

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy



September 2021

To be reviewed September 2023

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1. Introduction & Aims

At Viridis Schools, we believe that an outstanding education in EYFS will set children up with the skills needed to ensure the best possible outcomes throughout their formal education. We believe that every child is an individual and deserves personalised learning within highly stimulating classrooms and outdoor learning environments. We are committed to providing a high quality Early Years education, which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a life-long love of learning.

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021)

2. EYFS Principles

The statutory framework is based on four guiding principles that shape practice in Early Years settings. These are:

- **A Unique Child**
Every child is a competent learner who 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 and develop a positive attitude to learning.
- **Positive Relationships**
Children learn to be strong and independent through secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with children and their families.
- **Enabling Environments**
The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.
- **Learning and Development**
The classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

3. Areas of Learning

The Early Years Foundation Stage is currently made up of seven areas of learning and development. These areas are all important and are inter-connecting. These seven areas are split into three 'Prime' areas and four 'Specific' areas.

Prime Areas

The three prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas are:

- Communication and Language (CL)
- Physical Development (PD)
- Personal, Social and Emotional development (PSE)

They are essential for fostering early learning skills and are promoted heavily through our planning and provision. Successful mastery of these skills supports children to achieve well in the specific areas of learning.

Specific Areas

The specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied are:

- Literacy (L)
- Mathematics (N)
- Understanding the World (UW)
- Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

4. The Learning Environment

At Viridis Schools we believe that outstanding learning environments will support children in making outstanding progress in their learning. Our classrooms are set up with the seven areas of learning as laid out in The Early Years Foundation Stage and children can choose independently which of these areas they want to access throughout the day. Classrooms are set up in order to allow children to be as independent as possible in accessing each area of learning. Staff then plan for additional activities and resources depending on the topic, theme or core text through which the children are learning that particular week. Our classrooms are print rich in order to support the acquisition of early language. We also highly value children's work and ensure that this is on display in classrooms celebrating children's achievements.

The outside area has equal importance within The Early Years Foundation Stage and children can free flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Being outdoors encourages learning in different ways. It offers the children more opportunities to be creative and explore on a larger scale as well as to be physically active linking the indoors and outdoors together. Children will have opportunity to experience all seven areas of learning whether they decide to learn indoors or outdoors.

5. Planning, Assessment & Record Keeping

Planning incorporates all areas of learning and development and puts the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage into practice. Long and medium term planning are based around half-termly topic themes. Short term or weekly planning show specific activities and planned for objectives for the cohort of children. These will include a variety of adult-led activities and provision to inspire and support child-led learning. Staff ensure that all children are encouraged to experience all areas of activity throughout the week.

EYFS Curriculum Theme Overview						
	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year A	<i>'Me & My World'</i> Ourselves	<i>'My Home, Your Home'</i> Homes Around the World	<i>'Let's Work'</i> People Who Help Us	<i>'Out of this World'</i> Space	<i>'On the Farm'</i> Animals	<i>'Capes and Crowns'</i> Superheroes
Year B	<i>'Wonderful Me'</i> All About Me	<i>'Deserts & Icebergs'</i> Hot and Cold Environments	<i>'Planes, Trains & Automobiles'</i> Transport	<i>'Once Upon A Time'</i> Traditional Tales	<i>'From Seeds & Eggs'</i> New Life	<i>'Splash'</i> Water

In the EYFS, practitioners focus on the child and work in a continuous cycle of observation, assessment and planning, as outlined in the Statutory Framework and Development Matters. Practitioners see what children are able to do by themselves, and identify the next steps for their learning based on their observations. They are then able to plan activities that will support children to develop based on their assessments.

All practitioners who work across the EYFS are involved in making observations of children's learning. As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's development and learning to form our future plans. We record children's progress in a variety of ways. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated and recorded on electronic devices using the 2Simple program. Evidence of self-directed work is recorded in children's special books, which are shared with parents/carers every Friday morning. Each child also has a Literacy book and a Maths book which contain outcomes from guided work. Parents are invited to attend a parents evening each term where they are given feedback, targets and a termly report for their child.

At the end of the Reception year, children are assessed against the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. This is informed by assessments made across the year, with each child's level of development assessed against the 17 scales derived from the Early Learning Goals.

6. Transition Across EYFS

Children who are moving up a year within the school (from Nursery to Reception and Reception to Year 1) visit their new classroom and teacher during the summer term. The prospective teachers also visit the children in their current classroom. This helps to familiarise the children with the changes and makes their transition smooth. At the end of the summer term, the teachers have a hand over meeting to discuss each child's development that year.

For families new to the school a home visit will take place at the start of September. This is a 'getting-to-know-you' session where key information can be passed on to the adults that will be working with the child. It is also an opportunity for children to start to build a positive and happy relationship with the adults they will be working with in a relaxed and personal environment. There will also be a parent induction meeting in the summer term during which the headteacher or deputy headteacher will talk through school systems and important information about joining the school. A staggered entry over three days in September supports children in becoming familiar with staff, routines, and environments.

Teachers in Reception prepare children for more formal learning and the introduction of the National Curriculum in Year 1 by offering an increasingly structured timetable in the summer term. The introduction of Early Morning Work and Daily Supported Reader supports children in becoming familiar with systems in place in Year 1.

7. Health and Wellbeing

At Viridis Schools we strive to provide an EYFS setting that is welcoming, safe, and stimulating where children can grow in confidence. All children are entitled to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum regardless of ability, gender, race and social circumstances.

'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.'

3.1 Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017)

We recognise our responsibility for promoting the health and welfare of our youngest children by:

- Ensuring that all staff are subject to the appropriate level of DBS checking and are fully inducted.
- Promoting good health and taking appropriate action when children are not well.
- Ensuring that routines are in place to support children in their growing understanding of hygiene.
- Ensuring that staff are first aid trained and that parents are informed of any accidents involving their child.
- Managing behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensuring that there are suitable adult/child ratios; 1:13 in Nursery and 1:15 in Reception.
- Ensuring that the setting, furniture, and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for.
- Maintaining records, policies, risk assessment and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of all children.

8. Safeguarding

Viridis schools takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all staff and all staff are trained appropriately. Any concerns will be recorded appropriately, and if deemed necessary, will be reported to the relevant agency. Each school has a designated safeguarding lead and deputy lead to whom concerns can be raised and managed. The safety of children is always of paramount importance.

9. Related Policies

This policy should read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Behaviour and Bullying Policy
- Equalities Policy
- Food and Healthy Eating Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Special Education Needs Policy
- PSHE Policy