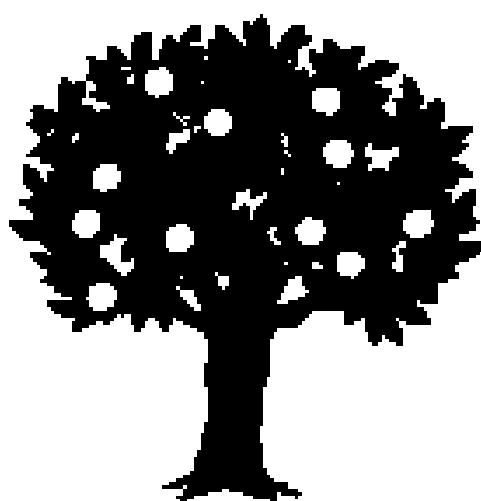


Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

The Russell School



Approved by:

EYFS Lead, Headteacher
and members of school
improvement governing
committee

Date: 5.2.26

Last reviewed on:

February 2026

Next review due by:

February 2028

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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 [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#), effective from 1 September 2025.

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years consists of one reception class and one nursery class.

For 3 – 4-year-olds, the setting is a school-run nursery every morning which consists of one class teacher and one qualified practitioner or nursery nurse. In the afternoon, the setting is a wraparound childcare provider which consists of two qualified practitioners. Parents need to book and pay a fee to have their children to attend the wraparound care facility and it is organised by our Finance Team. For 4 – 5-year-olds, the setting is a full-time school-run reception class which consists of a class teacher and a teaching and learning assistant. The classrooms are next door to each other on the ground floor and have direct shared access to a EYFS outdoor area.

At The Russell School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2025. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children

- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children

Our EYFS setting is carefully planned to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are various areas that support different styles of learning as well as encouraging both active exploration and quiet, restful and reflective moments. The classroom is set up with learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS setting has their own enclosed outdoor area. Being outdoors offers opportunities for exploring in different ways than when indoors, it offers the children the opportunity to use their senses and be physically active. We provide resources for the children to access outdoors that help to develop all 7 areas of learning.

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

The prime areas must come first for the specific areas to be achieved. Each area is equally as important and all depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

4.1 Planning

The Russell School is an inclusive environment and teachers plan to meet the needs of children of all genders, with special educational needs and from all social and cultural backgrounds. Planning is topic based that change each half term and are inspired by children's interests and then broadened into enquiry questions and exploration opportunities.

We meet the needs of all of our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn independently
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

Teachers make a baseline assessment of basic skills such as children's current physical skills and notes about their existing understanding based on observational assessment. During the first half term teachers should update the assessments made of the children in their pre-school setting. Teachers should use a best-fit approach, comparing the assessments and their own observations with starting points to show progress of individuals, groups and whole classes of children. Assessments may differ from those made within the pre-school setting for many reasons including a summer holiday dip and any effect of the size of the class compared to the child's previous experiences.

Each child is also focused on during their 'spotlight' month (see Assessment) and these in depth observations are shared with parents, who are also asked to share input, and help provide a series of next steps for each individual child. The Early Years team also meet regularly to discuss these and share their knowledge of individual children recording their progress on the tracking documents.

Towards the end of the year, nursery practitioners will meet with the reception practitioners to ensure a thorough handover and decide upon the starting point for all the children in the class, where it is known.

At the end of the reception year, judgements are made against the 'EYFS Profile' in line with the 'Development Matters' document. Each child's level of development is recorded against 17 Early Learning Goals and shared with both parents and Key Stage One teachers.

4.2 Teaching

At the Russell School, teaching happens in the moment through high quality interactions between the child and the teacher or facilitated by the teacher between children. Staff encourage children to explore and engage in the learning environment and respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

Through play our children have access to learning experiences which help them make sense of the world. They practice, form ideas through critical thinking and learn how to be part of a social group in which they learn to communicate, negotiate and problem solve as well as develop resilience. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to explore their emotions in a safe environment and make sense of other children's feelings. Active learning occurs when children are motivated, interested and have some independence and control over their learning. Children are given the opportunity to be creative in all areas of learning, with adults supporting children's thinking by helping them to make connections, offering encouragement and scaffolding children's thinking through questioning. Children access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Whole class teaching in Nursery and Reception mainly involve short, engaging carpet or circle time sessions where children are encouraged to engage and interact with the teacher and peers. In Reception, 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.

Reception children engage in a daily phonics session, daily maths session and daily handwriting sessions. They may also have addition adult input sessions which may have a topic focus.

5. Assessment

At the Russell School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. We adopt the OP&L approach (Observation of Play and Learning assessment tool). OP&L works on the basis of having six-monthly child developmental milestones, which we use to monitor children's development. This could be 3 years old (36 months), 3 and 1/2 years old (42 months), or 4 years old (48 months) and so on. These milestones reflect what we believe a 'typical' child, should be able to achieve. For nursery, children are assessed against milestones in the prime areas: Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language and Physical Development. For reception, children are assessed against the prime areas, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language and Physical Development and the specific areas of Literacy and Maths.

The 'spotlights' occur when children reach a 6-month milestone. Alongside daily observations, more focused and detailed observations and assessments are made during the child's 'spotlight' month. Practitioners observe children's innovation, creativity, ideas, intents and feelings. The insight that we gain enables us to discuss, reflect and plan the environment to support and shape future learning opportunities. Children are assessed using best fit against the milestones. The assessment involves discussions with all teaching staff to decide whether a child is meeting their age-related milestones and planning next steps.

Parents are invited to contribute to spotlight meetings by filling out the pre meeting sheet to share their thoughts on their child's progress as well as any other information that might be useful to know any key events at home etc. They are then invited to attend a spotlight meeting with the teacher to discuss observations and a document is shared observations and detailing whether children have met their age-related milestones with:

- Met - Meeting expected levels of development
- Not Met – not yet reaching expected levels

In Reception, staff will administer the reception baseline assessment (RBA) within the first 6 weeks of starting. This is statutory requirement and helps inform the baseline observations conducted by the teaching staff.

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:

- Expected - Meeting expected levels of development
- Emerging – not yet reaching expected levels

We share the EYFS profile with 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 EYFS profile (but not the reception baseline assessment) with their parents and/or carers. 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.

In Nursery, their learning evidence is mostly independent evidence and is collected in a learning journey that the children are able to add to independently, evidence from parents is also collated in these folders.

In Reception, children also have a learning journey and, in addition, an adult focus work book where adult led activities are recorded. They also have a handwriting book where their daily practice sessions are captured.

6. Working with parents and carers

At the Russell school, we recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contributions they make to our knowledge and understanding of each individual child. Parents are engaged in numerous ways throughout the school year. They include:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school

- offering to visit all children in their home setting prior to their starting school
- providing the opportunity for children to spend time with their teacher before starting school during 'visiting new classes' sessions
- inviting all parents to explore the school and meet the teachers during the summer term before their child starts school
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progression
- opening the classroom for termly Stay and Play sessions where parents and children can explore learning journal and independent work together as well as play in the classroom and talk to teaching staff.
- encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher on a regular basis in both formal meetings and during pick up and drop off.
- sharing a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year
- providing a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents and carers: social opportunities for parents and children, play dates, open days, class assemblies, Sports Day etc

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. At our school the EYFS teacher and Teaching Assistant in both settings act as 'Key People' to all children. We have strong links with other EYFS providers in both Richmond and Kingston. We endeavour to visit new children in their current setting before they start at the Russell School in order to build a bigger picture about them, this enables us to ensure continuity in their learning and where possible their environment.

Parents are kept to date with their child's progress and development through spotlight meetings. The progress check and EYFS profile help to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

We ask parents to provide more than 2 emergency contact numbers for their child (where possible).

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 [available on website].

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 two references 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 our safeguarding policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures [available on website].

7.3 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 the chair of the governing board via the clerk: b.hemphill@russell.richmond.sch.uk

See our whistleblowing policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures and more detail on our procedures for handling whistleblowing [available on website].

7.3.1 Malicious or vexatious allegations

If an allegation is made in good faith, but investigation finds no wrongdoing, there will be no disciplinary action against the member of staff who raised the concern.

If, however, an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, we will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the person making the allegation.

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.

See our child protection and safeguarding policy for more information.

8.1 Responding to allegations or concerns

If we have concerns about children's safety or welfare, we will immediately notify our local authority children's social care team, in line with local reporting procedures. In emergencies, we will also inform the police.

If any allegation is made of serious harm or abuse by anyone living, working or looking after children at the premises or elsewhere, e.g. on a visit, we will inform Ofsted within 14 days of the allegation being made. We will also inform them of any action we have taken in response to the allegation(s).

8.1.1 Investigating the concern

When a concern is received by the headteacher– referred to from here as the 'recipient' – they will:

- Meet with the person raising the concern within a reasonable time. The person raising the concern may be joined by a trade union or professional association representative or other accompanying person
- Get as much detail as possible about the concern at this meeting, and record the information
- Establish whether there is sufficient cause for concern to warrant further investigation. If there **is**, then:

- Arrange a further investigation into the matter, involving the governing body if appropriate. In some cases, the recipient may need to bring in an external, independent body to investigate. In others, they may need to report the matter to the police
- Inform the person who raised the concern about how the matter is being investigated and give an estimated timeframe for when they will be informed of the next steps

8.1.2 Outcome of the investigation

Once the investigation – whether this was just the initial investigation of the concern, or whether further investigation was needed – is complete, the investigating person(s) will prepare a report detailing the findings and confirming whether or not any wrongdoing has occurred.

The report will include any recommendations and details on how the matter can be rectified and whether or not a referral is required to an external organisation, such as the local authority in line with local reporting procedure, or police.

Beyond the immediate actions, the headteacher, governors and other staff, if necessary, will review the relevant policies and procedures to prevent future occurrences of the same wrongdoing.

While we cannot always guarantee the outcome sought, we will try to deal with concerns fairly and in an appropriate way.

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:

For Nursery Class, children are aged 3 and over:

- Where a person with qualified teacher status, is working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children. At least 1 other member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification and has received approval to be included in the ratios (School Run Nursery Morning Sessions)
- Where a person with an approved level 3 qualification early years professional status is working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 8 children. At least 1 other member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification and has received approval to be included in the ratios (Wrap Around Care Afternoon Sessions)

For Reception Class, children are aged 4 and over:

- We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils. There is also an additional Teaching and Learning assistant.

8.3 Paediatric first aid (PFA)

We have at least one person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate in each classroom and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every three 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.

We will attempt to contact the parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts from day one of the child's absence.

See our attendance policy [on website] for more on this, including our expectations of parents/carers to report child absences.

8.6 Oral health and tooth brushing

The EYFS promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by taking part in the boroughs supervised toothbrushing (STB) programme funded by NHS England. The STB programme involves consenting children to brush their own teeth once a day in the EYFS setting. We follow [government guidance on supervised toothbrushing](#) to make sure that it is evidence-based and safe.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's child protection and safeguarding policy, which can be found on our website.

8.7 Safer eating

While children are eating, there will always be at least 1 member of staff in the room with a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate (from a course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the latest EYFS framework). All children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating, and seated safely in an appropriate chair or highchair and, where possible, in a designated eating space.

Before a child joins our setting, we will get information on their:

- Dietary requirements and preferences
- Food allergies and intolerances
- Health requirements

We will share this information with all staff involved in food preparation and handling. At each mealtime and snack time it will be clear which staff member is responsible for checking that the food meets all the requirements for each child.

We will make sure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis; the differences between allergies and intolerances; and that children can develop allergies at any time, especially during the introduction of solid foods.

We will consult with parents/carers to:

- Create allergy action plans for their child – with the help of health professionals, where appropriate
 - We will also keep this information up to date and share it with all staff. We ask that parents and carers keep school updated with any changes or updates.
- Discuss their child's progress with solid foods
- Work with them to move on to the next stage at a pace that's right for their child

We will prepare food in a way that:

- Prevents choking

- Meets each child's individual developmental needs
- Is in line with the DfE's [Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance](#)

In the event of a choking incident that requires intervention, we will record details of the incident and make the child's parents/carers aware. We will periodically review the records to identify whether we can change anything in our practice to make eating safer, and then take action as appropriate.

8.8 Accident or injury

We keep a first aid box (which contains appropriate items for children) always accessible.

We keep a written record of accident or injuries and any first aid treatment.

We will inform parents or carers the same day as, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, of any:

- Accident or head injury sustained by the child
- First aid treatment given

We will notify the relevant authority of any serious accident, illness, or injury to, or death of any child while in our care and inform them of the action taken, as soon as reasonably practicable.

8.9 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 fire safety and hygiene requirements.

8.10 Toileting and privacy

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. Most children are able to carry out these procedures themselves by the time they join school, however, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. We do encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child is as independent as possible prior to entry to our Foundation Stage. This is to empower your child in their learning and independence for this exciting stage in their life long learning journey. 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.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the governing body every 2 years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

This isn't an exhaustive list of policies and only includes policies specific to the EYFS. For a full list of our policies, see [website](#)

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent/carer failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy