- engender confidence in children's ability to be successful learners,
- enhance social skills,
- provide opportunities for children to work harmoniously with others,
- promote attention skills and persistence.

Curriculum

Our setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the **2021 statutory EYFS framework**, which remains current for learning and development expectations.

The EYFS identifies seven interconnected areas of learning:

Prime areas:

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

Specific areas:

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

Young Children's Learning

Young children learn through exploration, talk, imaginative experiences, and carefully structured play. We maintain a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities, ensuring all learning is meaningful, developmentally appropriate and language-rich.

Promoting Young Children's Learning

The learning environment supports children to:

- feel secure and confident,
- learn in a variety of ways and at different rates,
- use their senses in learning,
- initiate and develop their own ideas,
- explore concepts in depth,
- make links across their learning,
- engage in imaginative and language-rich play.

Planning

Staff plan activities that enable children to develop effectively, with practitioners working with younger children focusing strongly on the prime areas. Planning responds to each child's developmental stage, needs and interests. Staff consider whether specialist support may be required and liaise with external agencies where appropriate.

Teaching

Learning is implemented through purposeful play and a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond sensitively to children's needs. As children progress, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led learning in preparation for Year 1.

Assessment

Ongoing assessment is central to our EYFS practice. Staff observe children to identify their achievements, interests and learning styles, and planning is adapted accordingly. Observations may be recorded on Tapestry or brief written notes. Weekly team meetings support reflection and planning.

A **progress check at age two** is completed for all children aged 2–3.

The **EYFS Profile** at the end of Reception assesses children as “expected” or “emerging” against the ELGs.

Equal Opportunities

We ensure equal opportunities for all children regardless of gender, race, disability, ability, belief or ethnicity. Staff actively remove barriers to participation and ensure all children access the full curriculum.

Parental Involvement

We recognise the importance of strong partnerships with parents and carers. Progress is shared regularly through discussions, the age-two progress check and the EYFS Profile. A key person supports each child and family and helps them access specialist services where appropriate.

Liaison with Other Agencies and Settings

We work closely with feeder nurseries and pre-schools. Reception staff visit children before transition. We liaise with external agencies such as health, SALT, social care and educational psychologists.

Welfare Requirements

The welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is central to all aspects of our provision. In line with the updated **2025 EYFS framework**, we ensure that children are safe, healthy, well cared for and supported to thrive in a nurturing environment.

1. Child Well-Being and Safety

We prioritise the creation of a safe, secure and nurturing learning environment. Staff build warm, responsive relationships with children and ensure that emotional well-being is central to daily practice. Children are encouraged to develop independence while staff provide consistent, appropriate supervision to ensure they are always safe and supported.

2. Staffing, Suitability and Ratios

We follow safer recruitment practices, including obtaining appropriate references and ensuring that every individual working with children is suitable and appropriately trained.

Students and trainees are only counted in staffing ratios if they have completed the required paediatric first aid (PFA) training.

A number of our lunchtime staff are trained in PFA so that safe practice is maintained throughout the day, including during meals and outdoor play.

3. Child Absence and Attendance Monitoring

We follow up any prolonged or unexplained absences promptly and ensure that we maintain up-to-date emergency contact details for every child.

Attendance patterns are monitored carefully to safeguard children's welfare and any concerns are addressed in line with our attendance procedures.

4. Health, Well-Being and Nutrition

We follow national guidance on healthy eating and nutrition to ensure that meals and snacks support children's health and well-being.

Children have access to drinking water throughout the day, and staff encourage healthy eating habits as part of our daily routines.

5. Safer Eating Requirements

To ensure safe eating practices for all children:

- Children remain seated while eating or drinking.
- Food is cut into appropriate sizes and textures to reduce choking risks.
- Children are closely supervised by staff trained in safe-eating procedures and how to respond if a child chokes.
- High-risk foods are modified or avoided for younger children in line with best practice.

Mealtimes are calm, structured and well-organised to support safety and promote positive attitudes towards eating.

6. Intimate Care and Toileting

Privacy during toileting and nappy changing is balanced with safeguarding considerations. At Cockton Hill Infants', we use dedicated changing areas that protect each child's dignity while also ensuring that children are not placed in secluded or unobservable locations. Staff follow clear, agreed intimate care procedures, maintaining an appropriate level of visibility or audibility—such as keeping doors ajar where suitable or ensuring another staff member is nearby—so that both the child and the adult are safeguarded throughout.

These procedures are fully detailed in our Intimate Care Policy.

7. Premises, Equipment and Hygiene

We ensure that indoor and outdoor environments remain safe and well maintained through regular risk assessments and ongoing upkeep. Staff follow high standards of hygiene, including consistent handwashing routines, cleaning schedules, and safe food-handling practices.

8. Behaviour, Emotional Well-Being and Relationships

Staff promote self-regulation, resilience and positive social skills through clear modelling, encouragement and consistent expectations. Children are supported to form friendships, express their feelings appropriately and develop confidence in a warm, secure and nurturing environment.

Further Information

For more detail on wider safeguarding and welfare responsibilities, please see the following policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Intimate Care Policy

