



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Formally adopted by the Governing Board of:-	Magdalen Gates Primary School
On:-	February 2026
Chair of Governors:-	Paul Guille and Orla Kennelly
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1. Intent and Vision for EYFS at Magdalen Gates

At Magdalen Gates Primary School, our work in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is rooted in our school motto: **“Working together to give every child the best.”** We believe that every child deserves the best education, the best support and the best possible start in life.

The Reception year provides essential foundations for children’s future learning, wellbeing and life chances. During this important stage, children develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours that enable them to thrive as learners and as members of our school community.

Our aim is for children to feel safe, confident and curious, and to develop a positive relationship with learning from the very start of their time at school. We place high value on communication, language, relationships and early literacy, recognising that these are fundamental to children’s success across the curriculum.

We are ambitious for all children. Our EYFS curriculum is carefully designed and sequenced to support children to develop independence, resilience and a strong sense of self, while also laying secure foundations for learning in Key Stage 1 and beyond. We want every child to leave Reception confident, curious and ready to thrive in the next stage of their learning.

2. Our EYFS Context

Magdalen Gates Primary School provides EYFS provision for children in Reception. The EYFS team works closely with colleagues across the school to ensure continuity and progression from the earliest experiences of school into Key Stage 1.

We recognise that children arrive with a wide range of experiences, strengths and interests. Our approach focuses on building on what children can already do, while providing structured support and rich learning opportunities that enable every child to make progress from their individual starting points.

3. Principles of EYFS Practice

Our EYFS practice is shaped by four guiding principles:

- 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, with adults and peers.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, where their needs and interests are recognised and supported, and where there is a strong partnership between school and home.
- Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates, and teaching responds flexibly to this

4. Curriculum and Pedagogy

4.1 The EYFS Curriculum

Our EYFS curriculum follows the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage framework and is built around the seven areas of learning and development:

Prime areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

The curriculum is planned to ensure breadth, balance and progression, and is aligned with whole-school curriculum themes where appropriate. It embeds opportunities to develop children’s cultural capital and reflects the local context of Norwich, including the diverse languages, cultures and experiences within our school community, supporting children’s understanding of the wider world.

4.2 Learning Through Play

We believe that play is central to children’s learning and development. Through play, children explore ideas, develop language, practice social skills and deepen their understanding of concepts. Our learning environment is designed to enable purposeful play, where children can investigate, create, practice and apply new learning.

Not all learning can be planned in advance. We therefore value responsive teaching and recognise the importance of observing children carefully and responding to learning opportunities as they arise.

4.3 The Role of Adults

Adults play a crucial role in supporting learning in the EYFS. Staff work alongside children, interacting sensitively and intentionally to extend thinking, model language, and support the development of skills and understanding.

Adults:

- Observe children closely to understand their interests and learning needs
- Prioritise children’s social, emotional and mental health by creating emotionally secure environments, supporting regulation, and building positive, trusting relationships
- Use high-quality talk and questioning to develop language and thinking
- Model positive learning behaviours and social interactions
- Provide clear routines and expectations that help children feel secure
- Balance adult-led teaching with child-initiated learning

5. Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning in the EYFS is grounded in an integrated approach, where all areas of learning are valued equally and developed through purposeful play, high-quality adult interaction and carefully planned experiences.

Children learn through a balance of adult-led teaching and child-initiated learning within continuous provision. Adults use their professional judgement to respond to children's interests, extend thinking, and deepen understanding through responsive interaction.

Learning is supported through:

- Clear routines and expectations that help children feel secure and confident
- Opportunities to practise and apply learning through play
- High-quality talk and modelling by adults
- Experiences that build independence, resilience and curiosity

Early reading and phonics are taught as part of this integrated approach to teaching and learning. Phonics is taught through a systematic and structured programme using Read Write Inc, supporting children's early reading, language development and confidence.

Mathematical development is embedded across the learning environment through play, problem-solving, talk, and real-life contexts. Children are supported to develop early number sense, patterns, reasoning and mathematical language as part of everyday learning.

All other areas of learning, including personal, social and emotional development, physical development, understanding the world and expressive arts and design, are developed through rich, purposeful experiences that reflect children's interests and support holistic development.

6. Assessment

Assessment in the EYFS is ongoing and integral to teaching and learning. Staff use observation and professional judgement to understand children's development, inform planning and identify next steps.

Assessment includes:

- Observations of children during play and adult-led activities
- Regular professional discussion within the EYFS team
- Engagement with parents to build a full picture of the child

Children complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment within the first six weeks of starting Reception. At the end of the EYFS, children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals, and outcomes are shared with parents.

Assessment information is used to support children's progress and ensure that teaching responds effectively to children's needs.

Observations and assessments are recorded using Tapestry, the school's online learning journal. Tapestry is used to document children's learning, identify next steps and support professional dialogue within the EYFS team. It also provides a meaningful way to share children's learning and development with parents and carers.

7. Inclusion and SEND

All children are valued as individuals. The EYFS curriculum and learning environment are designed to be inclusive and accessible, ensuring that all children are supported to participate fully.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities are identified early and supported through appropriate strategies and adjustments. The EYFS team works closely with the SENCo, parents and external agencies where appropriate to ensure children receive the support they need.

We recognise that many children speak English as an Additional Language (EAL). We support EAL learners through language-rich environments, visual supports, clear routines and modelling, and close partnership with parents and carers, ensuring that children continue to develop confidence and competence in English while valuing their home language.

8. Safeguarding and Welfare

Children's safety and wellbeing are central to all aspects of EYFS practice. We ensure that children learn in a safe, secure and nurturing environment where their needs are met.

Safeguarding procedures are followed in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. All staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and understand their responsibilities in keeping children safe.

Staffing ratios and paediatric first aid requirements are met in line with statutory guidance.

9. Working in Partnership with Parents

In line with our school motto, "**Working together to give every child the best,**" we recognise that parents and carers play a vital role in children's learning and development. Strong partnerships between home and school are central to ensuring that children receive the best possible start to their education.

We aim to build positive, trusting relationships with families and to work collaboratively to support children's progress and wellbeing.

This includes:

- Opportunities for parents to meet staff before children start school
- Stay and play sessions and transition activities
- Regular communication about children's learning and development
- Parent consultations and informal discussions

10. Transition into Year 1

Supporting children's transition into Year 1 is a key priority. We work closely with Key Stage 1 staff to ensure continuity in learning, routines and expectations.

Transition arrangements include:

- Sharing assessment information and professional dialogue between EYFS and Year 1 staff
- Gradual introduction to Year 1 routines and learning environments
- Supporting children to develop independence and confidence as learners

11. Monitoring and Review

The quality of EYFS provision is monitored through ongoing observation, professional dialogue and leadership oversight.

EYFS leaders use assessment information and professional discussion to monitor progress, identify patterns or gaps, and inform targeted support and curriculum refinement.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure it remains accurate, relevant and reflective of practice at Magdalen Gates Primary School.