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Lincoln

LN6 7UE

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

October 2025

Policy Owner	Early Years Lead
Governing Body Committee	Curriculum & Standards
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Updates to the policy:

Date	Changes
27.09.25	Pg4 – Updated the school's values and rules Pg4 – Updated information about Nursery staffing to include EYP Pg5 – Nursery fees checked Pg6 – Removal of some wording linked to Cornerstones to reflect the use of our own curriculum and Cornerstones supports our EY curriculum Pg7-9 – Early Years Assessment updated inline with Early Years section in the school Assessment Policy

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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their reception year. At Sir Francis Hill Primary School, all children begin attending school full time at the start of the school year in which they turn five this is called Reception. At the school we also have a Nursery where the children aged three and four years can attend.

1. Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children in our Early Years setting 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.

2. Our Core Early Years Purpose

Our Early Years Statement is:

At Sir Francis Hill Primary School Early Years, we work tirelessly to ensure children are happy in school and feel resilient, safe, and secure. We will provide quality learning experiences that spark the children's interests and imagination. We build positive relationships with the child and their family and work together to help children fulfil their potential and prepare for the next step in their educational journey.

3. Our Early Years Principles

At Sir Francis Hill Primary School, we recognise that all children are unique, and we celebrate differences within our school community. Therefore, our curriculum embraces the interests of the children, ensuring their voice and ideas are heard. We are passionate about children leading and engrossing themselves in their learning and strive to embed a language of learning based on the EYFS characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the Early Years are:

Playing and Exploring

Children's play reflects their wide-ranging interests and preoccupations. We believe that through play young children achieve their highest learning potential. Playing with peers is especially important for children's development. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

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. We give children a degree of independence and control over their learning. As they develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions, and this provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Thinking Critically

When children have opportunities to play and engage 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. We give children opportunities to be creative in all areas of learning. Adults support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas, and asking open questions. Children access resources freely and may choose to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

We support every individual to reach their fullest potential, as reflected in our school motto: **Learn, Achieve, Succeed**. We lay the foundation for children's understanding of our core values - **Wisdom, Kindness, and Community** - and guide them in developing a strong grasp of our school rules: **Ready, Respectful, and Safe**.

Four guiding principles shape practice at Sir Francis Hill Primary School Early Years which are in line with the school's vision, aims and values. These are:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Importance of learning and development. Children **develop and learn** at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

4. Early Years Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) Statutory Framework](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65aa5e42ed27ca001327b2c7/EYFS_statutory_framework_for_group_and_school_based_providers.pdf) from the Department of Education (Updated January 2024).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65aa5e42ed27ca001327b2c7/EYFS_statutory_framework_for_group_and_school_based_providers.pdf

The framework sets the standards that all early years' providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well, ensures children are kept healthy and safe and ensures that children have the knowledge and skills they need to start school.

5. Structure of Early Years at Sir Francis Hill Primary School

At Sir Francis Hill Primary School we are a large inter city school. We have a 39 place Nursery and 90 place Reception Unit that forms our Early Years provision. Upon completing their Reception year at the end of Early Years, children progress to Key Stage 1 and subsequently Key Stage 2, continuing their primary educational journey.

5.1 Structure of our Nursery

At Sir Francis Hill Primary School our Early Years includes a 39 place Nursery setting. The Nursery has its own dedicated space which includes a large classroom space, outdoor covered play space and woodland area. All our classroom and outdoor areas have a range of play activities designed to offer a fun, safe and stimulating environment for children aged 3 to 4 years old. **Our Nursery is led by our Early Years Leader and has a qualified Teacher assigned to the class with an Early Years Practitioner and additional support staff to help run the nursery provision and meet ratio requirements.**

5.2 Nursery Funded Session Options, Times and Fees

We offer parents / carers several different childcare options using their 15 or 30 hours funding entitlement. Children can attend; every morning, every afternoon, two and a half days, or full time - 30 hours (subject to meeting the funding criteria). Additional hours can be paid for. We work hard to be as flexible as possible within the limits and capacity of our nursery and we will do our best to meet the requests of individual families, but this cannot be guaranteed. We encourage parent to consider all morning or all afternoon

session for 15 hours funding (option 1 or 2) or full-time if you receive 30 hours funding (option 5) in order to build continuity for your child and be able to work on all areas of the Early Years curriculum.

Option 1	5 morning sessions a week	9.00am - 12.00pm (5 x 3hrs)	15hrs
Option 2	5 afternoon sessions a week	12.30pm - 3.30pm (5 x 3hrs)	15hrs
Option 3	Start of the week (2 x Core Days / 1 x morning session)	Mon & Tues 9.00am - 3.00pm (2 x 6hrs) Wed (morning) 9.00am - 12.00pm (3hrs)	15hrs
Option 4	End of the week (2 x Core Days / 1 x afternoon session)	Wed (afternoon) 12.30pm - 3.30pm (3hrs) Thurs & Fri 9.00am - 3.00pm (2 x 6hrs)	15hrs
Option 5	Full time (5 x Core Days)	9.00am - 3.00pm (5 x 6hrs)	30hrs

Additional Session Fees (if needed)

Additional paid sessions can only be agreed following discussion with school staff and are not guaranteed. We are unable to accommodate additional session that are not pre-booked and agreed to due to staffing and ratios.

Extended Session	3.00pm - 3.30pm (30mins)	£2.50 per session
Core Day	9.00am - 3.00pm (6hrs)	£26.00 per day
Morning Session	9.00am - 12.00pm (3hrs)	£13.00 per session
Afternoon Session	12.30pm - 3.30pm (3hrs)	£13.00 per session
Part Time Top Up	15 additional hours top up	£65.00 per week
Late Collection	If 3.00pm - 3.30pm not booked	£5.00 per late collection
Hot School Meal	For Core Day children only	£2.20 per meal

Fees correct – September 2025

5.2 Structure of our Reception

At Sir Francis Hill Primary School, we have a Reception pupil admission number (PAN) of 90 children. Our dedicated Reception Unit consists of three classrooms, which can be combined to create a spacious open free-flow area for all the reception children to utilise. Additionally, the reception children have access to an enclosed courtyard space and a larger outdoor area. Our Reception Unit is overseen by our Early Years Leader, and each of the three classes is supported by a designated class teacher. Furthermore, we have a team of support staff available across the unit to assist the reception children. Reception children session run the same time as Key Stage 1 and 2 – Monday to Friday 8.50am (registration at 9am) until 3.25pm.

6. Early Years Curriculum

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Sir Francis Hill Primary School our aims are to:

- Treat every child as a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
- Help children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. Ensuring children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents / carers.
- Ensure the Early Years environments, classrooms and outdoor spaces are developed to be enabling environments for our children learning and play. This is supported with the help from adults, who respond to the children's individual interests and needs we help the children to build the foundations for their future learning.
- Help children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates.

At Sir Francis Hill Primary School our Early Years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2025 EYFS statutory framework.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that shape the Early Years educational programme at Sir Francis Hill Primary School. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. These areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. We offer the children a wide range of activities and experiences through the prime and specific areas of the EYFS curriculum.

Prime Areas

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

Specific Areas

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

None of these areas of learning and development can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

At Sir Francis Hill Primary School within our Early Years provision, we use the 'Cornerstones Curriculum' which is part of our whole school curriculum progression to support our curriculum. Our curriculum is based on inspirational learning activities which take place in a classroom environment that allows children to learn in a way that motivates and interests them. The curriculum will provide our children with challenge, giving them opportunities to solve problems, apply themselves creatively and express their knowledge and understanding across the whole curriculum from Nursery to Year 6.

The Early Years program is designed to enhance our Nursery and Reception children's skills and knowledge throughout the year through a series of projects. These topics are carefully crafted and sequenced to facilitate children's learning and development. They build on Early Years children developing knowledge in systematically way progressing and support them to prepare for moving to the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum at the start of Year 1.

Early Years Long Term Topic Plan

	Autumn Term 1	Autumn Term 2	Spring Term 1	Spring Term 2	Summer Term 1	Summer Term 2
Nursery						
	Me and My Community	Once Upon a Time	Starry Night	Dangerous Dinosaurs	Sunshine and Sunflowers	Big Wide World
Reception						
	Let's Explore	Marvellous Machines	Long Ago	Ready Steady Grow	Animal Safari	On the Beach

6.2 Early Years Teaching and Planning

At Sir Francis Hill Early Years, our dedicated staff create a nurturing environment for children to learn and grow. We tailor our activities and experiences to support their development. We consider each child's individual needs, interests, and stage of development, and provide challenging and enjoyable experiences. For children with special educational needs or disabilities, we assess if specialised support is needed and collaborate with other agencies when necessary.

Our approach to learning involves a balance between child-initiated and adult-directed activities. In the Nursery, we have small group sessions focused on Phonics, Communication and Language, and Mathematics. In Reception, we provide directed teaching in Phonics, English, Handwriting, and Maths. Following these sessions, children work in groups to explore, deepen understanding, and develop knowledge with their peers and staff.

We follow a systematic phonics program called "Read, Write Inc." and use various resources and strategies. Daily phonics sessions are available for all children, with additional support for those who need it. We also focus on letter formation skills and speech and language development. For mathematics, we use programs like White Rose Maths and NCETM Teaching for Mastery. We also follow whole school programs for topics, PE, Music, and PSE.

Learning and development are promoted through purposeful play, both through planned activities and child-initiated exploration. Our staff respond to each child's needs and interests, fostering their development through positive interactions. We value learning through play, physical activity, critical thinking, and creative expression. These experiences occur indoors and outdoors, encouraging independent play and child-led learning. Our outdoor areas also support physical development and gross motor skills. Children are empowered to choose their preferred learning environment, guided by supportive adults.

As children progress and prepare for formal learning in Year 1, the balance shifts towards more adult-led activities. However, we continue to support their development and carry forward good practices from the Early Years. Smooth transitions and consistent educational practices are prioritised throughout their journey at Sir Francis Hill Primary School.

7. Early Years Assessment

Every child deserves the best possible start in life. At Sir Francis Hill Primary School, we greatly value the importance of the Early Years in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development and understand our responsibilities in ensuring that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

Educational provision and practice within the Early Years will be centred around the requirements of the DfE's 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'.

The educational programmes will be based on an observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development. Activities in school will be planned to reflect these interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience.

The Early Year Statutory Framework highlights the following: -

- Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. This section sets out the assessment requirements group and school-based providers must meet, as well as guidance on assessment.
- Assessment should not involve long breaks from interaction with children or require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. Practitioners are not required to prove this through collection of any physical evidence.
- Practitioners should keep parents and/or carers up to date with their child's progress and development. Practitioners should address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals.

- Assessment should inform an ongoing dialogue between practitioners and year 1 teachers about each child's learning and development, to support a successful transition to Key Stage 1.
- Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners understanding children's interests and what they know and can do, and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge. In their interactions with children, practitioners should make and act on their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share. However, there is no requirement to keep written records in relation to this.

Further information can be found in the [DfE Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#)

In line with statutory requirements, the school will undertake a summative assessment of each child's development at certain stages:

- **Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)** – a short statutory assessment which is taken within the first six weeks of a child starting Reception.

The RBA:

- Is an activity-based, age-appropriate assessment of children's ability in early mathematics, literacy, communication and language.
- Is expected to take approximately 20 minutes per child.
- Can be paused and completed in more than one sitting.
- Will be administered by a Reception teacher or suitably qualified practitioner, e.g. the SENCO.
- Will be used to create a baseline for school-level progress measures and will measure the progress children make from Reception until the end of Year 6.

- **Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)** – a comprehensive assessment completed at the end of the EYFS to provide a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, attainment against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs), and their readiness for Year 1.

- The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for year 1.
- Each child's level of development is assessed against 17 early learning goals (ELGs) across all 7 areas of learning in the EYFS. For each ELG, teachers must assess whether a child is meeting the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS, or if they are not yet reaching this level and should be assessed as 'emerging'.
- Teachers are expected to use their professional judgement to make EYFS Profile assessments, using their knowledge and understanding of what a child knows, understands, and can do.
- Children are defined as having reached a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the EYFS if they have achieved the expected level for the ELGs in the prime areas of learning (which are: communication and language; personal, social and emotional development; and physical development) and the specific areas of mathematics and literacy. This helps to understand broadly what a child can do in relation to national expectations.
- The main purpose of the EYFS Profile assessment is to support a successful transition to year 1 by informing the professional dialogue between EYFS and year 1 teachers. It should inform year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and help them to plan the year 1 curriculum to meet the needs of all children.

Principles of the EYFSP Assessment

Reliable and accurate assessment at the end of the EYFS is based on the teacher's knowledge of each child: assessment is based primarily on the teacher's professional knowledge of what the child knows, remembers and can do day-to-day. It is a means of checking whether a child has learnt what has been taught. It can take place during routine interactions with children and does not need to be planned or documented. The teacher may simply reflect on the knowledge, skills and understanding that the child demonstrates in the course of everyday learning to plan what to teach next. Where something has been well taught, a child's learning is embedded and secured. The child is likely to demonstrate what they know and can do consistently in a range of situations.

The EYFSP is based on a holistic view of what the child can demonstrate against each ELG at the end of the EYFS. When assessing children against the ELGs, teachers should look at the whole description for each goal to determine whether this best-fits their professional knowledge of the child. The ELGs are interconnected, meaning children can demonstrate development in more than one area of learning when engaging in a particular activity. Teachers should consider the child's development across the areas of learning, and whether the levels of development in relation to each of the goals make sense when taken together.

Further information can be found in the [DfE Early Years Foundation Stage Profile: Handbook](#)

8. Health and Safety

At Sir Francis Hill Primary School, we believe children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure. Children's safety and welfare is paramount to us. We create a safe, secure, and welcoming environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence. We provide a curriculum that teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies in place to safeguard children, and daily procedures are in place to encourage children to operate in safe ways and to keep them safe. We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

9. Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

At Sir Francis Hill Primary School, we endeavour to give children equal access to all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability, gender, race, or disability. Whenever appropriate we present positive images of all cultures. We respect family diversity and ensure the children are aware and celebrate their and their family's individual uniqueness. All children will be offered equal opportunities in terms of access to the curriculum. The needs of any children from other religious denominations and cultures are catered for appropriately in consultation with their parents / carers. Materials will be chosen to meet the interests of both boys and girls to counteract the stereotypical images, enabling all children to demonstrate equal worth and capability. It is essential that all children have equal access to materials, time, and adult support.

We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children meet the expected levels of development against the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents / carers and outside agencies.

See our school SEND Policy for more information.

10. Early Years Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

Our Early Years Safeguarding and Welfare procedures are outlined in our whole school Safeguarding Policy.

11. Working with Parents / Carers in Early Years

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. Regular parent / carer meeting termly reports and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. At Sir Francis Hill Primary School we also use an online learning journal to communicate between home and school and record photographs and videos of the children at school engaging in different activities and learning opportunities. This learning journal is a two way communicate tools, and we encourage parents / carers to share home learning experiences with Early Years staff too so the children's achievement and interests can be shared in school.

12. Early Years Transition

Sir Francis Hill Primary School acknowledges that the commencement of school and the transition to new classes can be both a daunting and thrilling experience for parents/carers and children alike. We recognise the significance of this period for families as they are welcomed into our school community. To ensure a seamless transition, we have established a comprehensive set of procedures with the primary objective of supporting children and their families. Our commitment lies in providing the necessary information and assistance to guide them through this exciting phase of their educational journey.

12.1 Starting our Nursery

Families whose children are entering our Nursery are offered multiple opportunities to visit our school throughout the year. We also arrange visits at various times when families are considering childcare options. Whenever possible, parents/carers have the chance to meet a member of the school's Senior Leadership team, who provides them with a tour of the entire school, addresses their questions, and discusses any concerns they may have about their child. Additionally, parents/carers are shown the school's nursery facilities and, if feasible, get to meet the nursery staff. Once a family expresses interest in enrolling their child in our nursery through our school administration team, we offer several "Stay and Play" sessions in the Nursery. These sessions allow families to meet other staff members and become familiar with their new environment before officially starting school.

12.2 Transition from our Nursery to our Reception

Children transitioning from our Nursery to Reception are given ample opportunities to explore and engage in the Early Years program at Sir Francis Hill. Nursery children regularly visit the Reception Unit and participate in Early Years and whole-school events. To facilitate this transition, some of our Early Years staff members work across both Nursery and Reception, including the Early Years Leader. This arrangement ensures that children have the chance to familiarise themselves with staff members and the Reception environment.

12.3 Transition from other Nurseries and Pre-schools to our Reception

For children coming from other Nurseries and Pre-schools to join our Reception, we strive to establish close collaboration with their previous educational settings. Our Early Years Leader and staff members meet with the staff from these nurseries and pre-schools during the summer term before the children begin school. The Early Years staff members make an effort to observe as many of these children as possible in their previous settings, allowing us to gather detailed information about them prior to their transition.

12.4 All children starting our Reception

All children starting Reception, including those coming from non-school nurseries and pre-schools, are offered multiple opportunities to visit our school throughout the year. These visits are scheduled at different times when families are considering their child's reception school choices. Parents/carers have the opportunity, whenever possible, to meet with a member of the school's Senior Leadership team, who guides them on a tour of the entire school, addresses their inquiries, and shares relevant information or concerns about their child. Parents/carers are also shown the school's reception facilities and, if feasible, get to meet the reception staff. Additionally, we organise "Open Evenings" close to the Local Authority deadlines for reception applications. Once the Local Authority assigns a child a place at our school and we receive the parent/carer contact information, we send a letter to all families, welcoming them and outlining the transition events scheduled at the school. These events include a formal parent/carer information meeting, transition sessions where the children come to school and spend part of the day with their new class teacher in their designated reception classroom, and a family transition picnic where the whole family is invited to visit their child's new school and meet the Reception team. Detailed information is shared with parents/carers before their child starts full-time in September.

12.5 Transition into Year 1

In the summer term, we initiate preparations for the Reception children's transition to Key Stage 1 and Year. Using the Early Years staff's knowledge of each child's personality and learning style, all reception

children are sorted into three new Year 1 classes. Once the school's Senior Leadership Team has organised the staff structure for Year 1 in the upcoming academic year, the new class teachers begin making regular visits to the children in the Reception Unit. They collaborate with the Early Years staff to discuss each child's progress, development, and achievements toward the early learning goals. Furthermore, parents and carers are invited to a Year 1 Transition Meeting with the school's leader and Key Stage 1 staff. The children participate in several transition sessions, spending part of the day with their new class teacher in their new classrooms. The reception teachers provide valuable insights into each child's growth, progress, and areas of improvement as they transition into Year 1.

12.6 Applying for an Early Years place at our School

To apply for a place in our Nursery at Sir Francis Hill Primary School parents / carers are invited to contact the school office and complete an 'Expression of Interest' form.

To apply for a place in one of our Reception classes at Sir Francis Hill Primary School parents / carers must apply online via the Lincolnshire County Council website - [Lincolnshire Council - School Admissions](#). The school admin team are unable to process or allocate Reception places.

13. List of Statutory Policies and Procedures for the Early Years

Statutory Policies and Procedures for the Early Years	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedures for responding to illness	See Health and Safety Policy
Administering medicines policy	See Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Health and Safety Policy
Procedures for parents/carers failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See Complaints Policy