



EYFS Policy

Signed by headteacher: *A Hughes*

Signed by Chair of Governors: *David Bradley*

Date of Approval: July 2025

Date for review: July 2027



Early Years Policy

Policy Statement

At Bitterne Manor, we are committed to providing high-quality Early Years education for all children aged 3–5, covering both Preschool and Reception. We believe that the EYFS is a vital stage in a child's development, laying the foundations for lifelong learning, positive relationships and emotional well-being. We aim to create a nurturing, inclusive and stimulating environment where children feel safe, secure and valued.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for 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.

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for 2024.

Principles of the EYFS

Our provision is based on the four overarching principles of the EYFS:

- Every child is a unique child.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

Structure of the EYFS

Our Early Years provision at Bitterne Manor caters for children aged 3 to 5 years, encompassing both Preschool and Reception. Children typically join our Preschool in the term following their third birthday and transition to Reception in the September after they turn four. Reception is the final year of the Early Years Foundation Stage and forms part of our maintained primary school. We ensure strong continuity between Preschool and Reception through consistent teaching approaches, shared planning and time, and carefully managed transitions. This structure allows children to build secure relationships with adults and peers, and to progress smoothly through the EYFS with a clear sense of routine and belonging.

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 are equally important and inter-connected. 3 areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and 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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

Literacy
Mathematics
Understanding the world
Expressive arts and design

Planning and Environment

Our Early Years provision is carefully planned to meet the developmental needs of all children and to support them in becoming independent, curious and confident learners. Planning is child-centred and responsive, shaped by children's interests, developmental stages, and next steps in learning. We provide a balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning opportunities, allowing children to explore, investigate and develop independence.

Our learning environment is designed to be stimulating and enabling, both indoors and outdoors, with continuous provision that promotes curiosity, creativity and deep-level learning. The planning cycle includes observation, assessment and reflection, ensuring that provision is tailored to support progress across all seven areas of learning. Staff work collaboratively to plan enhancements and provocations that build on what children know and can do.

Learning is play-based, with high-quality interactions and modelling from adults to extend thinking and language. Resources are carefully selected to be open-ended, inclusive and engaging for all children, including those with SEND or EAL.

Assessment

Assessment plays a vital role in helping the school recognise children's progress, understand their individual needs, plan appropriate learning experiences, and identify when additional support may be required. It is a continuous process embedded in quality interactions and observations carried out by practitioners who know the children well.

Ongoing formative assessment is central to our practice. Practitioners regularly observe, interact with, and reflect on children's learning and development during everyday activities. These observations help staff to identify each child's interests, strengths, and next steps, and are used to inform planning and provision that meets individual developmental needs.

Parents are kept informed of their child's progress and development through regular communication, parent meetings, and shared learning journeys. The EYFS lead works closely with families to address any learning and development needs, ensuring a strong and supportive home-school partnership.

In addition to formative assessment, we carry out key summative assessments at specific points:

- **Wellcom:** A speech and language toolkit designed to help children from 6 months to 6 years old. It helps early years professionals support children's speech, language, and communication development. Strong speech and language skills are essential for a child's overall development. By spotting any difficulties early on, children can get the support they need when it matters most. WellComm helps adults working with young children to do just that.
- **Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA):** Completed within the first six weeks of Reception, this assessment establishes a starting point for progress measures.
- **EYFS Profile:** Completed at the end of the Reception year, this final assessment provides a well-rounded picture of a child's attainment in relation to the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and their readiness for Year 1. Results are shared with parents and submitted to the local authority (LA) as required.

For children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), reasonable adjustments are made to the assessment process. Where concerns arise, particularly in the prime areas of learning, the EYFS lead will meet with parents to agree on a support strategy. If appropriate, consideration will be given as to whether further assessment or external support is needed.

For children with English as an Additional Language (EAL), opportunities are provided for them to use their home language in play and learning, while also supporting the development of English. Where there is concern about a child's language development, the EYFS lead will work with families to determine whether the child's skills in their home language suggest a broader delay.

Further information on Assessment is outlined in the assessment Policy.

Working with parents and carers

Bitterne Manor, we recognise that children learn and develop best when there is a strong and supportive partnership between school and home. We highly value the role of parents and carers as a child's first and most enduring educators, and we are committed to working closely with families throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Each child in our setting is assigned a key person. This named member of staff is responsible for ensuring that the child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person develops a close, supportive relationship with the child and their family, helping to provide consistency and emotional security. They are also a first point of contact for parents and play a central role in supporting home learning, sharing progress, and offering guidance.

We keep parents and carers informed about their child's development through daily informal conversations, planned parent consultations, and the sharing of assessment outcomes, including the EYFS Profile. The Reception Baseline Assessment and final EYFS Profile provide a well-rounded picture of each child's knowledge, skills and understanding, and are used as part of ongoing dialogue with families.

The key person also supports families in accessing more specialist services when appropriate, helping to identify and act early on any additional needs. We aim to ensure all parents feel listened to, respected and involved in their child's early education.

We encourage parents to take an active role in school life through workshops, stay-and-play sessions, parent events, and shared home learning activities. This collaborative approach ensures that children benefit from consistent support across home and school, strengthening both their development and well-being.

Transition

We recognise that transitions are a significant part of a young child's experience and can have a lasting impact on their confidence, well-being and readiness to learn. We are committed to ensuring that all transitions—whether starting Preschool, moving into Reception, or beginning Year 1—are managed sensitively and supportively, with the needs of each individual child at the centre.

Starting Preschool

Our aim is for all children to feel safe, secure and happy when joining our Preschool. To support this, we offer the following:

- An open afternoon in the summer term for children due to start in September. Parents and children are invited to a stay-and-play session where they can explore the setting, meet staff, engage in activities and ask questions.

- Termly tours for new families joining mid-year, during which parents meet with the class teacher or senior practitioner to discuss their child's needs before starting.
- A transition booklet with photographs of the staff and learning environment is provided to families to help children become familiar with key people and spaces.
- Families are kept informed through daily handovers and a special 'My First Day' observation uploaded to Tapestry to share with the child at home. Parents are also invited to complete an 'All About Me' section on Tapestry to help staff get to know their child before they start.

Transition to Reception (Year R)

Our Foundation Stage Team—Preschool and Reception—works closely throughout the year to ensure a consistent approach to pedagogy, routines and expectations, while adapting to meet the developmental needs of the children. This collaboration ensures that transitions between settings are seamless and supportive.

To support a smooth move from Preschool to Year R:

- Reception staff regularly visit the Preschool throughout the year to read stories and for joint rainbow time, helping children to become familiar with them in a comfortable setting.
- Detailed handover meetings take place between Preschool and Reception staff, ensuring that each child's strengths, needs and next steps are shared.
- Children are invited to attend a series of 'Stay and Play' sessions, initially with their parents/carers, then independently, to gradually become comfortable with their new environment
- Home visits are carried out by Year R staff in July before starting school to build positive relationships with children and families in a familiar setting.
- Reception children begin school with a phased start, which can be adapted according to the child's individual needs. Any concerns or changes to transition are discussed in partnership with parents.

Transition to Year 1

As children move from the Early Years Foundation Stage into Key Stage 1, we provide a carefully planned transition that respects their developmental needs and builds on their prior learning.

- In the summer term, the Year 1 teacher visits Reception to observe and interact with children within their familiar routines. This helps develop understanding of each child's current levels and how their needs are met within the EYFS approach.
- The Year 1 teacher also reads with the children, joins in activities, and works alongside the Reception teacher to deliver a jointly planned lesson, promoting familiarity and trust.
- Transition Day activities give children the chance to spend time in their new classroom and meet their new teacher and support staff.
- Staff from both Reception and Year 1 meet to discuss each pupil, sharing details on academic progress, emotional well-being, home life, and next steps to ensure continuity of care and learning.

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 are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff: 3 child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

For children aged 3 and over:

- Where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another approved level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children
- Where a person with the above qualifications is not working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 8 children

For reception children:

- We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required. The EYFS lead will report any accident or injury involving a child to their parents on the day it occurs, and any first-aid treatment administered to a child will also be reported to their parents. Accidents and injuries will be recorded in an accident book, located in the school office. The headteacher will report any serious accident, illness, injury, or death of a child whilst in the school's care to Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the incident occurring. Local child protection agencies will also be notified.

A first-aid boxes are located in the school office, Kingfishers class and in preschool.

Only medicine prescribed to a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist will be administered. The school's Administering Medication Policy outlines the procedures for administering medicines.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's child protection and safeguarding policy.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Amy Hughes, Head Teacher 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

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 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