



THE BISHOPSWOOD SCHOOLS FEDERATION

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

PLEASE NOTE:

This policy has been updated to reflect the latest Department for Education (DfE) Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, including revisions introduced from January 2024, November 2024, September 2025, and qualification updates effective January 2026. The EYFS remains statutory for all early years providers in England and sets standards for learning, development, assessment, safeguarding and welfare.

Compliance Statement

The setting ensures that it is working in accordance with the most up-to-date EYFS statutory framework and associated guidance. This includes the revised frameworks introduced in January 2024, updates effective from November 2024, and strengthened safeguarding and welfare requirements implemented from September 2025, alongside qualification updates effective from January 2026. Staff are provided with appropriate training and support to understand and implement these requirements, ensuring ongoing compliance and high-quality provision.

Aims of the EYFS

1. To provide quality learning experiences for all the children. Learning will be through practical and play activities, which are structured, balanced, relevant to the child and related to the real world.
2. To provide a curriculum which takes account of, and responds to, the children's developmental needs and allows them to make progress related to their differing abilities.
3. To ensure the children have positive experiences of success at their own levels in order to give them confidence and motivation for learning in the future.
4. To provide a curriculum which promotes the 'Early Learning Goals' identified by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and which dovetails with the National Curriculum.
5. To provide a curriculum which provides equal learning and development opportunities for all the children.
6. To create a partnership with parents to support and enhance the development of the children.
7. To promote and encourage independence in our learners.
8. To develop the importance of 'how' we learn using the characteristics of effective learning.

The Curriculum

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) we aim to provide a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum which addresses the children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, moral and cultural development within a safe, secure, stimulating environment.

Our curriculum enables the child to learn and develop skills, attitudes and understanding in the following areas of learning:

The **prime areas** being:

- Personal, Emotional and Social Development. (PSED)
- Communication and Language. (CL)
- Physical development

The **specific areas** are:

- Mathematics.
- Literacy.
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Art and Design

Throughout the EYFS we plan activities to give children learning experiences and opportunities to work towards the Early Learning Goals and prepare them for the National Curriculum. Teaching and learning will take place within the classroom and outside areas. Within these areas children will participate in a variety of activities, both with an adult and independently.

Play

At Bishopswood we believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is the fundamental way in which young children learn. Play can be enjoyed and challenging. When playing, children behave in different ways. Sometimes, their play will be boisterous, sometimes they will describe and discuss what they are doing, and sometimes they will be quiet and reflective as they play. Through play, children will be developing skills across all the Prime and Specific areas of learning, working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.

In a secure environment with effective adult support, children will be able to:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world
- Practise and build up concepts, ideas and skills
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules
- Be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk to rehearse their feelings
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems
- Express fears to relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

Adults in the setting will support play by:

- Planning and resourcing a stimulating environment
- Supporting children's learning through planned play
- Extending and supporting children's spontaneous play
- Extending and developing children's language and communication in their play
- Listening to all forms of children's communication and their ideas and taking these into account when developing play and planning
- Narrating children's play

- Asking questions about children's play.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The Characteristics of Effective Learning and the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning and Development are all interconnected. The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

The Characteristics of Effective learning support the development of the Unique Child in **how** children are learning. Characteristics of Effective Learning are outlined below:

1. Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

2. Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

3. Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

EYFS staff assess characteristics of effective learning throughout child initiated play and adult focuses. Staff use characteristics of effective learning buzz words in observations taken of children. Parents are informed of their children's progress in relation to their characteristics of effective learning through the highlighted sheet in the front of their child's journal. End of year reports also contain detailed information about the children's characteristics of effective learning and their progress.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

In the EYFS, topics are planned so that children will experience activities within each topic as they progress. Topic planning takes place on a half-termly basis. Topics may be altered to take into account children's interests and developmental needs. The long term planning sheets identify each of the Prime and Specific Areas of Development as identified in the Early Years Outcomes for each term. This ensures that all curriculum areas are covered whenever a topic or activity is planned.

Adult focused and independent activities are planned on a weekly basis. Children have the opportunity to work in each of the learning areas within the classroom and outdoors. Whole class, group and individual activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum, as appropriate.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) is completed at the end of the Reception year. Staff completing the profile will attend annual moderation meetings. Assessment is carried out through a mixture of informal observations, interaction with the child, the use of the information on assessment

sheets and regular formal and informal discussions with all staff. We observe the children working independently both indoors and outdoors. Practitioners are not required to collect physical evidence (e.g., photographs or written records) to support assessment judgements. Assessment should be based on professional knowledge, observation and interaction with the child.

Children are assessed during adult focused activities against the objective for that activity. A note is made of those children achieving above or below the objective. Samples of the children's work are kept in the child's learning journals and literacy and maths books/folders as appropriate.

Information gained through recording and assessment will be shared with parents, other school staff and outside agencies as appropriate. Parents' evenings are held twice a year. Parents' evenings are an opportunity for parents to discuss their child's progress. Parents can contact the staff at any time to request information about their child's learning and progress. Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey by adding comments to journals on speech bubbles during parent's days and evenings and completing 'wow' sheets.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

The setting remains committed to providing inclusive practice and equal opportunities for all children. In line with updated EYFS guidance, for children who speak English as an additional language, practitioners may take reasonable steps to support the development and use of the child's home language alongside English, where appropriate. This approach supports children's communication, language development and overall well-being while recognising the importance of cultural and linguistic diversity.

Staffing and Ratios

Staffing arrangements meet the requirements of the EYFS statutory framework, including staff:child ratios, which remain unchanged. However, updates introduced from 2024 onwards have clarified qualification requirements and who may be counted within ratios. Practitioners holding a Level 3 qualification are no longer required to hold a Level 2 maths qualification in order to be counted within ratios in group and school-based settings. The setting follows the Early Years Qualification Requirements and Standards to determine staff suitability and qualifications.

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

Bishopswood Schools Federation complies with all safeguarding and welfare requirements as set out in the EYFS statutory framework. Policies now explicitly include guidance on the safe use of mobile phones, cameras and all electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities, ensuring that emerging technologies are considered. Safeguarding practice has been strengthened to include robust safer recruitment procedures, ensuring that references are obtained and verified prior to employment and that only suitable individuals work with children. The setting maintains comprehensive staff records, including identity checks, DBS checks and employment references.

Procedures are in place to monitor children's attendance, including the prompt follow-up of unexplained or prolonged absences, with escalation to safeguarding partners where concerns arise. Safeguarding policies clearly outline how training is delivered and how staff are supported to apply this in practice. A clear whistleblowing procedure is in place and understood by all staff. Practice also reflects updated requirements around children's health, safety and dignity, including safer eating practices and the need to balance safeguarding with children's privacy during intimate care routines. The setting ensures that students and trainees hold paediatric first aid (PFA) training where required in order to be included in ratios. In addition, the setting takes account of current government nutrition guidance when planning food provision.

Transition

Please see the table below for information about transition to Bishopswood Infant School.

Month	Transition
October	Hold open mornings
December	Pre-schools invited to Nativity performance
	Prospective parents invited to Christmas events.
April	Parents and schools find out Year R places
May	Transition events letter to go out to parents
	Year R staff to visit all pre-schools of children allocated
	Year R New Parents Welcome meeting
	Start visits with feeder pre-schools
June	Staff sort class lists
	Staff and pre-schools to arrange transition meetings with parents for children who may require more support
	Story time transition
	Afternoon stay and play
	Children who need more transition to visit Year R from pre-schools
	New parents and children invited to Summer Fete
July	Move-up morning
	Afternoon stay and play
	Teddy bears picnic
August	Bishopswood Buddies Club: 3 mornings in final week of holidays.
September	Home visits for all children
	Staggered entry depending on month of birth
	Welcome to Year R Parents Meeting
	Harvest assembly
October	Parents evening, focus on settling in
	Parents phonics session

Policy Reviewed – June 2026

Next Review – June 2028