



## Early Years (EYFS) Policy

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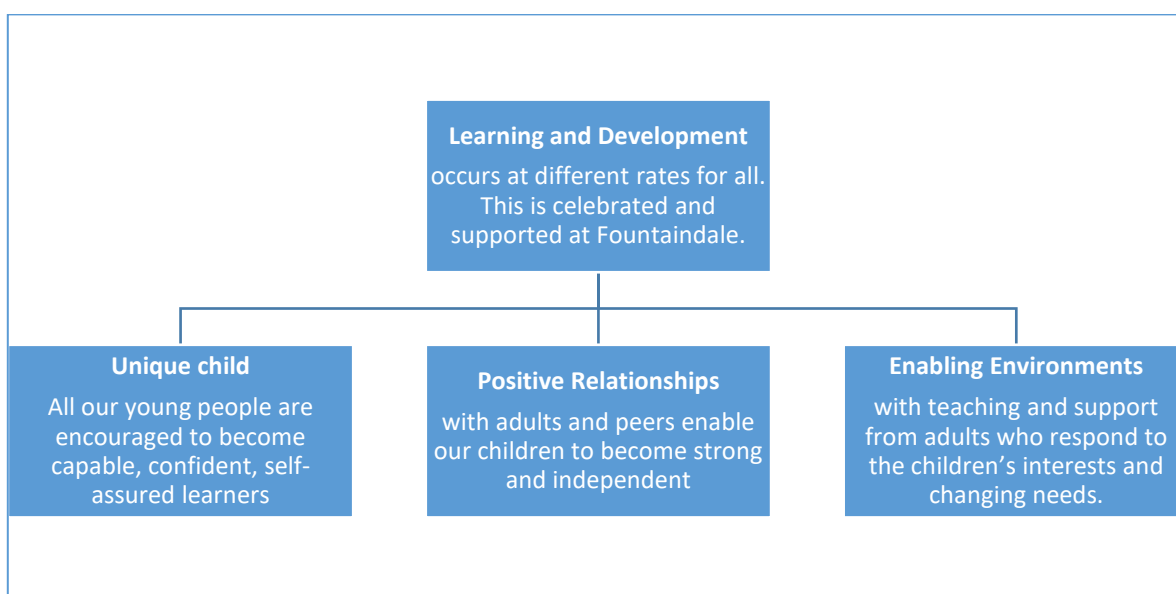
An academy within:



“Learning together, to be the best we can be”

# 1. Context

- 1.1. At Fountaindale, children and their families are at the centre of everything we do. We pride ourselves on working closely with families to lay the foundation for children’s future learning and development through a personalised learning programme which takes into consideration the strengths and interests of each child. All our young people are individually guided through the Early Years Foundation Stage September 2025 learning and development programmes alongside highly personalised targets taken from individual Education, Health and Care Plans. This holistic approach will thus enable exploration, development, achievement and success at the very start of their educational journey.
- 1.2. The four guiding principles outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2025 underpin both of our Early Years settings.



# 2. Intent

- 2.1. At Fountaindale, we are passionate that every child and young person has the right to be ‘the best that they can be’. We aim to create a safe, secure environment where staff acknowledge each child’s unique needs and competencies and use these to plan rich, stimulating and appropriate learning experiences.

2.2. During the Early Years, we focus on creating an environment where children can practise and develop their skills, interests, knowledge and understanding using a blend of motivating adult and child-initiated activities to promote learning. The balance between these vary depending on the child's individual requirements.

2.3. In order to achieve our aims, we will always:

- Provide a flexible learning environment structured to support everyone.
- Provide an active learning curriculum based on the needs of each child.
- Offer a curriculum which is inclusive, relevant and child-centred and which encourages opportunities to explore, observe and discover the environment around them, supported by skilled adult interaction to extend and enhance learning opportunities.
- Recognise that communication; the ability to attend to, understand and reciprocate language is vital for our children and the precursor of all learning. Communication is therefore at the heart of all we do and shapes the environment both indoors and outdoors.
- Encourage confidence, independence and self-esteem by teaching the skills that will provide and help future learning throughout school.
- Ensure all children are able to access the Educational Programmes as set out in the EYFS Statutory Framework 2025.
- Value and recognise the role of families as primary educators to their children and to establish and encourage a strong partnership between home and school.
- Encourage an awareness and respect of others, their school and wider community environment
- Support and develop our practitioners to allow them to extend, enhance and facilitate learning in the Early Years.

### 3. Admissions

3.1. Families are encouraged and welcomed to visit the school at any point before the assessment of Special Education Needs (SEN) has been completed.

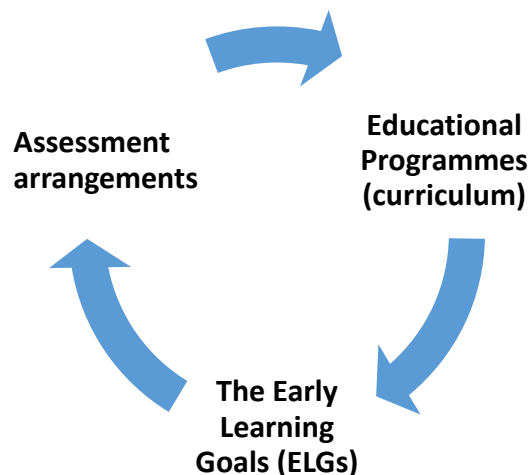
3.2. Once consulted, the school will aim to respond to the SEN advice within 14 days.

3.3. Upon receiving the Education and Health Care plan, the EYFS lead, or another appropriate member of staff specifically assigned to do so by the Senior Leadership Team, will contact the family to arrange a pre-admission visit, usually taking place at the family home.

- 3.4. During the pre-admission visit, the family and school will agree a personalised programme for transition into school. This is a family centred process and families are very welcome to accompany their child during their visits. Please note that an accompanying adult must remain on site with the child in order to comply with appropriate health and safety regulations.
- 3.5. Fountaindale School has a separate admissions policy which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

## 4. Learning and Development Requirements

- 4.1. The Learning and Development Requirements consist of the following elements:



- 4.2. **Educational Programmes** shape and form the activities that enable learning and development to take place. There are seven areas of learning and development that form our Early Years Curriculum at Fountaindale. These are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Maths
- Expressive Arts and Design
- Understanding the World

**4.3. The Early Learning Goals** are points within each of the above seven areas that are developmental aims for children at the end of Foundation Stage 2. At Fountaindale, it is recognised that children develop at very different rates and thus, may not fully meet each ELG by the end of their EYFS journey. Therefore, continued focus on the ELGs into Key Stage One and beyond is highly important. The ELG areas are:

- **Personal Social and Emotional Development**
  - Self-regulation
  - Managing self
  - Building Relationships
- **Communication and Language**
  - Listening, attention and understanding
  - Speaking
- **Physical Development**
  - Gross motor skills
  - Fine motor skills
- **Literacy**
  - Comprehension
  - Word Reading
  - Writing
- **Mathematics**
  - Number
  - Numerical patterns
- **Understanding the World**
  - Past and present
  - People, culture and communities
  - The natural world
- **Expressive Arts and Design**
  - Creating with materials
  - Being imaginative and expressive

**4.4.** Teachers will use a range of resources to plan appropriate targets within each area, although children will not have personal targets for every ELG. Instead, teachers will select the most relevant ELGs for children to work during each assessment cycle. These targets will be agreed in partnership with parents and other agencies such as SALT, Portage, CDC, Physiotherapy and O.T. The following resources are used to support target setting:

- Development Matters (2021)
- Early Support Developmental Journals
- Education, Health and Support Plan information
- Family input

**4.5. Assessment arrangements** in EYFS are as follows:

- *Personalised targets*- directly related to all four areas of the child's EHCP. Evidence is sent via Seesaw weekly.
- *Reception Baseline Assessment* – this is completed at the beginning of Foundation Stage 2 if it is accessible to the learner.
- *Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)* – this is completed at the end of the Foundation Stage 2 year. Each ELG is highlighted as either 'Emerging' or 'Expected.'

## 5. Educational Programmes and ELGs (Curriculum)

5.1. Educational Programmes are designed by teachers according to the needs and interests of children in each class. The following planning methods are used to shape activities and educational programmes:

- **Curriculum maps** are used to plan activities within each of the seven areas of learning. Teachers will choose a stimulus of interest or significance to the children and plan activities around these. It is important that children are exposed to a range of themes (Cornerstones ensures relevant rolling coverage) and stimuli that are exciting and engaging whilst simultaneously offering knowledge and understanding of all of the seven areas of learning.
- **Individual Learning Plans** identify the skills and/or knowledge and understanding that is of importance to the development of each child. Teachers and practitioners will observe children against these targets and plan opportunities (both child and adult initiated) to enable them to work towards and ultimately achieve each target.
- **Continuous Provision Plans** provide an overview of the opportunities within the environment for children to develop their skills within all seven areas of learning. Adults working in provision will support children through high quality interactions to facilitate, extend and communicate their understanding and skills. Both child and adult initiated activities may take place within Continuous Provision. Adult initiation to encourage children to use different learning areas may be necessary for children who are uncertain on how to engage with their environment and resources.

5.2. Early Learning Goals are referred to within planning in order to ensure that all of these areas are being covered wherever the child is on their journey towards these.

## 6. Assessment Arrangements

- 6.1. Learning and development is directly linked to personalised targets linked to the child's EHCP. Photographs and videos are used to support observations and to capture 'magical moments' for families as well as evidencing the 4 EHCP personalised targets. These are sent throughout the week, to families, via Seesaw.
- 6.2. Within EYFS, emphasis is placed upon high quality interactions between staff and children, therefore requiring staff to keep recording to a minimum while working with children.
- 6.3. Observations of children engaging in learning and interactions with peers and their environment is extremely important, particularly while building a picture of their skills, interests and characteristics of effective learning. Such observations provide practitioners with 'next step' information so they can support and guide them through the next stage of their learning.
- 6.4. Assessment data capture take place three times each year. This a whole school assessment method which aims to provide a holistic and personalised approach to learning and development throughout school. Individual targets are assessed at the end of each cycle by the teacher who will either assess the target as 'beginning,' 'developing' or 'secure.' Targets are either continued or reset depending on whether they have been achieved, are working towards or are still at the initiated level of assessment. In the case of the latter, it may be that the target set needs to be revisited at a later stage and is not currently appropriate.
- 6.5. **The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)** is a statutory assessment requirement which takes place at the start of a child's final year in the Early Years Foundation Stage (FS2). As a school, we use our in-depth understanding of our children's need to determine whether the material within the RBA is suitable. Whilst the RBA material is designed to be accessible to children with additional needs, in many cases, our children are unable to access the content provided. In this case, we will 'disapply' children on an individual basis. Where it is thought that a child could potentially access the materials, the RBA would be carried out within the first six weeks of the FS2 year. The assessments are short, practical, play based activities.
- 6.6. **The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)** is a statutory assessment that takes place at the end of a child's FS2 year. It is only ever completed once and is used to inform national data information. The EYFSP does not affect or impact on a child's targets unless they are working at this level. Children are recorded as either 'emerging' or 'expected' against each

ELG. Where children are emerging at the end of FS2, it may be appropriate to continue to take targets from the EYFS Developmental Journals into Key Stage 1.

- 6.7. Early Reading underpins all learning throughout school. Without skills in reading, children are unable to access information about the world around them, read symbols for communication and experience independence as they develop. Whilst Early Reading forms a large part of the specific Literacy area of learning in EYFS, many of our children rely on reading in other forms to communicate, such as through Picture Exchange Communication Systems, Makaton or Objects of Reference. Being able to attach meaning to symbols, sounds, pictures, objects or signs is essentially reading.
- 6.8. **Reporting to families** is essential in ensuring that they are kept up to date and informed of their child's progress. Each day, a Seesaw message is written to communicate achievements, routines and progress to each family. This offers a two-way communication option where families are invited to record achievements and messages from home. Annual review meetings take place every 6 months (until a child reaches 5 and then it goes to annually) to discuss the progress made against the EHCP long term targets and to form new ones where appropriate in partnership with the family and other agencies involved. End of year reports celebrate the achievements of each child across the year and allow families to receive photographic and written evidence of their child's individual learning and development. Seesaw also allows teachers to share observations with families throughout the year so that they can be kept up to date on the educational programmes being followed. Families are also able to share achievements from home via this method.

## 7. Welfare Requirements

- 7.1. **Child Protection** is covered by the whole school Safeguarding Policy.
- 7.2. **Suitable People** are ensured through the relevant whole school HR policies and procedures.
- 7.3. **Staff qualifications, skills and training** are ensured through the relevant HR and CPD policies and procedures. All EYFS classrooms have at least one qualified teacher and one Level 3 practitioner to lead learning and development. Supervision of staff who are in contact with families and children takes place termly between a member of the Senior Leadership Team and the staff member in order to provide support, coaching and mentoring and to ensure the wellbeing of staff.

- 7.4. Key Persons** are assigned to each child in an Early Years class. This key person will usually be the class teacher or in some instances, it may be a Level 3 or Level 4 practitioner.
- 7.5. Staff:child ratios** – Fountaindale School maintains high ratios of adults to children in order to fully meet individual needs. In normal circumstances EYFS classes will consist of no more than 10 children and will have appropriate staffing numbers, depending on the needs of the children. Students and trainee staff must hold a valid and current Paediatric First Aid qualification in order to be included in staff:child ratios.
- 7.6. Health welfare requirements** are covered by whole school health related policies.
- 7.7. Food and drink** – Fresh water is always available. In order to encourage communication of needs, children may be encouraged to positively engage with an adult using an appropriate form of communication to request a drink. Alternatively, children may have access to water bottles sent in from home if needed. Children are offered healthy snacks at appropriate points in the day. Where children have sensory needs relating to food and drink, staff will encourage and promote healthy eating and drinking using a small steps approach using motivational foods and drinks that are not high in sugar. Children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, that are healthy, balanced and nutritious. A Paediatric First Aid trained member of staff, will always be present whilst EYFS children are eating.
- 7.8. Allergies** are highlighted by the class team and taken into consideration when preparing snacks/lunch.
- 7.8.1.** When children are eating there should always be a member of staff in the room with a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate.
- 7.8.2.** They should be seated safely in appropriate chairs.
- 7.8.3.** They must be within sight and earshot of a member of staff.
- 7.9. Accidents and injuries** are covered by whole school risk assessment policies and procedures. All child accidents and injuries are recorded using CPOMS. Parents are informed about the nature and cause of the injury in an appropriate way, via telephone call, face to face or via Seesaw.
- 7.10. Managing children's behaviour** is covered by the whole school Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) policy and ethos. School has a dedicated team of PBS leads and coaches who can support classes where required.

- 7.11. The safety and suitability of premises, environment and equipment** is covered by whole school risk assessment, premises and health and safety policies. Our EYFS classroom fulfils the minimum spatial requirements as set out in the Early Years Statutory Framework 2025. EYFS also have continuous access to outdoor areas.
- 7.12. Risk assessments** are conducted following the whole school policy on risk assessments. All classes have a general classroom risk assessment, individual child risk assessments for personal care (ensuring children's privacy is considered), and individual child swimming risk assessments as standard. External visits are risk assessed by teachers and signed off by a Senior Leader.
- 7.13.** As a specialist setting, both our Early Years classes pay full regard to the **SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2014)**.
- 7.14. Information and Records** are covered by relevant whole school policies.

## 8. Roles and Responsibilities

**8.1.** The following staff are subject to this policy:

- **Teaching Assistants and Practitioners** will support and facilitate learning following the EYFS and whole school policies, forming positive relationships with children and engaging in high quality interactions throughout the school day.
- **Class teachers** will plan, deliver and assess children according the EYFS and other whole school policies. They will act as a key person for children and families so that positive relationships with both families and children are nurtured. Teachers will take a lead in engaging children in high quality learning experiences and interactions, providing a safe, organised learning space which supports the development of all learning areas.
- **Early Years Lead/Senior Leadership Team** will review the EYFS policy as required and ensure that this is shared with staff at all levels. They will provide supervision for key members of staff and ensure that appropriate CPD is provided. The lead will ensure that curriculum planning is completed and covers all the required areas of learning and development and that there is evidence of a balance of adult and child-initiated activities. The lead will also ensure that families are kept updated on their child's progress and achievements.



- **Headteacher** will line manage the Early Years Lead, providing them with the resources and skills needed to ensure the EYFS policy is implemented. The Headteacher will provide regular supervision to the Early Years Lead.
- **Nexus MAT** will performance manage the Headteacher and ensure local governance arrangements are in place and are effective.