



MERRIOTT & HASELBURY PLUCKNETT
PRIMARY SCHOOLS FEDERATION

Merriott & Haselbury Plucknett Primary Schools Federation

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Date ratified by Governing Body	
Review Cycle	Every 2 years, or when there is a change in statutory guidance or legislation.
Review Date	March 2028
Headteacher	Mrs. Lois Bowery
Chair of Local Governing Committee	Mr. Craig Pearce

1. Aims

This policy ensures that all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) access a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum which provides the knowledge and skills needed to make good progress through school and life; that there is quality and consistency so no child is left behind; that staff work in close partnership with parents and carers; and that every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on the statutory requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers, effective from 1 September 2025, and associated guidance, including the Early Years Qualifications Requirements and Standards. It should be read alongside our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and other related school policies.

3. Scope of this Policy

This policy applies to the Reception (Year R) classes at Merriott and Haselbury Plucknett Primary Schools.

4. Curriculum

Our setting follows the EYFS educational programmes. The EYFS has seven areas of learning and development. The three Prime Areas—Communication and Language; Physical Development; and Personal, Social and Emotional Development—are particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children’s capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The four Specific Areas—Literacy; Mathematics; Understanding the World; and Expressive Arts and Design—strengthen and apply the Prime Areas. Our curriculum is sequenced so that knowledge and skills build cumulatively, and it reflects our local context, community and values.

5. Planning and Teaching

Staff plan activities and experiences that enable children to develop and learn effectively. Planning is informed by children’s individual needs, interests and stages of development, with a strong focus on the Prime Areas for the youngest children. Where a child has a special educational need and/or disability (SEND), we work with families and external professionals to secure appropriate support. In guiding children’s activities, staff reflect on the different ways children learn and incorporate these into practice.

Teaching is delivered through planned, purposeful play and a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. As children grow and their development allows, the balance shifts towards

more adult-led learning to prepare them for the demands of Year 1. We ensure safe, high-quality provision indoors and outdoors, with enabling environments that foster exploration, communication, collaboration and independence.

6. Assessment

Ongoing assessment is integral to learning and development. Practitioners observe children to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and use this to shape future planning. We value and incorporate information shared by parents/carers.

Within the first six weeks of starting Reception, staff administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). From academic year 2025/26, the RBA includes additional digital elements; our procedures, training and ICT arrangements reflect this.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS Profile for each child, assessing against the 17 Early Learning Goals and indicating whether children are meeting expected levels of development or emerging in these areas. The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents/carers. EYFS Profile outcomes are shared with parents/carers and submitted to the local authority in line with statutory requirements. Internal and external moderation arrangements ensure consistent judgements.

Currently, the children in Reception are taught by the same teacher in Year 1, which allows for a smooth transition between the year groups. Should the teacher be new to the children when they move to Year 1, we will ensure that the Reception teacher meets them to discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals.

7. Working with Parents and Carers

We recognise that children learn and develop best when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents/carers. We provide regular updates on progress and next steps, offer workshops and guidance on supporting learning at home, and seek parent/carer contributions to assessments. We promote excellent attendance; our Attendance Policy sets out expectations for reporting absences and the actions we take when children are absent without notification or for a prolonged period.

8. Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We are committed to meeting the needs of all children, including those with SEND, those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with English as an additional language. We make reasonable adjustments to ensure access to the curriculum and environment, and we follow our SEND Policy, Equality Objectives and Accessibility Plan. We challenge discrimination, stereotyping and bias, and promote respect and inclusion in all aspects of provision.

9. Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure; when their individual needs are met; and when they have positive relationships with the adults who care for them. We comply with the EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements and our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Key arrangements include:

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Our school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) holds overall responsibility for child protection and safeguarding across the entire school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The DSL leads on all safeguarding matters, liaises with statutory agencies, and ensures that all previous references to a "lead practitioner" are replaced with DSL in line with current statutory terminology.
- **Safer recruitment:** We follow safer recruitment procedures and obtain employment references before appointment, in addition to statutory suitability checks (e.g. DBS, identity, right to work). Our Safeguarding Policy includes procedures to ensure only suitable people are recruited.
- **Whistleblowing:** We maintain and promote a Whistleblowing Policy so that staff can report concerns about unsafe practice or conduct.
- **Attendance and absence follow-up:** We follow up promptly on absences. Where a child is absent without notification or for a prolonged period, we attempt to contact parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts, and take additional actions in line with our Attendance and Safeguarding Policies. We aim to hold more than two emergency contacts for each child, where possible.
- **Intimate care and privacy:** Our Intimate Care procedures ensure children's privacy and dignity during toileting and nappy changing while balancing safeguarding considerations (e.g. visibility, appropriate staffing, record-keeping).
- **Health and nutrition:** We take into account the national early years nutrition guidance and follow it unless there is a good reason not to. We implement safe eating and allergy procedures, including careful supervision when children are eating, choking risk reduction, individual healthcare plans for allergies/medical needs, and staff training.
- **First aid and ratios:** At least one person with current Paediatric First Aid (PFA) is on the premises and available at all times children are present, including on outings. PFA certificates are renewed every 3 years. Early years students/trainees must have PFA training to be included in ratios at a level below their study level.
- **Safeguarding training:** All staff undertake safeguarding training that meets the minimum criteria set out in the EYFS annex. Training is renewed on a yearly basis, with additional refreshers as needed to maintain knowledge and respond to changes or incidents. Induction

covers safeguarding, whistleblowing, code of conduct, safer working practice, health and safety and emergency procedures.

- Infant class size: We comply with infant class size legislation, ensuring at least one qualified teacher per class of up to 30 pupils.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed by the EYFS Lead every two years, or sooner if statutory guidance changes. At each review, the policy will be approved by the governing board and shared with staff and parents/carers as appropriate.

11. Statutory Policies and Procedures for the EYFS

The following policies/procedures apply to EYFS and are available from the school or Trust website:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (including safer recruitment, DSL arrangements, whistleblowing and training criteria)
- Attendance Policy (including procedures for reporting and following up child absence)
- Health and Safety Policy (including risk assessment and emergency procedures)
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions and Administration of Medicines Policy
- SEND Policy and Information Report
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Accessibility Plan
- Staff Code of Conduct and Safer Working Practice
- Recruitment and Selection Policy

This policy replaces earlier versions and reflects the statutory EYFS framework effective from 1 September 2025.