Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust
St Mary's Convent
Denchworth Road, Wantage
Oxford, OX12 9AU
odst.governance@oxford.anglican.org
www.odst.org.uk

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| **Statutory:** | Policy provided centrally for adoption by schools with minimal amendment to the core text. Changes are allowed to the text where indicated |

# Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Benson C of E Primary School

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| **Approved by:** | |
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| **Adopted by school:** | |
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# Contents

1. Aims ..... 2
2. Legislation ..... 3
3. Structure of the EYFS ..... 3
4. Curriculum ..... 3
4.1 Planning ..... 3
4.2 Inclusion, Equality and Diversity ..... 4
4.3 Teaching ..... 4
5. Assessment ..... 5
6. Working with parents and carers ..... 5
7. Staff ..... 6
7.1 Staff training ..... 6
7.2 Safer recruitment ..... 6
8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures ..... 6
8.1 Whistleblowing ..... 6
8.2 Staffing ratios ..... 7
8.3 Paediatric first aid (PFA) ..... 7
8.4 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) ..... 7
8.5 Absence ..... 7
8.6 Oral health and tooth brushing ..... 7
8.7 Safer eating, Nutrition, Food safety and Hygiene ..... 8
8.9 Safe sleep ..... 8
8.10 Screen use ..... 9
8.11 Accident or injury ..... 9
8.12 Safety of premises ..... 9
8.13 Toileting and privacy ..... 9
9. GDPR ..... 9
10. Monitoring arrangements ..... 9

# 1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a secure foundation for learning, development and 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. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework - GOV.UK, effective from 1 September 2025. This policy has regard to the Equality Act 2010.

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

# 3. Structure of the EYFS

This policy describes how all ODST schools with children in the EYFS provision implement the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (Updated September 2025). It sets out ODST's approach to children's well-being, education and health to ensure that our youngest children have the best possible start to their time in school and can flourish.

The EYFS refers to children from birth to five years of age. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the full range of policies for ODST and statutory guidance on the EYFS.

# 4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest EYFS statutory framework.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that we must teach. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Three areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

We also support the children in 4 specific areas which help strengthen and develop the 3 prime areas, and ignite the children's curiosity and enthusiasm:

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

# 4.1 Planning

At Benson C of E Primary School our staff are ambitious for all children, and plan activities and experiences for the children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. To do this, staff working with the youngest children in our Nursery are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas; Communication and Language (C&L), Physical Development (PD) and Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED). Securing these prime areas at the very start of their education journey will allow children to move their learning forward and progress to experience the 4 specific areas of learning; Literacy, Mathematic, Understanding the world and Expressive arts and design.

Across the EYFS, planning is based around half termly themes which feed into the whole school curriculum. These themes have been carefully chosen to reflect the cultural capital of children attending Benson C of E Primary School. All planning across Nursery and Reception also reflects children's individual needs and interests. It is aimed at helping children to achieve their next steps in their learning. These plans are used by the EYFS staff as a guide for weekly planning; however, the teacher alters these in response to the needs (achievements and changing interests) of the children.

Where a child may have a special educational need or disability (SEND), staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding the children's activities, staff reflect on the different rates at which children develop and take these into account.

## 4.2 Inclusion, Equality and Diversity

Our Trust values the individuality of all children. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by considering the pupils' varied life experiences and needs. The achievements, attitudes and wellbeing of all our children matter. This policy helps to ensure that the school promotes the individuality of all our children, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background. Staff teaching in the EYFS consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and adapt the practice and provision to meet the needs of all children, striving to create an inclusive environment that offers all pupils, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

The school's SENCO and School Leaders work together closely with the Central Team to ensure that we meet the statutory requirements as laid out in the 'SEND Code of Practice' and relevant legislation. Our ODST SEN Policy and School's SEN Information Report contains more detail on how we achieve this, in relation to pupils with Special Educational Needs.

## 4.3 Teaching

At Benson C of E Primary School our aim is to teach an exciting, engaging and inclusive curriculum that inspires curiosity, creativity and a lifelong love of learning. We recognise that young children learn best through meaningful experiences, play, exploration and positive relationships.

Our staff will provide a balanced curriculum both inside the classroom and in our outdoor areas that builds on children's interests, experiences and individual needs. Practitioners will create opportunities and teach children to:

- Explore, investigate and ask questions.
- Develop language, communication and social skills.
- Build confidence, independence and resilience.
- Develop early literacy, mathematics and problem-solving skills.
- Express themselves through art, music, movement, role play and creativity.
- Learn about people, communities and the natural world.
- Develop physical skills, coordination and an understanding of healthy lifestyles.

Our staff will respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. Staff take into consideration each child's individual need and adapt their practice to allow every child to thrive and achieve at their own pace.

As the children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more focus on teaching essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning, to help the children prepare for Key Stage 1.

# 5. Assessment

At Benson CE Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their progress, development and interests. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers and keep them up to date with the child's progress and development. Staff will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals.

We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observation in Nursery and in the form of observation and individual writing and maths books. Relevant snapshot observations and photographs of work are added to Tapestry to create an individual Learning Journey for all children. This information then supports practitioners to monitor the learning of each individual child and is shared with parents.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the reception baseline assessment (RBA). [The requirements for the RBA are set out in Annex B of EYFS statutory framework]

In the final term of the academic year in which the child reaches age 5, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child (before 30 June in that term). Each child is assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

We share the EYFS profile the child's year 1 teacher. This helps to inform a discussion between reception and year 1 teachers about the child's stage of development and learning needs, and helps with planning activities in year 1.

The school shares the results of each child's 'progress check' and EYFS profile (but not the reception baseline assessment) with their parents and/or carers.

In exceptional circumstances, after discussion and only in agreement with parents and/or carers, a child might stay in EYFS provision beyond the end of the academic year in which they turn 5. In these exceptional cases, we will continue to assess the child throughout their time in EYFS provision and complete their profile at the end of the year before they move into year 1.

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. We submit EYFS profile data to the local authority on request.

# 6. Working with parents and carers

We recognise parents and carers as children's first and most important educators. Strong partnerships between home and school are essential in supporting children's wellbeing, development and learning.
We will:

- Welcome parents and carers into the life of the setting and create a friendly, inclusive environment.
- Share information regularly about children's learning, progress, interests and achievements.
- Encourage parents to share information about their child's experiences, interests, routines, culture and individual needs.
- Provide opportunities for parents to contribute to their child's learning through activities, workshops, home-learning ideas and school events.
- Value parents' knowledge and expertise and work collaboratively to identify appropriate next steps for their child.
- Communicate clearly and sensitively, recognising that families have different circumstances, backgrounds and communication needs.
- Support a smooth transition into Reception and between different stages of the early years.

- Work closely with parents and relevant professionals when additional support may be required.

We aim to build trusting, respectful relationships where parents feel listened to, valued and confident in working alongside school staff. By working together, we can provide consistency between home and school and ensure that every child feels secure, supported and excited about learning.

# 7. Staff

## 7.1 Staff training

We will:

- Train all staff in safeguarding procedures in line with Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance
- Support all staff to feel supported and confident in implementing our safeguarding policy and procedures
- Renew training every 2 years, or more often when it's needed to help maintain skills; keep up to date with any changes to our safeguarding procedures; or because of any safeguarding concerns
- Outline how training is delivered, and how staff are supported to put it in place, in our child protection and safeguarding policy [insert details on where to find this policy]

Our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will:

- Provide ongoing support, advice and guidance to all staff
- Attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework
- Liaise as needed with local statutory children's services agencies and our local safeguarding partners

## 7.2 Safer recruitment

When recruiting staff, we will follow the procedures set out in the latest EYFS framework guidance on checking the suitability of new recruits, including:

- Obtaining a reference for any member of staff (including students and volunteers) before they are recruited
- Recording information about staff qualifications and identity checks, vetting processes and references

See ODST Safer recruitment Policy.

# 8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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 follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

All practitioners are alert to any issues of concern in children's lives at home or elsewhere.

## 8.1 Whistleblowing

We make sure that all staff are aware of our whistleblowing procedures; feel able to raise concerns about any poor or unsafe practice; and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

In the event that a member of staff feels that they need to blow the whistle on misconduct, they should report their concern to the Headteacher. If the concern is about the Headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to chair of the local governing body.

See ODST Whistleblowing Policy

## 8.2 Staffing ratios

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff: child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

**Nursery:**

- For children aged 3-4: where there is a member of staff with QTS present in the setting ratios are 1:13. At least 1 other member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification, or has received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status.
- At least half of all other staff hold an approved level 2 qualification
- When the teacher is not present practitioners with Level 3 or 2 status ratios become 1:8.
- We aim to have 3 members of staff present within the Nursery at all times.

**Reception:** Where there is a person with qualified teacher status, early years professional status, or early years teacher status, an instructor or another suitably qualified, overseas-trained teacher:

- For classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5 or older within the school year, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 30 children
- At least 1 other member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification, or has received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status
- We comply with infant-class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils

## 8.3 Paediatric first aid (PFA)

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

## 8.4 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

We also have a DSL who has lead responsibility for safeguarding children. They are also responsible for:

- Liaising with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSPs (local safeguarding partners)
- Providing support, advice and guidance to all other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required
- Attending a safeguarding training course that complies with the criteria set out in annex C of the latest EYFS framework

## 8.5 Absence

We're required to promptly follow up on absences.

If a child is absent for a prolonged time or if their parents/carers haven't told us about the absence, we will attempt to contact the parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts.

See the ODST Attendance Policy for more information.

## 8.6 Oral health and tooth brushing

We recognise that good oral health is an important part of children's overall health, wellbeing and development. We aim to help children develop positive habits and an understanding of how to care for their teeth and mouth from an early age.

We will:

- Talk to children about the importance of looking after their teeth and maintaining good oral hygiene.
- Provide age-appropriate activities, stories, songs and discussions about healthy teeth and healthy lifestyles.
- Encourage children to understand that regular toothbrushing helps keep teeth and gums healthy.
- Promote healthy eating and drinking, including choosing water and milk and limiting foods and drinks that are high in sugar.
- Avoid using sugary foods and drinks as rewards or incentives.

- Provide opportunities for children to learn about healthy food choices through play, cooking and role-play.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers by sharing information and guidance about oral health and encouraging consistent routines at home.
- Signpost families to appropriate dental services and advice where necessary.
- Ensure staff model positive attitudes towards healthy eating, drinking and oral hygiene.

Children will develop their understanding of oral health through engaging experiences such as role-playing visits to the dentist, reading stories, exploring healthy and unhealthy food choices, and using creative activities to learn about teeth and brushing.

We will communicate with parents about the importance of establishing good oral health routines, including regular toothbrushing and dental visits. We will respect families' individual circumstances and provide supportive, non-judgemental advice.

Our aim is to give every child the knowledge, confidence and positive habits they need to maintain good oral health throughout childhood and beyond.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's child protection and safeguarding policy, which can be found here:
https://www.bensoncofeprimary.org.uk/attachments/documents.asp?id=475

## 8.7 Safer eating, Nutrition, Food safety and Hygiene

The school is committed to promoting safe eating practices in line with EYFS requirements to safeguard children and minimise the risk of choking, allergic reactions, and other harm during food consumption. We recognise that mealtimes present potential risks, particularly for younger children. We therefore implement robust procedures to ensure that all food provided and consumed within the setting is appropriate, supervised, and managed safely.

The school is committed to promoting children's health, wellbeing and development through the provision of healthy, balanced and nutritious food and drink in a safe and supportive environment.

The school comply with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, which requires that: "Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious."

We also have regard to the EYFS Nutrition Guidance (2025)

See the ODST Safer Eating Policy and ODST Pupil Allergy Policy for more information.

## 8.9 Safe sleep

All staff must read NHS advice on Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) - NHS

See the ODST Safer Sleep Policy for more information.

## 8.10 Screen use

The school will follow the DfE guidance "Help for early years providers: Screen use, July 2026 that under-2s should have no screen time 'other than in exceptional circumstances such as a video call with parents and carers'; and 2 - 5s should have a maximum of one hour, preferably less.

## 8.11 Accident or injury

All accidents, injuries, and existing marks are recorded promptly and accurately and shared with parents/carers as appropriate. The school ensures that an appropriate number of staff with current paediatric first aid training are on site at all times in line with EYFS requirements. Any concerns about a child's injury are reported and managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

## 8.12 Safety of premises

We make sure that our premises, including overall floor space and outdoor space, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children we care for and the activities provided on the premises.

We comply with requirements of health and safety legislation, including risk assessment, fire safety and hygiene requirements.

## 8.13 Toileting and privacy

We make sure that there are:

- Enough toilets and hand basins available for the children
- Suitable and hygienic nappy changing facilities
- An adequate supply of necessary items such as clean bedding, towels and spare clothes
- Separate toilet facilities for adults

During nappy changes and toileting, we will balance children's privacy with their safeguarding and support needs. Parents are required to provide permission for staff working with their children to change their child if they have had a toileting accident or require assistance in the bathroom.

See ODST Intimate Care Policy

# 9. GDPR

We are committed to protecting your personal data and complying with the standards set by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). See school website for details and privacy notices.

See ODST Data Protection Policy and Data Retention Schedule and school website for Privacy Notices

# 10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Trustees annually and adopted by the LGB.