

INSPIRE

INCLUDE

INTEGRITY

EXCEED

# EYFS Policy V5

## Sheep Dip Lane Academy

<b>Author/Owner (Name and Title)</b>	Mrs Parish, Principal, Mrs Matthews FS2 Lead
<b>Version Number</b>	Version 5
<b>Date Approved/Reviewed</b>	July 2025
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	July 2026
<b>Approved By</b>	LGB
<b>Policy Category</b>	Academy Policy
(Please indicate in bold)	



**Exceed Learning Partnership**  
• EVERY CHILD • EVERY CHANCE • EVERY DAY •

## Version Control

<i><b>Version</b></i>	<i><b>Revision Date</b></i>	<i><b>Revised by</b></i>	<i><b>Section Revised</b></i>
V1	March 2022	SS	All sections – revised document due to updated statutory framework
V2	May 2023	SS	Slight amendment to wording around staff supervision New Policy Cover
V3	July 2024	GM	All sections
V4	March 2025	GM	Statutory Guidance updated from November 2024 - groups and school based providers New Cover
V5	July 2025	GM	Lead practitioner changed to DSL where needed/ safer eating/ intimate care

## Aims

**At Sheep Dip Lane Academy, we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. We understand that children develop quickly in the early years and a child's early experiences have a major impact on their future life chances. This is a crucial time for developing their enjoyment of learning, their engagement and motivation.**

Our Foundation Stage aims to:

- Make the child's first experience of school happy, positive and engaging.
- Ensure breadth and balance in the curriculum through carefully planned adult input and sensitive interaction, balanced with child-initiated and adult-supported activities. This will be appropriate to the social, emotional, spiritual and intellectual development of individual children, including those with additional needs.
- Provide a setting in which children and adults are able to develop these individual skills regardless of race, social circumstances, religion, culture, gender, ability or additional needs.
- Provide a curriculum firmly based on the principles of active learning to develop independence and meet the needs of the individual child.
- Encourage parents to become active participants in their children's learning.

## EYFS Curriculum Intent

In our EYFS, we strive to ensure there are no limits or barriers to our children's achievements, regardless of backgrounds, circumstances or need. Every member of the EYFS team has high ambitions for all children. The Characteristics of Effective Learning are woven into every part of our practice, promoting every child's motivation, aspirations, self-control, respect and resilience. Our long-term aim is to ensure our children know how to make a positive contribution to their community and wider society and are fully able to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world in the future.

Our goal is to ensure that all children are happy and engaged. We understand that high-levels of well-being and involvement lead to high-levels of child development and indicate deeper levels of learning. Through our child-centred curriculum, we provide a high-quality, enabling environment that acts as a vehicle for children to develop their skills and knowledge and highly-skilled practitioners to assist them on their journey.

We believe that children need rich, first-hand opportunities to initiate and explore their ideas so that they can develop the learning characteristics that will support their lifelong learning. Our supportive and knowledgeable EYFS team sensitively interact with children, following their interests and fascinations, nurturing children's

ability to Play and Explore, Learn Actively and to Create and Think Critically. Our carefully planned and balanced approach to teaching and learning ensures that children experience a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led learning experiences to ensure all children can work towards their next-steps in learning.

### **Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2024 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. (EYFS) (Updated for group and school based providers November 2024) The policy is also based the recent educational reforms for EYFS.

This policy explains how our practice is underpinned by these four themes:

#### **1) A Unique Child**

At Sheep Dip Lane Academy, we recognise that every child is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

**Inclusion/Special Educational Needs and Disability** – We believe that all our children matter and we value the diversity of individuals within the school. We believe that equality of opportunities for all those in our care is paramount and all our policies, procedures and practice will reflect the rights of all children and adults including those with special educational needs or a disability, all ethnic and cultural groups and those with English as an additional language. We have a zero tolerance attitude towards any form of discrimination and will challenge any inappropriate attitudes and practices.

At Sheep Dip Lane Academy, we recognise the importance of early intervention in supporting a child's physical, cognitive, social and emotional and behavioural development. Early intervention can take different forms, from supporting parents, school-based programs to improve children's social and emotional skills and additional support at school from appropriate staff (Teachers and support assistants). We make differentiated provision for all ability levels within school and, if deemed appropriate after discussion with parents/carers, support from outside agencies. The class teacher will be responsible for identifying and planning for individual needs with help from the SENDCO if applicable.

#### **2) Positive Relationships**

At Sheep Dip Lane Academy, we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children and we value being partners with them in their child's education.

**We do this by:**

- Using Tapestry as a communication tool between teachers and families, enabling Parents and family members to have a window into their child's learning;
- Developing relationships with parents prior to their children starting school through regular phone calls, in-person meetings, sharing school information and inviting into school to 'Meet the Teacher';

- Talking to parents about their child during the first few days of starting school and asking them to complete an 'All About Me' booklet about their child;
- Offering parents and children the opportunity to spend time with staff in their new classroom before starting school;
- Holding termly meetings for parents, during which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress and next steps for learning;
- Sharing information on the school website and through Tapestry, about special events and learning taking place each half term;
- Suggesting activities that can be done at home to support learning;
- Providing children with homework and topic related activities to complete on Tapestry;
- Sending home phonetically decodable reading books and lending library books and encouraging parents to make comments in their child's reading record;
- Providing support videos linked to specific areas of learning to help parents working with their child at home
- Having stay and play sessions in Nursery;
- Providing end of year reports which outline the progress and achievement made by each child;
- Celebrating children's achievements with their parents;
- Holding meetings to explain how parents/carers can support their children with areas such as early reading, communication skills, writing, mathematics or personal/social development;

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. Each child also has a key person who ensures, along with the class teacher, that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs.

### 3) Enabling Environments

At Sheep Dip Lane Academy, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The environment in our EYFS classrooms regularly changes to match the needs and interests of our cohorts. These changes happen in response to information gathered from observing the children and assessing their ongoing needs and development. Carefully selected resources are regularly added to areas of continuous provision, inside and outdoors, to further develop and extend a theme or topic and in response to children's interests.

The foundation stage classrooms have been designed, built and organised in such a way that they provide a multi-sensory approach to learning. They have a wide range of Continuous Provision areas set out in an exciting way to enable children to be independent active learners. The base arrangements are flexible and are designed to be safe and accessible to all children.

The children are able to make choices about the materials and equipment they use in any area. The following list gives an indication of the range of activity areas we have organised to provide the most effective environment for learning.

- A creative area which provides a stimulating area in which to paint, print, work with fabrics and recyclable materials through a thematic, observational approach.
- A quiet, carpeted reading zone, following a seasonal or topic related theme with a range of well-chosen and presented books.
- A Mark-making, Literacy and phonic area for the development of emergent writing that has a range of exciting stimuli linked to topic themes, accompanied by a range of supportive phonic resources.
- Mark-making opportunities supplied around the unit to encourage purposeful mark-making linked to other activities and areas of learning.
- A mathematical area which includes a range of objects to count and sort, number lines, shapes and games, along with opportunities for investigative maths, which includes themes like counting songs and rhymes with props.
- Mathematical opportunities & resourcing are also planned within other areas of learning to further enable application of maths skills.
- Wet or dry sand, with a range of tools and equipment of varying sizes, including some small world and natural materials to provide imaginative learning opportunities.
- An exciting water play area, which includes a range of equipment and tools to focus on themes, imaginative play and measures and is gradually developed to include opportunities for siphoning, filtering and pulleys.
- Small world, e.g. furniture, characters from different stories and cultures, fabrics, small construction to provide imaginative learning opportunities and activities linked to PSHE.
- Large and small construction areas which include large/small wooden bricks, mobilo, duplo, Interstar, lasy, marble run, stickle bricks, Lego, Duplo etc used on a rotational basis linked to children's interests and skills development.
- Interactive whiteboards and a bank of iPad's with a range of suitable software, and access to other technological equipment including torches, CD players, Talking Tins, Beebot etc
- Materials and tools for cookery, baking and dough.
- A jigsaw, puzzle and games area to encourage problem solving and to develop fine motor skills.
- Role-play areas which provide opportunities for children to use their Speaking and Listening skills to act in role, revisit experiences and develop PSHE skills. We also use enhancement prop boxes such as birthday parties, wash-day etc to enhance the continuous provision and build upon the children interests.
- A music area where children have the opportunity to experiment with a range of small percussion apparatus, developing listening skills and important pre-reading skills such as sound differentiation and beat/syllable patterns
- An outdoor area where children can develop their physical skills on the climbing equipment, balancing equipment and also with the physical games equipment.
- The children can also learn in our sensory garden area and outdoor learning resources which have opportunities for the children to access all 7 areas of learning as an extension of the indoor learning opportunities.

#### 4) Learning & Development

**The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school, children usually join us, part time, in Nursery following their third birthday. The final year of the EYFS is referred to as the Reception year. Children start Reception full time in September of the school-year they will be five.**

This policy refers to the education of pupils from three to five years-old. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum ensures that children have the opportunity to develop skills, knowledge and understanding in the



following **7 areas of Learning**

### **3 Prime Areas:**

- Personal, Social and Emotional – Self Regulation  
Managing Self  
Building Relationships
- Communication and Language – Listening, Attention & Understanding  
Speaking
- Physical Development – Gross Motor Skills  
Fine Motor Skills

### **4 Specific Areas:**

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

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning;**

We ensure that our learning environment and delivery of the EYFS curriculum has a strong emphasis on the characteristics of effective learning and teachers plan with these characteristics in mind;

- **Playing & Exploring** – children investigate, experience and ‘have-a-go’
- **Active Learning** – children concentrate, enjoy their achievements and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties
- **Creating & Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop a range of strategies.

**Children in our setting will be taught through an active learning approach. This is a way of working with children based on the philosophy that children learn best from active, purposeful and developmentally appropriate learning experiences. We encourage children from a very early age to make choices and decisions for themselves and be responsible within their own world. In this way children learn that they are capable, able to make decisions and solve problems about activities, which are purposefully meaningful to them.**

### **Implementation: Quality of Practice – Teaching, Learning & Pedagogy**

We take careful considered decisions when planning and developing our multi-sensory learning opportunities for our children, focusing primarily on the Characteristics of Effective Learning which underpin our whole teaching and learning approach. We believe that young children learn best when...

- They have distinct areas within the classrooms that they can access to develop the 7 key areas of learning from the EYFS.
- Foundation Stage staff interact with them in a sensitive and supportive manner.
- Their learning has a careful balance of adult led, adult initiated and child initiated learning experiences.

- The foundation stage classrooms are set out in a carefully planned exciting way where a wide variety of quality resources are easily accessible to the children. Shadow markings and photographs show clearly where each item or resources belongs, encouraging self-confidence and independence within the classroom.
- They are working in a stimulating environment where learning is fun and purposeful and they do not make a distinction between “play and work”.
- They are given time to become engrossed, work in depth and complete an activity, reflecting upon what they have learnt, allowing for high-levels of wellbeing and involvement.
- They are given opportunities to discuss their feelings, sensations and emotions, which are valued and respected by all.
- They receive high quality care and education by practitioners who are highly skilled, have a clear understanding of the EYFS, and who understand the importance of observation and how to support children with the next steps in their learning.
- Their parents and carers are valued and work in partnership with school to develop the full potential of their child.
- They are encouraged to explore, experiment, take risks, make and learn from mistakes and engage in purposeful play.
- They have adults who are good role models who expect high standards of behaviour following the school behaviour policy.

### **Our EYFS Curriculum**

Our curriculum is based soundly upon the Educational Programmes within the EYFS statutory framework. We then tailor our curriculum to meet the needs of our children and the community we serve, adding in the additional knowledgeable, skills and experiences to make our curriculum unique, challenging & enjoyable. A two-year cycle of topic themes is underpinned by a wide range of high-quality books, stories, rhymes and poems. The sequence of learning in all curriculum areas is carefully planned and structured within and across the EYFS and moving into KS1 and beyond. This ensures our children access a high-quality and progressive curriculum which supports new learning and builds upon prior skills and knowledge.

Our curriculum aims to support our children to meet the Early Learning Goals at the end of their Early Years.

### **Statutory Assessments**

Children will complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) within the first 6 weeks of joining Reception, regardless of when they join the class, unless they have been assessed previously. The RBA is an age-appropriate assessment of mathematics and literacy, communication and language, that is delivered in English. It is clearly linked to the learning and development requirements of the EYFS. The purpose of the RBA is to provide an on-entry assessment of pupil attainment to be used as a starting point from which a cohort-level progress measure to the end of key stage 2 (KS2) can be created.

On entry to Nursery and Reception classes, the teachers and Early Years practitioners use their professional judgement, based on observations of individuals, to record the starting points for the children’s level of development. In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed for each child. Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels (emerging) across the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. Each child’s level of development is recorded as Emerging or Expected against the 17 Early Learning Goals. On entry into the foundation stage children are assessed using a range of approaches, with the main focus being observational assessment. Every child has detailed observations carried out on them, which identifies their stage of development and learning in each of the 7 areas of the EYFS, and also of their individual Learning Characteristics. Assessments are used to provide practitioners with information that:

- Informs planning for learning
- Informs planning and development of the learning environment to meet the needs of the children

- Sets targets for individual children's learning.
- Aids identification of special needs and inclusion priorities.
- Informs parents as to their child's progress and development needs.

In the foundation stage all teaching and support staff are actively involved in the assessment process. We have two strategies that focus on on-going assessment, one that is based on regular observation of the children working on activities as well as children's discussions at review time. The other is where staff work on carefully planned assessment tasks related to key objectives. The information collected by staff is recorded in systematic ways to track pupil progress, attainment and to inform target setting.

Each child's progress is recorded against the criteria outlined in the Foundation Stage Profile documentation, and updated at least termly onto school-based tracking systems and OTrack. Children's progress is shared with the child and parents informally when appropriate and formally at Parent's evenings and through written annual reports to parents.

### **Safety and Welfare**

At Sheep Dip Lane Academy, we recognise that 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 caring for them. We understand that we are legally required to comply with the welfare requirements as stated in section three of the Statutory Framework for EYFS (November 2024) and have regard to the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' statutory guidance and the 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales'. We endeavour to meet all these requirements and staff receive annual safeguarding training to ensure their knowledge of the safeguarding requirements are up to date. Our full safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in the schools Safeguarding and Health and Safety policies.

Staff in the EYFS carry out risk assessment checks of the learning environment, both indoor and outdoor, to ensure the areas are safe and to minimise any preventable risk of harm.

In the October 2024 reforms it states:

***In every setting, a practitioner must be designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is responsible for liaison with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the Local Safeguarding Partners. All practitioners must be alert to any issues of concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere.***

Staff working in the EYFS setting must ensure they report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. Staff have annual training through the trust network and national college for prevent. Staff have two weekly updates on specific focus to the Academy. Staff are aware of the Academy's whistleblowing policy and understand the procedures for this.

Staff working in the Early years understand the importance of food preparation in line with the child's developmental stage. Staff must ensure they can see children at all times and hear them while eating. Where possible children will face the same direction to ensure staff have a clear view of each child during meal times. Adequate seating will be provided for children and in particular those with SEND will have specialized Occupational therapy chairs where needed to support meal times.

### **Staffing & Staff Supervision**

The Foundation Unit is staffed well beyond the legal minimum requirements of the statutory EYFS requirements. Our current staffing:

- FS1 base (25 children – AM only): 1 teacher, 1 HLTA & 1 PSA
- FS2 base (30 children): 1 x full-time teacher, 1 HLTA (PM's), 1 x Nursery Nurse (PT), 1 x LSA (FT), 1 PSA

The staff within the foundation stage work together as a team in the development of planning, assessment and teaching.

EYFS team meetings focus on teaching and learning and enhancing the continuous provision areas. In addition to these meetings, daily discussion take place around children's individual needs and to raise any concerns staff may



have relating to children's safety, welfare, learning and development. EYFS training is personalised to the needs of the current staff team with the aim of developing their skills & knowledge with the ultimate aim of improving outcomes for children.

### **Staff Supervision:**

The EYFS Statutory Framework states that:

*'providers must put appropriate arrangements in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families. Effective supervision provides support, coaching and training for the practitioner and promotes the interests of children. Supervision should foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement, which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues. Supervision should provide opportunities for staff to:*

- discuss any issues – particularly concerning children's development or wellbeing, including child protection concerns
- identify solutions to address issues as they arise
- receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness

At Sheep Dip Lane Academy, EYFS staff supervision complies with the EYFS statutory Framework. All EYFS staff have access to:

- A daily offer of informal, ongoing support with opportunities to share any concerns staff may have around the children in the EYFS
- A termly offer of support, coaching & training, which forms a balance of 'light-touch' and more in-depth reviews
- An annual offer of support, coaching & training with a more formal review.


### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

**It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow this policy. The Senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring system. This policy will be reviewed at the start of each academic year and will incorporate the views of all staff concerned. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body at Academy and Trust level.**

Date of Policy Review July 2025

Next Review: July 2026

Signed: Principal



Signed: Chair of Governors

