

# Primrose Hill Primary School



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

April 2026

Review date: Summer 2027

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Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is used to describe children who are in the 2 Year Old Provision, Nursery and Reception classes. The term 'parents' is used as shorthand but includes other guardians and carers responsible for the child.

We adhere to the statutory framework of the EYFS and the **four guiding principles** that shape the practice within the setting:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

### A Unique Child

We celebrate the uniqueness of each child by offering personalised learning opportunities and through working closely with families and professionals from other settings who have knowledge of the child. In our school every child matters.

Our skilled professionals understand the process involved in children's growth, development and learning. The curriculum and the opportunities we offer are designed to help children develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture. We recognise that children learn in different ways and at different rates and we accommodate this in the provision we offer.

### Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families and carers.

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents and carers have played, and will continue to play, in educating their children. At our School the children in EYFS are each assigned a 'Key Person' to support their transition into our school and build secure attachments for emotional security. In Nursery and Reception their Key Person will be their class teacher.

- We attend the Camden 'Transition For All' meeting, discussing children's needs with staff from their previous settings
- Teachers and Nursery practitioners visit all children in their home setting prior to their starting school
- We give children an opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during Stay & Plays
- We hold parents evenings twice a year to discuss children's prime and specific areas of learning
- We offer parents regular informal opportunities to talk about their child's development
- Parents are emailed their child's electronic observations each half term and are encouraged to respond with learning that has taken place outside of school
- We provide parents with an annual written report detailing their child's progress.

### Enabling Environments

At Primrose Hill Primary School, we recognise that the physical environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We observe the children and assess their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend their children's learning.

Our learning environments are organised to enthuse children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classroom is arranged into learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. All our classrooms have their own enclosed outdoor area and learning opportunities are reflected in both areas. Children have the opportunity to free flow between the two environments. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. We plan activities and resources for the children to access indoors and outdoors that help the children to develop in all seven areas of learning.

### Learning and Development

There are **seven areas of learning in the EYFS curriculum**. Our curriculum is underpinned by the statutory educational programmes set out in the EYFS framework. Our intent is to provide a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that builds strong foundations for all children. We prioritise communication and language, personal, social and emotional development, and physical development, recognising their importance in enabling children to become confident, capable learners. Learning is carefully sequenced to build on children's prior knowledge and skills over time. Practitioners engage in sustained shared thinking and provide language-rich interactions to extend children's learning.

There are three *prime* areas that are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for expanding their capacity to learn. These are:

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

There are then four specific areas through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These are:

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

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

Through our teaching and learning we ensure that children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement. Our practitioners understand how children develop and learn, and consider this when they plan learning opportunities.

We offer children first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play. Our carefully planned curriculum helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS.

We enable children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities. Children are encouraged to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management. Learning is supported by appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.

We identify progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents. We support children to develop self-regulation and manage their emotions through secure relationships and consistent routines. We also recognise and promote the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance. As a result, children make strong progress from their starting points and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The three **Characteristics of Effective Learning** in the Early Years are:

### **Playing and Exploring**

Children's play reflects their wide-ranging interests and preoccupations. We recognise that through play young children achieve their highest learning potential. Playing with peers is especially important for children's development.

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

### **Active Learning**

Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. We give children a degree of independence and control over their learning. As they develop their confidence they learn to make decisions and this provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

### **Creating and Thinking Critically**

When children have opportunities to play and engage with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.

We give children opportunities to be creative in all areas of learning. Adults support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children access resources freely and may choose to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

## Observation, Assessment and Planning

Planning is based on each child's ongoing formative assessment. We also have long, medium and short term plans to ensure continuity of curriculum coverage, but these do change according to the needs of individuals and the class.

Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation by all adults working with the child. These observations are linked to Development Matters which in turn informs the end of phase judgements made in each child's EYFS Profile, some of these observations may be made on the Tapestry app using an iPad.

Development Matters is used as a non-statutory guidance to support understanding of child development, not as a checklist or tracking system. At the end of the Reception year, each child will be assessed against the national standard of the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs), each one linked to one of the seven areas of learning highlighted in the EYFS curriculum below.

The teachers will record each child's level of development against the 17 ELGs as either **emerging** or **expected**. The profile is then completed with a brief commentary of the child's skills in relation to the three key characteristics of learning (playing and exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically)

We provide a written summary of these judgements for parents. We also give parents an opportunity to discuss these judgements with their child's class teacher.

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's development and learning in order to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own Tapestry Learning Journal using the iPad, and are thereby subsequently shared with parents.

## Statutory Assessments

We undertake developmental checks on all children, where possible, by the time they are 2 years 6 months. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requires that parents and carers must be supplied with a short written summary of their child's development in the three prime learning and development areas of the EYFS: Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Communication and Language. This should be completed when the child is aged between 24-36 months.

The aims of the progress check are to:

- Review a child's development in the three prime areas of the EYFS.
- Share this information with parents at an agreed time so as to ensure they have a clear picture of their child's development.
- Enable us to understand the child's needs and plan activities and experiences to meet them in the setting.
- Enable parents to understand the child's needs and enhance development at home, with support from the setting.
- Note areas where the child is progressing well and identify any areas where progress is less than expected.
- Describe actions the setting intends to take to address any developmental concerns (including working with or referring the child to other professionals where

appropriate).

The progress check will:

- Be completed by a practitioner who knows the child well and works directly with them in the setting. This will normally be the child's Key Person.
- Arise from the ongoing observational assessments carried out as part of everyday practice in the setting.
- Be based on skills, knowledge, understanding and behaviour that the child demonstrates consistently and independently.
- Take account of the views and contributions of parents, and the child if appropriate.
- Take into account the views of other practitioners and, where relevant, other professionals working with the child.

The progress check will:

- Be clear and easy to read, avoiding unfamiliar jargon, acronyms or terminology (with interpretation and translation available where necessary).
- Present a truthful yet sensitive reflection of what the child can do and their achievements to date.
- Identify areas where the child is progressing at a slower pace than expected.
- Recognise parents' in-depth knowledge of their child by incorporating their observations and comments.
- Explain how the child's future learning and development will be supported in the setting.

The setting will allow a settling-in period for the child so as to enable their Key Person and other practitioners to build up good knowledge of the child's development, abilities and interests before completing the progress check.

If a child has a period of ill health or a significant event in their family (e.g. family breakdown, bereavement or the arrival of a sibling) it may be appropriate to delay the check.

If a child has a period of absence or irregular attendance or attends for limited sessions, then parents or carers will be contacted and the relevant attendance protocol followed.

Where possible, we will carry out the progress check in time for parents to share it with the health visitor at the statutory two year old health and development review. (Note: If the child has already had the health visitor conduct the two year old health check, the setting is still required to carry out the EYFS two year old health and development review.)

If the progress check is for a child with an identified disability, medical need or special educational need, the setting will take into account if the child is already being supported by other professionals. If so, the setting will agree with parents how the views and contributions of those professionals should be sought. The focus will be on what the child can do, their unique and individual characteristics and their development to date, rather than describing their development purely in terms of their need or disability.

### Reception Baseline Assessment

The Reception Baseline Assessment is a short, interactive and practical assessment of each child's early literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills when they begin school. This must be completed within 6 weeks of each child starting school in

Reception. If a child joins mid-year from another country or another school and did not take part in the Reception Baseline Assessment, then we will assess them within 6 weeks of starting with us at Primrose Hill.

The Reception Baseline Assessment is carried out by the class teachers using an online program using an ipad or a laptop, one-to-one with each child. Once the Reception Baseline Assessment has taken place and it has been input into the online program, it will provide a helpful snapshot of where each child is when they enter reception, so they can be supported in the most appropriate way.

The main purpose of the Reception Baseline Assessment is to create a starting point to measure the progress schools make with their pupils. The data from the assessment will only be used by the Department for Education when each child has reached the end of year 6, to provide the baseline to measure the progress of each child's year group from Reception to Year 6. The data from the assessment, including numerical scores, is not shared with parents, pupils, teachers, or external bodies, including schools, and there will be no published scores at pupil, school or national level.

### The Early Years Foundation Profile

The EYFS profile assessment must be carried out in the final term of Reception in which a child reaches age 5, and no later than 1 July in that term.

The main purpose of the EYFS profile is to provide a reliable, valid and accurate assessment of individual children at the end of the EYFS.

EYFS profile data is used to:

- Inform parents about their child's development against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and the characteristics of their learning.
- Support a smooth transition to Key Stage 1 (KS1) by informing the professional dialogue between EYFS and KS1 teachers.
- Help the Year 1 teachers plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

The EYFS profile provides an accurate national data set relating to levels of child development at the end of the EYFS. The DfE uses this to monitor changes in levels of children's development and their readiness for the next phase of their education both nationally and locally (school level results won't be published in the performance tables).

At Primrose Hill, we begin by assessing a baseline on entry to Nursery and Reception within the first 3 – 6 weeks. This is reviewed termly as part of our School Assessment procedure.

In the final term of Reception, teachers must review information from all sources to make a judgement for each child, for each ELG. The judgement must say whether the child's learning and development is:

- Best described by the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS (expected)
- Not yet at the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS (emerging)

## The Wider Context

We work closely with outside agencies to support children's development. Where appropriate we involve health and social care professionals, family support workers and other members of the local community. We have a diverse school and we actively promote community cohesion.

We hold termly meetings with other local schools with a view to double-checking our judgements when assessing children, and to ensure that children who join us from other settings have accurate assessment data. The link with these schools also helps us to strengthen the continuity for families who join us from them.

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning together with work guided by the adults.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discrimination.
- Provide early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context of each child's life.
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult.
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment, indoors and out.

## Admissions

At Primrose Hill in our Early Years, we have provision for children from 2 years through to 5 years. This is organised into:

- **2 year old provision**, which is situated in the school house. This is for 15 full time equivalent children. This is called Tadpoles class. The class has a Level 3 Senior Practitioner and two other staff members.
- We have one **Nursery class** for 39 full time equivalent children. This is called the Froglets class. This is with one class teacher and at least three other staff members.
- We have one **Reception Class** for all 60 children. This is called Ladybirds Class. The class has two class teachers and at least two other staff members. This operates the same as two classes of 30.
- From September 2026, **Reception** will be split into two separate classes of 30, Ladybirds & Bumblebees, though will have the opportunity to free flow throughout the indoor and outdoor spaces at points throughout the day

From September 2026 we will also be operating consistent Rising 3's and Rising 4's each Spring and Summer term. Depending on spaces available, each Spring term, children who have turned three will move up to the Froglets Nursery classroom and children who have turned four will move into the Ladybirds or Bumblebees classroom. The same will happen again in the Summer term. This is to enable us to keep all our EYFS classroom provisions operating at full capacity, whilst supporting our children's learning and development throughout our EYFS. We will only transition children to the next classroom setting if we feel they are emotionally and socially ready, and in agreement with families.

Please note that places given in Tadpoles and Froglets are based on availability. If we do not have a space available, we run a waiting list which you are more than welcome to join.

In Froglets we fill up our spaces using the identical criteria to the Camden LA criteria used for Reception and prioritise full time places.

### Home Visits

Prior to any child being welcomed into our School the first point of contact will be made, with both parents and child, in the home.

- A home visit will be made shortly before a new child is due to start the Tadpoles, Froglets or Ladybirds. Two members of staff will make the visit.
- The visit will give the staff the opportunity to meet both parents and child in comfortable and secure surroundings.
- If home visits are not possible, arrangements will be made for the family to meet in school.
- Meetings will be used, not only to get to know parents and child, but additionally to explain routines, times etc. and to answer any questions that may be asked of the Provision, Nursery or School. They will enable staff to interact with the child and provide him/her with a reference point for when they do eventually formally start.
- Meetings will give an opportunity for both parents and school to discuss mutual expectations or support that may be offered.
- The opportunity to arrange Provision visits to Tadpoles, Froglets or Ladybirds will be offered and the settling procedure will be shared and discussed. Parents and their child will spend the first day at the start of the academic year together to enable smooth settling procedures.
- Communication will be encouraged between previous settings or after school clubs or day care settings.

### Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is part of the partnership on which our early years are based. Parents can be involved in our Foundation Stage in a variety of ways: -

- Initially parents may wish to remain in the Tadpoles or Froglets with their child over a period of visits until the child has settled. The parent may choose to taper off these visits as the child settles.
- Parental support will be positively encouraged and welcomed. This support may involve interacting and working with children while they are engaged in activities within school or at home.
- Parents are encouraged to stay and learn alongside their child on special themed days throughout the year and a series of maths, literacy and phonics workshops enable parents in Reception to gain a deeper understanding of how their children are taught and learn.
- All parents are encouraged to share learning from outside of school using the Parent Share feature on Tapestry Journal, demonstrated in a September parents meeting.
- Parents are invited to join us for academic trips.
- The education of our children is a partnership based upon a high level of trust and communication; a partnership within which our children can develop to their full potential.

## Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time is given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and we establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child at other settings, including previous nurseries or childminders. Children attend introductory sessions to Tadpoles, Froglets or Reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. They receive a small booklet containing photos and complete an 'All About Me' sheet or questionnaire.

In the final term in Reception, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development as measured against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

We agree:

- The EYFS profile will be completed for each child leaving Reception, then passed on to Year 1 teachers informing them of each child's stage of development and learning needs in order to assist with the planning of appropriate activities in Year 1.
- There will be a dialogue between Tadpoles and Froglets Teachers, Froglets and Reception Teachers and then also with Y1 Teachers as part of the transition process.
- A monitoring cycle will support the progress of individuals and groups of learners: Pupil Progress Meetings, lesson observations, planning scrutiny.

## Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum that teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food and the following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

## Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need. In doing so, we work closely with parents and outside agencies. See our separate school policies on Equality of Opportunity, SEND and Teaching & Learning.

## Ratios

The School will ensure that staff levels within the Early Years setting comply with statutory guidance and can meet the needs of the children. This is to provide suitable levels of supervision and keep them safe. Children will be kept within sight and hearing at all times.

The EYFS Leader will oversee all EYFS Provision.

For the Tadpoles (Two Year Old Provision):

- There will be at least one member of staff for every 5 children.
- At least one member of staff will hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.

For the Froglets (Nursery class):

- There will be at least one member of staff for every 13 children.
- One member of staff will be a qualified teacher.
- At least one member of staff will hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.

For Ladybirds (Reception class):

- Class sizes will be limited to 60 pupils, two classes of 30 children from September 2026.
- Classes will be led by a qualified teacher, supported by suitably qualified support staff.

The EYFS Leader and SLT will ensure that:

- Outdoor activities are planned (and outdoor resources prepared) on a daily basis.
- There are correct adult to child ratios at all times.
- At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate will be on the premises at all times when children are present.
- Risks, both collective and individual, have been assessed carefully before carrying out any practical activities or trips.

### Information sharing

Our admissions pack contains a written consent section to enable us to contact previous settings or other health professionals to find out more about the needs of the child and what support they have received. During the settling in period, the setting will ask to obtain the child's health visitor contact details. The progress check is a statutory requirement of the EYFS. The setting will seek the consent of parents to share information from the check directly with relevant professionals.

### Safeguarding

\*Please see our Safeguarding Policy

As an Early Years Provider delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the School aims to meet the specific safeguarding and child protection duties set out in the Childcare Act 2006 and related statutory guidance. Our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is Annie Clark, Assistant Headteacher.

The School will ensure that children taught in the Tadpoles, Froglets or Reception classes are able to learn and develop and are kept safe and healthy so that they are ready for school by providing a safe, secure learning environment that safeguards and promotes

their welfare, and takes appropriate action where there are child protection concerns. We follow stringent safer recruitment procedures, including statutory vetting procedures and enhanced DBS checks. All staff, including agency staff and governors are subject to regular and ongoing safeguarding training.

All safeguarding and child protection policies within the School apply equally to children in the EYFS so far as they are relevant to that age group.

In addition, the School has the following child protection policies and procedures specific to EYFS: In relation to the use of mobile phones within the early years setting we will ensure:

Parents and carers are asked to put mobile phones away if they are coming into the Early Years setting and leave the setting if they need to use their mobile.

Parents are generally prohibited from taking any photographs of children in the Early Years setting, however, for special events such as school performances, they may do so on the understanding that the images are not posted onto social media sites or otherwise shared, and providing there are no objections from any other parents attending whose children are taking part in the event.

Staff seek parental permission to take photographs of the children, which must be linked to teaching the curriculum and that they use school equipment only for this purpose.

Staff put away / safely store personal mobile phones in the early years setting and use them only during breaks outside the setting.

Other Policy Requirements fall under other general policy arrangements:

E-Safety

Data Protection

Educational Visits

Accessibility Plan

Behaviour Policy

Attendance Policy

Admissions Policy

Charging & Remissions Policy

Complaints Policy & Procedure

Equality Scheme

Home School Agreement

Medical Policy

Pupil Premium Statement

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

SEND Policy

Code of Conduct for Working with Families and Advocates

The EYFS Leader in conjunction with the Head Teacher is responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of this policy.

All Staff are responsible for implementing procedures outlined in this policy.

Senior Leadership Team April 2026

Review Date: April 2027

#### DISSEMINATION OF THE POLICY

The policy will be given to all members of staff and copies will be available for parents, including via the school website.

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