



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Policy owner	EYFS School Improvement Lead
Policy approved by	Education Standards Committee
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Section 1: EYFS Aims & "Bring It!" Vision

Core Educational Aims

Our goal is to ensure that **learning is irresistible, memorable and fun**, giving every child a happy and positive start to school life while building a solid foundation for a deep, lifelong love of learning. We empower our children to:

- **Explore & Enquire:** Foster imagination, curiosity, and critical thinking through immersive environments.
- **Grow Independently:** Cultivate self-motivated, resilient, and entrepreneurial learners who adapt their work, take risks, and solve problems.
- **Thrive in the 21st Century:** Ensure foundational literacy and numeracy while developing ambitious, empathetic citizens.
- **Connect Globally:** Build awareness of the local community alongside wider world cultures and strong teamworking skills.

The "Bring It!" Philosophy

At the heart of our Trust's vision is a commitment to ensuring achievement for all by listening to every child's voice and embracing what they bring to school:

- **We Bring Friendship:** Nurturing kind, safe, and inclusive communities where children develop empathy, respect, and long-lasting social skills through collaborative play.
- **We Bring Creativity:** Designing a bespoke, child-centred curriculum tailored to children's interests and talents. We blend focused learning sessions with purposeful indoor and outdoor continuous provision.
- **We Bring Courage:** Empowering children to take risks, express themselves, and grow in confidence. Our practitioners place a massive priority on early reading and speech/language development to equip children to thrive in life.

Section 2: Curriculum Framework & Teaching Strategies

We strictly follow the current Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Areas of Learning & Development

All seven areas of learning are interconnected and vital for a child's development. The Prime Areas are particularly critical for igniting curiosity, forming relationships, and thriving.

1. The Prime Areas

- **Communication & Language:** Listening, Attention & Understanding | Speaking
- **Personal, Social & Emotional Development:** Self-Regulation | Managing Self | Building Relationships

- **Physical Development:** Gross Motor Skills | Fine Motor Skills

2. The Specific Areas

- **Literacy:** Comprehension | Reading | Writing
- **Mathematics:** Number | Numerical Patterns
- **Understanding the World:** Past & Present | People, Culture and Communities | The Natural World
- **Expressive Arts & Design:** Creating with Materials | Being Imaginative and Expressive

Promoting Oral Health: In line with statutory requirements, we actively promote oral health through our curriculum. This includes targeted activities, stories, and parental engagement regarding healthy eating, the impact of sugar on teeth, and establishing good brushing habits.

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

These traits are routinely assessed through observation to shape future planning:

- **Playing and Exploring:** Investigating, experiencing things, and "having a go".
- **Active Learning:** Concentrating, persisting through difficulties, and celebrating achievements.
- **Creating and Thinking Critically:** Developing unique ideas, making connections, and building strategies.

Pedagogical Approach

- **Balanced Instruction:** A deliberate daily mix of adult-led structured teaching and child-initiated play.
- **Adult Interaction:** Staff actively model, demonstrate, question, and scaffold learning during play to guide, build, and extend skills.
- **Structured Routines:** Set daily timetables include traditional carpet-time sessions focusing on maths, literacy, phonics, music, movement, and high-quality stories to develop vital group learning habits.
- **Learning Environments:** Classrooms are systematically organised with clearly labelled resources spanning writing, maths, creative, role-play, construction, small world, and quiet reading zones. Outdoor spaces are treated with equal importance.

Section 3: Operations & Enrichment

Off-Site Visits & Expert Visitors

Visits (e.g., seaside, farms, zoos) and expert visitors are carefully mapped to each term's active learning project to broaden our children's view of the world. To maintain safety, the Trust enforces strict adult-to-child ratios:

- **Nursery Ratio:** 1 : 2
- **Reception Ratio:** 1 : 4

Note: Parental support on trips is highly welcomed and encouraged, subject to a clear DBS check.

In line with KCSIE 2026 rules on regulated activity, any volunteers carrying out regular supervision or care duties must complete an Enhanced DBS check with a Barred List check, regardless of staff supervision.

The Three-Stage Transition Journey

We recognise that education is a shared journey with families. Communication is eased through home learning opportunities and our dedicated EYFS online platform.

- **Stage 1: Home into Nursery**
 - Prior-term "Stay & Play" sessions are arranged for children and parents to meet staff and familiarise themselves with the environment.
 - Deep-dive discussions help build positive relationships from the outset and complete mandatory school records.
- **Stage 2: Nursery into Reception**
 - Children are invited to "Learning Together" sessions and parents attend one of the Summer term transition meetings.
 - Introductions are provided for school routines alongside opportunities to meet the new class teacher.
 - Staff-to-staff transition handovers securely cover medical, SEN, and EAL requirements.
 - A Transition Day features a Summer holiday project "hook" to excite children before September.
 - Transition videos are sent weekly throughout the 6 weeks holiday.
- **Stage 3: Reception into Year 1**
 - Comprehensive handover meetings take place between Reception and Year 1 teachers.
 - Staff share final development profiles, Early Learning Goal (ELG) achievements, medical background, and individual support needs.
 - A Transition Day allows children to sample their new classroom and get hooked into their next project.

Section 4: Assessment & Progress Tracking

- **Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA):** Completed within the first six weeks of a child starting Reception in line with statutory rules.
- **Language Screen:** Completed within the first six weeks of entry.
- **Continuous Observation:** Real-time observations during taught sessions and free-flow play form the basis of our baseline data and lesson adjustments.
- **Data Entry Tracking:** Student data is updated in our digital tracking tool at the end of every half term in Reception. This identifies children tracking well versus those requiring targeted intervention to hit their developmental milestones.
- **Progress Reviews:** Termly progress meetings are held between the Head of School, Class Teacher, and SENCO to review interventions and plan support.

- **End of Year Profile:** Children are assessed as *Emerging* or *Expected* across all 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

Section 5: Safeguarding, Welfare & Supervision

Student Welfare & Safety

- **Safeguarding Framework:** We closely follow the current statutory EYFS Safeguarding and Welfare requirements. Strict policies exist to flag anyone at risk of harm or radicalisation. We actively engage with local Family Help pathways to ensure early identification and support before child protection concerns escalate. All staff maintain up-to-date Safeguarding credentials.
- All staff members are required to read **Part One of KCSIE 2026** in full. The DfE 'Part One: Overview' is utilised for supplementary quick reference.
- **Safer Recruitment & References:** All employees undergo rigorous qualification checks and rolling Enhanced DBS verification. In line with safer recruitment protocols, the Trust requests references directly from the applicant's current or previous employer (completed by a senior authority figure). Open references ("To whom it may concern") are never accepted.
- **Key Workers:** The class teacher is the named key worker for each class. In our nurseries, each qualified member of Early Years staff also acts as a key worker to nurture secure, positive relationships.
- **Digital Safety:** Supported by robust web filtering systems that block suspect sites, targeted staff training, and instruction during dedicated E-Safety Weeks. Filtering, monitoring, and educational sessions address risks from emerging technologies, including AI-generated harms, deepfakes, and non-consensual sharing of nudes/semi-nudes. Our comprehensive E-Safety policy is accessible via the school website.
- **Attendance & Absences:** The school operates a strict attendance monitoring process. If a child is absent without prior notification or for a prolonged period, staff will follow up in a timely manner using the primary and alternative emergency contact details provided by parents/carers (a minimum of two alternative contacts is required).
- **Whistleblowing:** We foster a culture of safety. All staff are trained on and have immediate access to the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy, ensuring they feel confident to securely report unsafe, illegal, or poor practice.

Staff Supervision Culture

In line with statutory requirements, St Barnabas MAT implements confidential, 1-to-1 supervision sessions for all staff working with children and families.

- **Frequency:** Maintained at least once per year, with additional ad-hoc sessions scheduled as specific needs arise.
- **Purpose:** To provide coaching, reflect on practice, problem-solve operational challenges, and securely handle pupil welfare, development, or child protection escalations.

- **Documentation:** Brief records of supervision meetings, agreed actions, and training needs are logged and stored securely under strict data protection rules. Safeguarding disclosures are immediately escalated per the Trust's safeguarding policy.

Food, Drink, and Safer Eating

- **Nutritional Standards:** Where children are provided with meals, snacks, and drinks, these are healthy, balanced, and nutritious. We have strict regard to official national early years nutrition guidance. Fresh drinking water is constantly accessible across both Nursery and Reception.
- **Safer Eating Environment:** To eliminate choking hazards, children are always within sight and hearing of staff while eating, and staff sit facing children where possible. Food is prepared and cut to match each child's individual developmental stage.
- **First Aid Cover:** At least one staff member holding a valid Paediatric First Aid (PFA) certificate is physically present in the room at all times during meal and snack times.
- **Allergy Management:** Before admission, detailed dietary, allergy, and health requirements are obtained. Allergy action plans are created, continuously updated, and actively shared with all staff members.

Safe Sleep & Rest Arrangements

In strict compliance with statutory safeguarding and welfare updates, and aligned with NHS Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and The Lullaby Trust guidelines, the Trust enforces a zero-compromise safe sleep culture across our nurseries.

- **Safe Positioning:** All children under the age of two are consistently placed down to sleep on their backs.
- **Approved Sleep Spaces:**
 - Babies aged 12 months and under must **only** be placed to sleep in a safety-approved cot (including travel cots or vetted coracle beds).
 - Children over 12 months sleep on their own separate, clear, firm, flat, waterproof mattress or low sleep mat.
 - If a child falls asleep in a buggy, bouncer, or infant car seat, they must be transferred to an approved flat sleep surface immediately.
- **The "Clear Cot" Policy:** To eliminate suffocation risks, sleep spaces must remain completely clear. The use of pillows, duvets, cot bumpers, wedges, positioning straps, or soft toys inside the cot is strictly prohibited.
- **Bedding & Clothing:** Staff use only lightweight bedding tucked in firmly no higher than the child's shoulders, positioning the child "feet-to-foot" at the bottom of the cot. Alternatively, a manufacturer-approved, correctly sized sleep bag may be used. Outdoor clothing, heavy layers, hats, and bibs must be removed before sleep to prevent overheating or choking.
- **Dummies and Comforters:** Dummies can be used to soothe a child during wind-down, but dummy clips, ribbons, or attachments are entirely forbidden in the sleep space. Once the child is asleep, the dummy is safely removed. Soft comfort blankets or toys are permitted during settling but are removed from the cot once the child falls asleep.

- **Climate Control:** Sleep rooms are strictly maintained between **16°C and 20°C**. Ambient room temperatures are checked and recorded frequently using a reliable room thermometer.
- **Active Supervision & Ratios:** Sleeping children are never left unmonitored. For babies under six months, an adult must physically remain in the same room at all times. All sleeping children must remain within direct **sight and hearing** of staff; electronic baby monitors or windows do not replace physical staff presence. Staff conduct and document frequent, timed physical checks of sleeping children, monitoring breathing patterns, skin temperature, and sleep positions on a dedicated Sleep Log.
- **Staff Training:** Every nursery practitioner must complete mandatory safe sleep training during their induction, with annual refreshers utilising NHS and Lullaby Trust resources to ensure complete awareness of SIDS and Sudden Unexpected Death in Childhood (SUDC) risk factors.

Health, Safety, and Hygiene

- **First Aid:** A certified Paediatric First Aider is on-site at all times. All medical cupboards are clearly labelled, and minor incidents are logged for parents. Significant injuries or head bumps trigger an immediate phone call home.
- **Hygiene & Intimate Care:** While potty training before Nursery entry is heavily encouraged, children requiring support receive dedicated Care Plans. We cooperate closely with the local children's centre to aid parents with toilet training strategies. Staff strictly protect and respect the child's privacy, ensuring a meticulous balance between dignified care and safeguarding oversight.
- **Fire Safety:** Fire drills are completed and timed at least once per term. Designated fire doors are actively maintained, and the local fire brigade carries out regular safety checks.

Appendix 1: Staff Supervision Record Template

This form structures annual or ad-hoc staff check-ins. Sections can be omitted based on current requirements, but sessions must always open with a general check-in and close with actionable item agreements.

Agenda Item	Focus & Discussion Points
1. Welcome	General check-in: How is the staff member feeling? What is currently pre-occupying them? An easing into the session.

2. Action Item Review	Progress updates and review of agreed tasks from the previous supervision meeting.
3. Safeguarding	Open forum to raise and discuss any specific child protection, family welfare, or staff safety concerns.
4. Learning & Development (Children)	Focus on individual child progress, milestones, tracking concerns, or learning opportunities.
5. Roles & Responsibilities	Performance check: Is work of a satisfactory standard? Review successes, shortfalls, and ensure practice reflects the Early Years philosophy.
6. Learning & Development (Staff)	Discussion of professional development requests, training goals, or coaching needs for the employee.
7. Staff Support	Dedicated space for the staff member to openly raise workplace problems, challenges, or seek adjustments.
8. Meeting Close	Summarise explicit action points, establish the staff member's final outlook, and schedule the next date/time.

Supervisor Name: _____ **Staff Member Name:** _____

Supervisor Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Staff Member Signature: _____ **Date:** _____