

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



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

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

Structure of the EYFS

At Yarborough Academy we have a 52-place nursery (FS1) and two reception classes (FS2) with places for a total of 60 children.

In nursery we offer places for 15-hour universal funding and additionally the 30-hour extended funding. Families can choose to pay for additional sessions outside of the funding they are eligible for. An additional 3-hour session costs £12.

Nursery sessions available are-

Morning Sessions- 8.50-11.50

Afternoon Sessions- 12.10-3.10

Full Day- 8.50-3.10 (**£2 additional charge to cover the cost of staffing over lunch as funding does not cover this**).

We aim to be flexible and support families to access sessions that work best for them and therefore families can choose different ways to use their funding entitlement. This can include a mixture of full and half day sessions.

Curriculum

The Nursery and Reception classes follow the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the Early Years statutory framework that applies from September 2021. This is available at [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

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

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

The EYFS also includes the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning. These are also used within planning to guide what children learn. Adults within EYFS regularly reflect on the different rates that children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately.

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

This links with the whole schools GLO characteristics (Growth, Love, Over and Above), which show that we are determined, brave, inventive, kind, trustworthy and that we stick together. When children have shown these characteristics, they are recognised with GLO stickers or a post card home. We also have a weekly GLO circle in which children nominate a peer for showing growth, love or going over and above. The child nominated will then receive a GLO band at the GLO MO show and enjoy GLO Time with the Headteacher.

Teaching Strategies

We ensure that there is a balance between adult led and child initiated activities across the day. We believe that even during child initiated activities the adults' role and interaction with the children is essential as this helps to build the children's understanding and so guides new learning. The role of the adult is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the children are doing, either through participation in the children's game or encouraging the children to participate or complete a task with the adult. The children are taught through a number of different strategies that are both Early Years based as well as more direct teaching and other more investigative approaches especially as the year goes on.

- **Relationships**- Our Early years staff are trained in the importance of relationships, especially while children are very young. As part of this, we know that when children join our Early Years classes, they are developing the middle part of their brains, this part of the brain is built by relationships. For this reason, in our Early Years classrooms everything we do is based around growing healthy brains. We focus on spending time with the children, interacting with them and truly getting to know each and every little personality that joins our classroom family.
- **Exploration Time** – Exploring is an important and integral part of the Early Years curriculum and classroom. We believe that children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. The brain-based research our staff are trained in also backs this up. When children are fully engaged and interested, research shows that brains are 'lit up' and ready to learn. Brain activity is at it's highest when this attention is focused upon tasks which they have chosen and that they are immersed in, ones which fascinate them. We use prior assessment of the children's skills and knowledge, as well as children's interests as a starting point for our planning.
- **Direct teaching** – In FS1 (Nursery) we have opportunities at the beginning of each sessions and throughout the day in which children are encouraged to participate in an exciting activity led by the teacher or Early Years Practitioner (EYP).

We concentrate on developing children's speaking and listening skills as this lays the foundations for the phonics work, which starts the term before the join reception classes. These activities focus on environmental and instrumental sounds whilst also focusing on rhyme and rhythm. As part of our daily routine we introduce basic Math and number skills during our small group sessions including morning meetings and snack time.

In FS2 (Reception), we have opportunities at the beginning of the school day and throughout the day where children participate in small group and whole class teaching sessions delivered by the class teacher and teaching assistant.

The children participate in daily Read Write Inc. (RWI) sessions. This focuses on learning letter sounds and on blending and segmenting words. Our children also have daily maths sessions, which over the school year increase to be more adult-led taught sessions to aid transition to year 1. Children are given library books weekly to take home and share with their parents. When your child reaches red group in RWI they will be given a reading book to take home and practice. They may also have some words to take home to explore. We encourage lots of games such as snap, flashcards and bingo to help them with their blending and segmenting. All direct taught sessions are carefully planned and tailored for each class using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. Planning is changed and tailored regularly and in response to the result of taught sessions, ensuring all teaching and learning is relevant and challenging for each child.

Visits and Visitors

The part of visits and visitors plays a very important role in the Early Years at Yarborough Academy, as these are seen as an opportunity to further develop our children's view of their world or community and to broaden their early experiences. Each term the children are given the opportunity to widen their experience through either visits to specific areas (e.g. the seaside, local farms or wildlife parks). In addition to this we have visitors invited into the school who are seen as experts in their field. Each of these visits and visitors are carefully planned and tailored to the children's interests or specific events in the calendar.

As well as carefully planning these experiences we ensure that all ratios are matched for the year group carefully. We ensure that there is a ratio of 1 adult to 5 children with the Reception class and 1 adult to 3 children with the children in Nursery when we are out on trips.

Classroom Organisation

Our Early Years classrooms and environments mirror a home from home environment. We have cosy areas within each room with blankets and cushions. We have neutral décor and low lighting to help create a calm and relaxing space. Resources are accessible to children and have clear 'homes' so that children are able to find the things they need during their play independently and with ease. The provision areas within each room reflects each of the areas of learning within the EYFS framework and are adapted to meet the needs and interests of our children on a regular basis. We do this by providing invitations and provocations to play, based on our continuous assessments and observations of the children. Each of the EYFS classrooms at Yarborough Academy have opportunities for children to experience and explore: A Peace Corner, cosy spaces, opportunities for sensory regulation, opportunities for core group muscle movement, a home corner (set out like a home environment) small world, loose parts, dressing up and stage areas, reading area, sand, water, creative area, mark making (early writing opportunities) and a Math area.

The outdoor area is as important as the indoor environment and is something we continue to develop, ensuring that the children are able to explore and learn in the natural world as much as possible, creating the links between the indoor and outdoor environments.

Assessments, Observations and Learning Journeys

Assessment plays an important part of the Early Years for children's learning and development. It helps parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs and plan purposeful activities and support. At Yarborough Academy we use Tapestry (An online learning journal) to capture children's ongoing learning, play and interests. These moments are shared instantly with children's families via the Tapestry app. In addition to this, we encourage our families to share achievements, activities and special events from home to create a richer picture of the children's experiences, interests and learning. In school practitioners respond to their daily interactions and observations of the children to shape teaching and learning experiences for each child 'in the moment' and on a daily basis.

Assessment at Yarborough Academy does not entail prolonged breaks from interactions with children or require excessive paperwork. When making judgements on whether children are at the expected level of development staff in school draw upon their knowledge of the children and expert professional judgements.

On entry to Nursery a baseline assessment is carried out for each child. The staff use Tapestry to judge whether there are any areas of 'concern' in any of the areas of learning from the EYFS framework for each child. This enables practitioners to identify key areas of support from the very beginning and helps us to tailor provision to the needs of each child. This information is stored on Scholar Pack (the assessment tool that is used throughout the rest of the school) and is used to inform the class provision map. These provide a basis for conversation during meetings with the Head teacher and Assessment Lead teacher, where discussions and plans are put into place to support and extends the needs of all children through research-based interventions and daily provision. These assessments and provision maps are reviewed termly.

During the first six weeks in Reception the teachers carry out the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment as directed by the Department for Education (DFE) with each child, more information can be found here- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1004560/2021_Information_for_parents_reception_baseline_assessment.pdf Our teachers also carry out baseline assessments for each of the areas of the EYFS framework in the same way as nursery. Termly assessments are stored on Scholar Pack

and the class provision maps are created.

In the final term of Reception and no later than the 30th June each child is assessed against each of the Early Learning Goals (ELG). Children are assessed to have either 'met or not met' the expected level of development in the ELG for each of the areas of learning and a report is shared with families informing them about their child's learning and progress.

Role of Staff and Key Workers

In FS1 your child will be assigned a key worker. A key worker is a named practitioner who has responsibility for a small group of children, they are there to help nurture your child and help them feel safe and secure. A key worker will respond to your child's needs and help them settle into the setting.

The role of each teacher is to ensure that each child's care and development is carefully catered and planned for through exploration time, project and other experiences. Each adult aims to develop a positive relationship with each child in the class, as we believe that a happy, nurtured and confident child is a child that is ready to learn. We actively seek positive relationships with the parents as well as the children.

Relationship with Parents and Carers

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and so we aim to work very closely with parents.

In FS1 we encourage parents to add to their child's files and Tapestry journals to strengthen the link between school and home. Children then proudly share their files weekly with their key worker groups.

We have regular stay and play sessions, which have a main focus or theme. At the beginning of the school year we hold Numicon and phonics stay and play sessions to ensure parents have the correct information they need to help children with their learning at home. We also link some of our stay and play sessions to special days throughout the year such as grandparents' day and Christmas.

Transitions

We have several transitions throughout the Foundation Stage that we manage with care. The first transition is that transition into Nursery, which is very often some children's first experience of any type of setting or school. For this transition 2 'little seedlings' sessions are planned in which parents and their children are invited to come into the nursery setting. We encourage parents and children to have fun and enjoy the fun and exciting activities the nursery has to offer. The 2nd session involves children joining in with a fun activity with the early years staff whilst parents speak to our Early Years Lead Teacher and Learning Mentor about any queries or questions they may have. These sessions provide an invaluable opportunity for the children and parents to meet the adults in the setting and become familiar with the environment. During these 'Little Seedlings' sessions we also arrange times for a home visit, in which the schools learning mentor and nursery teacher will visit the child and parent in their own home, talking more in depth about the school and providing an opportunity to complete the relevant forms that need to be completed for the schools records. This also provides a time to become familiar with the parent and child, developing positive relationships from the outset.

The second transition that occurs during Early Years is the transition from Nursery to Reception, this jump from part time schooling to full time can be very daunting for both parents and their children and we aim as a school to ensure that any transition is as smooth and comfortable as possible. In order to do this, we invite the parents into a transition meeting during the summer term to provide the parents with information about the school and the curriculum. We also have the opportunity to talk about other general information subjects, such as school dinners, phonics, mathematics and an opportunity to meet their child's new class teacher. In addition to this we invite all children joining FS2 into school during the summer term. This is an excellent opportunity for children to meet their new friends, teachers and becoming familiar with the school.

There are transition meetings planned during the summer term between nursery and the new class teacher in Reception, allowing the nursery teachers to provide further information about each child's development and pass on any other important information about each child (e.g. medical, SEN, EAL, etc.).

We also have an opportunity for Reception teachers and Year 1 teachers to meet and inform the child's new teacher

about each child's level of development, ELG achievement and any other information about each child (e.g. medical, SEN, EAL, etc.).

Safeguarding

Children learn best when they are happy, safe and feel secure. We aim to ensure that all children feel happy, safe and secure through the continuous development of positive relationships between children and staff as well as relationships with their peers. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Guidance.

It is important to note that all staff are given a school registered iPad in which they use to take photos when using Tapestry. Tapestry is an app which is used through EYFS at Yarborough Academy to capture children's learning and experiences. All data on these devices are stored in the cloud and do not remain in these devices. Any data stored within the Tapestry system is password protected and encrypted.

Our school has a rigorous safeguarding policy and procedures that are used to identify anyone at risk of harm or radicalisation, this sets out a clear procedure for reporting any concerns from minor to major. All staff are regularly trained in BASICS Safeguarding, which is updated in a regular basis. All staff are trained in Team Teach, which trains staff in ways to handle children that are at risk of harming themselves or others, and again this training is regularly updated and refreshed. The school has rigorous checks when employing members of staff, ensuring that they have the relevant qualifications and are DBS checked. All DBS checks are updated in a rolling basis as required.


We have an e-safety policy which stipulates and advises how to keep children safe when online, which is available on our schools website <https://www.yarboroughacademy.co.uk/about-our-academy/safeguarding1/online-safety/>. All staff are regularly made aware of how to keep safe online, and have training around this. This is also regularly promoted throughout the school. The school as a whole also has a filtering system that blocks any unknown or suspect websites.

Health and Safety

Within the school we follow a set of guidelines regarding different aspects of Health and Safety.

- **Healthy school meals** – our children when they enter Reception are entitled to a free school meal and are provided with this. The school meals are carefully catered and follow a healthy food model.
- **Healthy snack** – Fruit and milk are provided and are available throughout Nursery and Reception for children to eat. We also encourage children to try new or more exotic types of food/fruit.
- **Accidents and First aid** – There is a trained Paediatric First aider on site at all times. All first aid cupboards are clearly labelled and regularly updated. All accidents are recorded and parents are informed of any accidents. If a more serious accident occurs (e.g. significant bump, scrape or graze) parents will have a phone call home to inform them of anything that has happened before the end of the session.
- **Nappies** – We encourage all parents to ensure their children are potty trained before they start nursery, but in the event that this is not possible, we will put into place a care plan which will ensure that the child is well looked after and regularly changed..
- **Fire alarms** – A fire alarm practice is organised at least once a term and all of these are timed and recorded. We have set fire doors throughout the setting and the caretaker carries out regular safety checks.

Child Protection and Safeguarding – We have a very clearly set out safeguarding policy, which is available on our website (<https://www.yarboroughacademy.co.uk/about-our-academy/safeguarding1/>), our Safeguarding officers are Mrs Hannah Albery (Head teacher) and Mrs Elizabeth Cox (Deputy Head Teacher).

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Policy written by: EYFS Lead	
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