The Oak Partnership

TOP EYFS Policy

We are committed to safeguarding and ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all pupils in accordance with safeguarding procedures and guidance for staff outlined in the schools' Health and Safety, Child Protection, Security and Safeguarding policies.

Document Information

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1. Aims and principles

The Oak Partnership Trust schools aim to ensure every child experiences a safe, ambitious and inclusive early years education, founded on secure relationships, purposeful play, direct teaching where appropriate, rich language interactions and strong partnership with families.

- Children are recognised as unique learners with different starting points, interests, strengths and support needs.
- All seven EYFS areas are equally important and interconnected; the prime areas underpin later learning.
- Staff support the characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically.
- Children are prepared for the next stage through a thoughtful curriculum, not excessive paperwork or premature formalisation.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy should be implemented with reference to the EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers effective 1 September 2026 and to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. The school will also follow relevant statutory duties under the Childcare Act 2006, Children Acts 1989 and 2004, Equality Act 2010, SEND Code of Practice (2015), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026), and data-protection and health-and-safety legislation.

- The school will follow the statutory learning and development requirements and the applicable safeguarding and welfare requirements in the EYFS.
- Policies are read alongside local school safeguarding, behaviour, SEND, health and safety, recruitment, attendance, admissions and complaints procedures.
- Any school-specific exemptions, requirements or additional legal duties must be checked rather than assumed to be the same as a standalone nursery.

3. Leadership and responsibilities

The headteacher and governing body or academy Trust are accountable for the EYFS offer and for ensuring that statutory duties are met. The EYFS lead coordinates curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, transitions and quality assurance across Reception and any nursery class.

- Headteacher / senior leaders: provide clear oversight, suitable resourcing, staff development, safe deployment, safeguarding and evaluation.
- EYFS lead: sequence and monitor the curriculum; support practitioners, observation and assessment; ensure appropriate communication with families and other professionals.
- Teachers and practitioners: deliver age-appropriate learning, maintain safe and inclusive practice, identify emerging needs and promptly share safeguarding concerns.
- Designated safeguarding lead (DSL): oversee safeguarding records, referrals, advice, information-sharing and staff training in line with school arrangements.
- SENDCo: coordinate identification, reasonable adjustments, graduated support, specialist liaison and transition planning.

4. Curriculum, teaching and learning

Ruishton Primary School implements the seven EYFS areas through developmentally appropriate, coherent and ambitious educational programmes. Planning is informed by the statutory EYFS and the school's agreed curriculum progression.

- Prime areas: communication and language; physical development; personal, social and emotional development.
- Specific areas: literacy; mathematics; understanding the world; expressive arts and design.
- Practitioners develop vocabulary and talk, phonological awareness, stories and books, mathematical understanding, physical confidence, relationships and independence.
- Learning includes high-quality indoor and outdoor provision, child-initiated experiences, sensitive adult scaffolding and explicit teaching when beneficial.
- The school's phonics, early reading programme is Read, Write, Inc
- The school's early mathematics approaches uses White Rose and Mastering Number
- The Reception curriculum reflects the requirements of the EYFS
- Screen-based activities are considered in the light of children's ages, learning needs, welfare and the EYFS requirement to have regard to screen use.

5. Assessment, reporting and transition

Assessment is predominantly formative, drawn from what practitioners see and hear during everyday learning. It informs planning, responsive teaching and timely intervention. Staff do not create unnecessary observation or tracking evidence solely to demonstrate compliance.

- On entry: establish each child's starting points using conversations with families, previous providers and professional observation.
- Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA): administer in the first six weeks of the child starting Reception in accordance with the current assessment and reporting arrangements.
- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP): complete in the final term of the academic year in which the child turns five (normally Reception), assessing the 17 early learning goals and reporting and sharing results as required.
- School leaders ensure internal and external moderation, statutory data submission, parental reporting and handover to Year 1 comply with current instructions.

- Transitions include home-to-nursery, nursery-to-Reception and Reception-to-Year 1, with enhanced arrangements for children with SEND, social care involvement or other vulnerabilities.

6. SEND, inclusion and equality

Every child is entitled to participate meaningfully in the school's EYFS curriculum. Leaders and practitioners fulfil Equality Act duties, make reasonable adjustments and support children with SEND through early identification and the graduated assess–plan–do–review approach.

- Work in partnership with the SENDCo, parents and relevant professionals; respond to strengths and needs without making a diagnosis a condition of support.
- Value linguistic, cultural and family diversity; support children with English as an additional language and respect home languages.
- Where necessary use tailored communication, appropriate sensory adaptations and evidence-informed intervention without isolating children from high-quality teaching.
- Maintain effective liaison for education, health and care plans and for children requiring additional adult support, always considering safe staffing.

7. Safeguarding and child protection

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The school follows Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and the safeguarding and welfare section of the current EYFS framework.

- All staff read KCSIE 2026 Part One in full and follow the school's child protection policy, reporting and escalation procedures.
- Concerns are recorded promptly and passed to the DSL. Allegations relating to adults, low-level concerns and whistleblowing are managed under the school and Trust policies, including LADO and notification duties where relevant.
- Recruitment, references, suitability, identity and appropriate DBS and barred-list checks are completed as required; volunteers and other adults are risk-assessed and supervised appropriately.
- Maintain clear arrangements for mobile phones and cameras, intimate care, appropriate professional boundaries and child-on-child safeguarding.
- Follow up unexplained and prolonged absences promptly, applying statutory attendance and safeguarding expectations relevant to the child's age and registration.
- Implement the September 2026 EYFS safeguarding clarifications, including requirements concerning safer sleep, banned dog breeds on childcare premises, notifications about allegations of harm, and having regard to screen use.

8. Staffing, ratios and qualifications

The headteacher ensures sufficient suitable adults are available to protect children and provide high-quality care and education. The school checks the different EYFS staffing, ratio and qualification provisions applicable to nursery classes and Reception classes, including whether an appropriately qualified teacher is working directly with the children.

- For nursery pupils, staffing ratios and qualified staff requirements are checked for each age group, and school-specific exceptions applied only when permitted under the framework.
- For Reception classes, deployment is planned in line with the EYFS class-size and staffing rules and any other relevant legal requirements.
- Qualifications are verified against the applicable DfE criteria; schools do not assume eligibility because a qualification has a similar title.
- Paediatric first aid cover, certificates, induction, safeguarding training and supervision arrangements meet the current EYFS requirements.
- Staff are deployed to meet individual safety and learning needs during lunch, play, outings, toileting and when supporting children with complex SEND; compliance with a numerical ratio alone is not sufficient.

9. Health, safety and welfare

The school and any nursery classes maintain safe indoor and outdoor provision, effective risk assessment, suitable premises, hygiene, accident procedures, first aid, safe medication administration and food safety.

- Food and drink: balanced, nutritious provision, access to fresh drinking water, safe management of allergies and dietary needs, and choking-risk controls.
- Health promotion: oral health, handwashing, physical activity, emotional wellbeing and healthy relationships.
- Intimate care and toileting: preserve dignity, privacy and safeguarding; seek appropriate consent and protect children from harm.
- Policies covering local arrangements: risk assessment, first aid, health and safety.

10. Partnership with parents, attendance and communication

Parents and carers are children's first educators. Staff develop collaborative, respectful relationships and share information about wellbeing, learning and development while safeguarding personal information.

- Reception classes maintain consistent named contacts and clear family communication arrangements.
- Explain the curriculum, home learning, support pathways, assessments and transition arrangements to families.
- Record attendance and absences in accordance with the applicable rules for both non- and compulsory-school-age pupils, and act promptly when absence raises welfare concerns.
- Maintain accessible processes for family feedback, complaints and discussion with the school SENDCo or DSL.

11. Records, complaints and monitoring

The school securely maintains accurate records and shares information lawfully when required for education, welfare and safeguarding. Relevant records include pupil and emergency contact information, attendance, accidents, medicines, allergies, safeguarding, staff suitability, assessments, SEND plans and complaints.

- All complaints and regulatory notifications are handled under Trust, school and applicable EYFS processes.
- School leaders review curriculum impact, safeguarding, statutory assessment arrangements and inclusion through monitoring, supervision, learning discussions and family feedback.
- Review this policy annually and whenever statutory changes or serious safeguarding learning require revision.

Key references

- EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers (September 2026): https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2
- EYFS profile handbook: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-handbook
- Reception Baseline Assessment 2026–27 ARA: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reception-baseline-assessment-assessment-and-reporting-arrangements-ara