

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE Policy

Carlisle and Hampton Hill Federation



*Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities
to the full.*

UNICEF Article 29 Convention on the Rights of the Child

Statutory Policy:	Yes
Source of policy e.g. AfC, The Key Model Policy etc.	Guided by The Key Model EYFS Policy
Date of review:	November 2025
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Staff member responsible:	Zoe Brown
Governor name & committee responsibility:	A&F Committee
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Carlisle and Hampton Hill Federation

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

‘Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.’

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

In the Carlisle and Hampton Hill Federation, we aim to ensure that all children are supported to achieve their potential and recognise that the EYFS is an important part of their learning journey.

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) for 2025 which:

- sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well
- ensures children are kept healthy and safe
- ensures that children have the knowledge and skills they need to start school

In line with the aims of the EYFS reforms, developing early language skills is key as this will support children’s learning across the curriculum. We are committed to making a difference to the outcomes of disadvantaged children by working to close any gaps in children’s learning.

Aims

At Carlisle we recognise every child’s right to grow up in a safe environment, to be healthy, enjoy and achieve what they set out to do, to make a positive contribution in their own community and develop the communication and social skills they will need throughout life.

We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively, and intellectually to their full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

At Carlisle Infant School, we aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating and nurturing environment which is sensitive and inclusive to the needs of all children.
- Create a broad, balanced and inspiring curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Enable choice and decision making; fostering independence, self-confidence and risk taking.
- Ensure there is a consistency in high quality teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Work in partnership with families/ carers, valuing their contributions and ensuring all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability are valued.
- Understand progression in the skills needed across the Prime (Physical Development; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Communication and Language) and Specific areas (Mathematics, Literacy, Expressive Arts and Design and Understanding the World) and plan accordingly.

Structure of the EYFS

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

A unique child

We recognise that every child is an individual 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 empower a positive attitude to learning.

Positive relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent, developing secure relationships and we aim to establish caring, respectful, and professional relationships with the children and their families, right from the start.

Enabling environment

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development and we offer a wide range of learning opportunities. 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. Children are encouraged to become independent by selecting their own resources and tidying up after themselves.

Learning and Development

The Foundation Stage is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. We ensure that there are opportunities for active, physical learning as well as quiet spaces for thinking.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Carlisle Infant School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS for children is from birth to five years of age. All children begin school with a wide variety of experiences and learning; it is the privilege of the adults working in the foundation stage to accept the task of building upon that prior learning experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents and carers, support staff and the Reception team work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children.

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:

Playing and exploring: - engagement

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

Active learning: -motivation

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

Creating and thinking critically: - thinking

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

Learning and Development is categorised into three Prime Areas of Learning:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

Additionally there are four Specific Areas of Learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

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

Planning, observation and Assessment

At Carlisle we know that effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. The staff at Carlisle are ambitious for all children, and plan activities and experiences for the children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus on the 3 prime areas and the curriculum guidance from Development Matters 2021.

We believe in meticulous planning to utilise all opportunities, yet we also practise 'planning in the moment' where knowledgeable staff draw on their expertise to extend learning, and to support the child's next steps at that point of learning. Where possible we receive records from pre-school settings to ensure continuity and progression from Nursery to Reception.

We understand that it is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Across EYFS and KS1 [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds](#) is used to teach phonics. Our Little Wandle vision is to teach reading and change lives through evidence-based practice and energetic and dynamic teaching.

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Through purposeful connections to real-life situations and by providing frequent and varied opportunities to build on and apply their understanding, children in reception will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built.

We believe that to enhance the children's literacy and maths skills, the Prime areas must be well taught and fostered. With this in mind, we plan for inspiring continuous provision and engaging adult-led sessions which includes but is not limited to; daily drawing club inputs, daily phonics lessons, daily mastering number sessions and weekly challenges in reading, writing and maths to support independence and mastery of the skills and sounds taught that week.

In Reception classes, all staff make careful observations of the children while they are engaged in activities, in order to gain an insight into their interests and abilities. We understand that the most useful and relevant observations are made during child-initiated activities. Research tells us that we should prioritise the development of children's communication and language through socially meaningful interactions. All of our adults follow the **Share attention, Respond, Expand, and Conversation (ShREC)** approach to high quality interactions, which follows evidence informed strategies which we can embed into everyday practice. We use these strategies with every child, every day. Some careful observations are also carried out and recorded during focused group work or whole class teaching in order to assess the children's level of understanding related to specific skills and concepts. Observations and assessments are used to identify the next steps for learning and to ensure that planning reflects identified needs.

We use an online tool called 'Tapestry' to record observations made of the children in our Reception Classes. This enables EYFS practitioners to photograph, video and capture a commentary of children's current knowledge and understanding as well as demonstrating their progression. These observations help to inform teachers when assessing their attainment and progress.

At Carlisle, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their progress, development and interests. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers and keep them up to date with the child's progress and development. Staff will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the reception baseline assessment (RBA).

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:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

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

In exceptional circumstances, after discussion and only in agreement with parents and/or carers, a child might stay in EYFS provision beyond the end of the academic year in which they turn 5. In these exceptional cases, we will continue to assess the child throughout their time in EYFS provision and complete their profile at the end of the year before they move into year 1.

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.

Working with parents and carers

We recognise that parents have a very important role to play in the education of their child. We try to have excellent links and encourage good communication between parents and teachers on a regular basis, formally and/or informally.

These are some of the ways that we establish a positive partnership:

- New Parent's information evenings.
- Home visits for Reception children at the beginning of the Autumn Term.
- Reception Open Days in the Summer Term.
- We share the Early Years Foundation Stage Transfer Summary and the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile with parents and we value parents' contributions to the assessment process.
- At Parent Consultations we share children's progress and include targets for future learning.
- In Reception, Home Learning is shared weekly.
- Half termly Curriculum Information sheets are sent to parents via email.
- We encourage parental help, when possible, in Reception. We hold a Reception parents Reading information meeting in September when we explain our synthetic phonics teaching system and parents are encouraged to work alongside the school in teaching their children to read and write.
- Parents are encouraged to join in with the Carlisle School Association events to help develop friendships and support networks.
- We encourage parents to talk to their child's Class Teacher if there are any concerns.
- We monitor our performance through school questionnaires and surveys to try to keep improving and updating our services to parents.
- Reception children take home Reading Diaries weekly and parents and teachers can record comments and suggestions in these.
- Questionnaires are sent out to parents to find out more about the children's learning and talents.
- In Reception we use Tapestry online Learning Journals to show children's learning progress and to capture and record the child's voice. Parents can view these observations as soon as they are posted and can also upload photos and videos to share the things their child does at home.

We also have very strong links with our feeder Pre-schools and Nurseries. The EYFS staff meet with providers to discuss each individual child and their transition process into the School at the end of the Summer Term.

The Learning Environment

The Reception classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc. Our staff focus on creating calm, beautiful and child-led spaces using authentic, natural and open ended resources to spark awe and wonder. We use neutral tones and natural materials to encourage creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving. The adult acts as a facilitator, following the child's interests rather than directing activities and the environment feels more like a home than a school.

The Early Years Foundation Stage has its own outdoor areas. The free flow between the inside and the outside has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

At Carlisle we are very proud of our stimulating and inviting outdoor classroom. Learning outdoors supports the development of healthy lifestyles by offering the children the opportunity for physical activity, freedom of movement and helps them to develop a sense of well-being. It also gives children direct exposure with nature and unique learning experiences such as contact with the weather and seasons. In Reception, children have daily opportunities to play and explore in our outdoor area. This provision includes some structured challenges set up by the EYFS team as well as lots of opportunities for child-initiated learning too. Children are encouraged to learn to manage risk in their activities safely negotiating spaces around them. We are always reviewing and adapting our provision based on the needs of the cohort.

The Induction Process

Children join Carlisle from over 25 different settings every year. During the summer term, staff start the transition process to ensure all our children and families have a positive start to life at Carlisle. The transition process involves:

- Children visit our YR area with their nursery key workers
- Where possible, members of the Reception team will visit nursery settings
- Lengthy handover of information from nursery practitioners and a member of the YR team, these notes help to inform our class mix
- All children and their parents/ carers are invited to two stay and play sessions. One where the children and parents are invited to play in our indoor and outdoor environments together and a second where the parents are invited to attend a workshop in the hall and the children get the chance to play in their new environment, and with their class teachers.
- An information evening for new Reception parents/carers in June.
- In early September the class teacher and a teaching assistant will arrange a home visit so that they can meet each child and their parents and to establish a relationship with the child and their family. Building relationships with parents/ carers is fundamental.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) will be supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. Children with specific learning difficulties and disabilities have Individual Education Plans which identify targets in specific areas of learning. The school's SENDco, Lorraine Blake, is responsible for providing additional information and advice to staff and parents and for arranging external intervention and support as necessary.

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

Staff training

At Carlisle, 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 [found on the school 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

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 a reference 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](#).

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 Federation Headteacher / Head of School. If the concern is about the Federation Headteacher / Head of School, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the Co-Chairs of the Governing Body - Deb Long/Barbara Clifford.

See our whistleblowing policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures and more detail on our procedures for handling whistleblowing see our [whistleblowing policy](#).

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.

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.

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).

Investigating the concern

When a concern is received by the Federation Headteacher / Head of School – 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:
 - o Arrange a further investigation into the matter, involving the local 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
 - o 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

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.

They will inform the person who raised the concern of the outcome of the investigation, though certain details may need to be restricted due to confidentiality.

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.

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. We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils, but in Reception classes will aim to maintain a minimum 1:15 ratio wherever possible.

Paediatric first aid (PFA)

All of our Reception class teachers, teaching assistants and lunch leaders hold a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate and are available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

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

Absence

We're required to promptly follow up on absences.

If a child is absent for a prolonged time or if their parents/carers haven't told us about the absence, we will attempt to contact the parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts.

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

Oral health and tooth brushing

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 and the importance of brushing your teeth

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 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 Individual health care plans for children who have severe allergies, which outline how to manage their condition and respond to an emergency. We will also keep this information up to date and share it with all staff

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.

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:

- o Accident or injury sustained by the child
- o 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.

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.

Toileting and privacy

We make sure that there are:

- o Enough toilets and hand basins available for the children
- o An adequate supply of necessary items such as spare clothes
- o Separate toilet facilities for adults

During toileting, we will balance children's privacy with their safeguarding and support needs.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Governing Body and will be reviewed every three years.

EYFS Leader: Zoe Brown