Kirkheaton Primary School

Early Years Policy 2025/2026

Date of Next Review:

Date of Implementation:

Date Approved by Governos:

Policy Reviewer:

Rights Respect Responsibility Resilience

1.Introduction

Early Years

1.1 The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the statutory framework for the early education and care of children in the early years age group. The Early Years (EY) includes requirements for the provision of young children's welfare, learning and development that all providers must meet, as well as good practice guidance.
1.2 The four principles of the EYFS underpin all the guidance in Birth to 5 Matters, which is designed to show how these principles work together for children in the EYFS.
These are:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development

1.3 The Early Years applies to children from the age of 3-5 years old and is a uniquely important and precious time in a child's life and should be valued as such. The child's time in Early Years lays the foundations for all future learning, providing the base on which everything else builds.
1.4 Kirkheaton Primary School Early Years operates as a unit, even when the children work in different areas, staff focus on the needs of the children and their learning. Working closely as a unit reduces the number of transitions young children experience, as for some children this is a very traumatic experience. Allowing a child to stay in the same environment, with familiar adults and routines, until they are emotionally secure reduces stress for the child and helps build up their confidence and become emotionally secure.
1.5 Children learn at different paces and in the Early Years. This allows children to learn at their own developmental level and not at the chronological level. There is no limit to what new starters can achieve, they can learn alongside older children and have access to their teaching and activities. The Early Years Unit works closely with Year 1 children and adults and this allows children to make the transition from Early Years to Year 1 a calm and relaxed one.
2. Aims

- To provide a safe, happy and stimulating learning environment that can be accessed by all children
- To promote confidence and positive self-image
- To provide a stimulating environment where learning is fun
- To establish a partnership with parents for the education of their children.
- To provide a well balanced curriculum for each child to develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually.
- To encourage all children to be independent learners.

- To strive towards excellence in all we do and create for the children; this includes the resources, the environment, the activities and most importantly the teaching and learning which takes place.

At Kirkheaton Primary School, our Early Years provision is guided by our core values: Rights, Respect, Resilience, and Responsibility. These values underpin our curriculum, relationships, and expectations, ensuring every child is nurtured to become a confident and responsible learner.
We value, seek to understand, and identify the potential in everyone. In our setting we promote values which include:

- British democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs (and no faith)

We do this alongside an appreciation and celebration of difference and diversity (reflecting all protected characteristics and social class). We promote rights and accept that rights come with responsibility.
Valuing our cultural heritage, we explore our local, regional and national heritage and British history, both positive and negative ' learning from history and taking pride in positive contributions made.

3. Principles

To ensure high quality of education and care in the Early Years, we;

- Employ staff who understand child development
- Create an atmosphere of mutual respect
- Plan a relevant, rich and stimulating and carefully structured curriculum
- Observe, assess and review, building on what individual children already know and can do
- Plan transitions between home and schoo
- Use effective communication systems with parents, carers and other agencies.

4. Teaching and Learning

4.1 The Learning and Development theme of the EY is made up of seven areas. All areas of Learning and Development are inter connected and of equal importance. The areas of Learning and Development are:

4.2 Prime Areas:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Communication and Language
3. Physical Development

The prime areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas. The prime areas continue to be fundamental throughout the EY.

4.3 Specific Areas:

4. Literacy
5. Understanding the World
6. Expressive arts and design
7. Mathematics

4.4 Specific areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas, and provide important contexts for learning.

5. Characteristics of Effective Learning

The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment ' playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically ' underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.
The Unique Child reaches out to relate to people and things through the Characteristics of Effective Learning, which move through all areas of learning.
Children develop in the context of relationships and the environment around them. This is unique to each family, and reflects individual communities and cultures.

5.1 According to the new Statutory Framework for the EY, the Early Years seeks to provide:

- Quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind:
- A secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly;
- Partnership working between practitioners, with parents and/or carers, child minders and other setting children attend;
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

5.2 The learning and development requirements cover:

- The areas of learning and development which must shape activities and experiences(educational programmes) for children in all early years settings;

- The early learning goals that providers must help children to achieve (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five); and
- Assessment arrangements for measuring progress (and requirements for reporting to parents and/or carers).

6. Overarching principles from the EY

6.1 These are as follows:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and

6.2 Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early year's provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

6.3 Early Years staff aim to make each child's time fun as well as educational. The curriculum is structured to provide opportunities for Child Initiated activities as well Adult Initiated and Adult Led activities. Adults will lead structured activities in small and large groups. We build upon children's prior experiences; develop their practical skills through hands on activities, which the children find interesting and fun. Teaching staff are responsible for keeping children's learning journey folders

Welcoming each child individually into our setting and assist the parent/carer with toilet training. We will help and encourage a child to have independent toilet skills and change any accidents. We only accept children in pants unless the child has a medical condition.

- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents.
- Offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents/carers. There is regular communication with home through the half termly newsletters, the use of a Learning Journey home/school book and discussions with parents/carers at the start of the day and at home time.

15. Liaison

15.1 Good communication aids smooth transitions. We liaise with;

- Parents/carers as first educators- Through See Saw
- Pre-school settings such as playgroups (Spring) child minders and nursery schools
- Key Stage 1 staff

16. Behaviour Management & Positive Handling

16.1 Refer to school Behaviour Policy and Intimate Care Policy; as the children in Early Years are much younger we encourage adults to make it clear as to why the child has to be spoken to and how they can put their mistake right. If children become distressed or upset they will be comforted by an adult, appropriately, and will not be left feeling upset or alone.

16.2 We understand that occasionally children within Early Years will have a toileting accident, we ask parents to bring changes of clothing so children can be changed discreetly. See intimate care policy.

17. Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. Through this process the children learn to think through their play and begin to play with purpose.

We follow Kirkheaton Primary School's Safeguarding Policy and adhere to the statutory guidance outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). Intimate care routines are conducted in line with our Intimate Care Policy, ensuring dignity and respect. Medical needs are managed according to our Medical Policy, with appropriate staff training and parental communication.