

CHANCERY EDUCATION TRUST

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

(EYFS) POLICY

DECEMBER 2025

Next Review Date: December 2026

Chancery Education Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Chancery Education Trust – Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy –
December 2025

Executive Summary of the CET EYFS Policy December 2025

Purpose of the EYFS

- The EYFS sets the statutory framework for children from birth to five, ensuring they are kept safe, healthy and supported to learn and develop
- It promotes school readiness, providing the foundations for future learning and life
- Children complete the EYFS at the end of Reception
- The policy is reviewed annually and published on academy websites, with changes approved by the Local Governing Board

Core Aims

The EYFS at Chancery Education Trust aims to ensure:

- Quality and consistency across early years provision so all children make good progress
- Learning that is planned around individual needs and interests
- Strong partnerships with parents, carers and professionals
- Equality of opportunity, inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice
- A secure foundation for lifelong learning and development

Teaching, Learning and Play

- Play underpins all learning and development, supporting children socially, emotionally, physically, creatively and intellectually
- Teaching is informed by Development Matters (non-statutory guidance)
- Learning takes place through planned, purposeful play, indoors and outdoors
- Provision balances adult-led and child-initiated activities
- Phonics is taught daily using a DfE-approved synthetic phonics programme, with regular opportunities to apply skills across the curriculum

The Four EYFS Principles

Provision is underpinned by four key principles:

1. Unique Child

- Every child is recognised as capable, confident and resilient

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- Planning meets the needs of all children, including those with SEND, medical needs or additional educational needs
- Support includes individual learning plans, inclusive resources and adaptive teaching

2. Positive Relationships

- Parents and carers are recognised as children's first educators
- Each child has a key person who supports wellbeing, security and progress
- Strong partnerships are developed through induction, regular communication and family involvement

3. Enabling Environments

- Carefully planned indoor and outdoor environments support learning across all EYFS areas
- Children are encouraged to develop independence, confidence and decision-making
- Resources reflect diversity and the wider world
- Observations of children's interests inform planning

4. Learning and Development

- Children learn and develop at different rates
- High-quality adult interactions support language development, thinking and understanding through modelling, scaffolding and questioning

Areas of Learning

The EYFS includes seven areas of learning, all interconnected and delivered through play:

Prime Areas:

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

Specific Areas:

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

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Assessment

- Baseline assessments are completed in Nursery and Reception
- The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is statutory
- Ongoing formative assessment includes:
 - Observations
 - Discussion and questioning
 - Evidence of independent learning
 - Parent contributions
- The EYFS Profile is completed at the end of Reception and shared with parents, Year 1 staff and the Local Authority
- Assessment judgements are supported through moderation within schools and across the Trust

Transitions

- Transitions are carefully planned to support continuity of learning and emotional wellbeing
- This includes:
 - Induction and introductory sessions
 - Information sharing between Nursery, Reception and Year 1 staff
 - Classroom visits for children
 - Responsive curriculum planning based on transition information

Safeguarding and Supporting Policies

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is a shared responsibility
- The EYFS policy aligns with key Trust policies including safeguarding, SEND, equality, health and safety and assessment guidance

Monitoring and Review

- The policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with statutory requirement
- EYFS provision is monitored through assessment outcomes, moderation and school development planning

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EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

Introduction

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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) refers to children from birth to five years of age. At our Academy Schools, children complete their final year of the EYFS in reception.

The policy is reviewed annually, although we may vary or amend it periodically to ensure that we fulfil our obligation around EYFS. All proposed changes to this policy would be made following the approval from the Local Governing Board. This policy is available publicly on the Academy School websites.

The EYFS 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 and with parents and/or carers
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported
- 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

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At our Academy School we aim to achieve this by:

- Setting the standards for individual learning, development and care to enable each child to fulfil their potential
- Providing for equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice (refer to Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy)
- Creating the framework for partnership by working with parents, professionals and other outside agencies
- Ensure that learning and development is planned around the individual needs and interests of the child and informed by the use of on-going observational assessment
- Laying a secure foundation for future learning through the provision of a key person
- Individual learning plans and enabling environments

Play

At our Academy School we recognise that play underpins all learning and development for young children. Most children play spontaneously although some may need adult support. It is through play that children develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. By providing well-planned experiences based on children's spontaneous play, both indoors and outside we support our children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. Through play the children investigate and explore unknown situations. They learn to develop friendships and how to foster positive relationships. They also learn to explore their surroundings and take risks in a safe environment.

Teaching and learning

Our planning stems from the non-statutory curriculum guidance 'Development Matters'.

In planning and guiding children's activities we reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. We provide learning opportunities in 7 areas, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, Literacy, Mathematics, Physical Development, Understanding the world and Expressive Arts and Design. We approach all aspects of the learning we have to cover through play.

Phonics are taught through daily discrete lessons in both EYFS and in Key Stage 1. Phonics for reading and writing are taught explicitly, as well as across the curriculum so that pupils regularly practice applying their phonic knowledge and skills. Pupils learn sets of sounds, spelling rules, blending for reading and segmenting for writing, following the DfE approved synthetic phonics programme.

The early year's experiences we offer our children are based on four overarching principles:

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

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Unique Child:

Every Child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

At our Academy Schools we believe every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We give every child the opportunity to achieve their best by having realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children across the areas of learning and development. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), children with additional educational needs, children with medical needs, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children by:

- Using individual learning plans
- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, skills, experience and interests
- Planning opportunities to develop their well-being, self-esteem and confidence, including experiences that provide risk and challenge
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- Providing a secure and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is respected and valued
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination or stereotyping
- Planning challenging and appropriate experiences for higher achieving children
- Monitoring children's progress and providing additional support when identified
- Using age appropriate ways to seek the views of all children through observing, listening and sensitive discussion
- Seeking advice from specialist agencies where appropriate

Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

At our Academy Schools we respect that parents are the child's first and future educators. We believe that the positive relationships we build are the key to effective partnerships between all practitioners, parents, carers and families. Each child has a key person, i.e. the person with whom they form a special attachment. The key person is responsible for ensuring that the child feels safe and cared for, in order to develop a positive sense of well-being and achievement.

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We meet the needs of all of our children by:

- Developing positive relationships with parents during the induction programme
- Working with parents/carers right from the start to find out about their child's needs, feelings and interests
- Developing effective partnerships with families throughout the year by offering regular opportunities for them to talk about their child's progress
- Encouraging families to talk to their child's teacher to foster two-way communication with parents / carers and families
- Helping parents to support children's learning and development
- Recognising that friendships and relationships are an important part of a child's development from birth
- Encouraging parents to help in our Academy Schools and become involved in a range of enrichment activities, family learning and extended Schools/Academies

Enabling Environment

Children learn and develop in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

At our Academy Schools we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. Our environment is carefully planned both indoors and outdoors to help children achieve across all aspects of the EYFS. Opportunities are provided for children to take part in a wide range of experiences and to extend their interests.

We meet the needs of all our children by:

- Encouraging children to communicate and talk about their experiences
- Developing children's independence and decision making by providing an environment where children can freely access resources and select from the experiences on offer
- Using the outdoor environment to enhance learning and development
- Analysing children's responses to different situations and identifying their future learning needs
- Using materials and equipment that reflects both the community that the children come from and the wider world
- Encouraging a positive attitude to learning by ensuring our planning begins by observing the children in order to consider their current interests, developmental stage and learning style
- We work in partnership with parents/carers, other settings, other professionals and with individuals and groups in the community to support children's learning and development

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Learning and Development

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

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of Learning and Development: All areas are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. Children should mostly develop the 3 prime areas first

These are:

1. Communication and language;
2. Physical development; and
3. Personal, social and emotional development.

These prime areas are those most essential for a child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in the 4 specific areas. Providers must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

These are:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the world
4. Expressive arts and design

All of the 7 areas are delivered through planned and purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led (child working with the adult) and child-initiated (child chosen) activities. Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside. Daily routines and interactions ensure that children develop their language and vocabulary across all areas of learning and development and can communicate and manage their thoughts and feelings. Staff engage children in high-quality interactions to develop their knowledge and vocabulary; they help children articulate what they know and understand by scaffolding, modelling, extending and developing their ideas.

Observations undertaken by all practitioners are used to plan children's next steps of learning in their individual learning plans and progress is recorded on the EYFS profile.

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At our Academy Schools we ensure that the requirements of the EYFS are met through all seven areas of learning and development, in order for children to make progress towards the early learning goals, which are the established expectations for most children to reach by the end of the reception year. Progress is tracked termly and parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's assessment. This information is then passed on to Year 1 to inform future planning.

EYFS Assessment

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) has been a statutory assessment since September 2021. It provides a snapshot of where the pupils are when they arrive at school.

In accordance with our assessment policy, each child will be assessed in their first half-term of Nursery and Reception to provide a baseline. On-going assessment (formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff will use daily observations and assessments throughout the Nursery and Reception Year; they include child-initiated tasks and teacher led activities in the inside and outside learning environments. Observations, samples of work and photographs for each child are recorded. The EYFS Profile will be completed at the end of the Reception year. It is a holistic, best fit judgement about the child's development and readiness for Year 1. Data will be sent to the local authority who will then submit it onto the Department for Education (DfE).

Assessment Sources:

- Observation: Watching children during independent and targeted activities.
- Discussion & Questioning: Engaging with children to understand their thinking.
- Evidence of Independent Learning: Collecting examples of what children do on their own.
- Parent Input: Incorporating insights from families about the child's development.

Professional Judgement:

- Teachers use their knowledge of the child and expertise to interpret evidence.
- Assessment is not just about ticking boxes—it's about understanding progress and attainment in context.

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We ensure that our end of EYFS assessments are reliable through:

- knowledge of the child gained through observation and interaction
- the environment which enables the child to flourish to their full capacity
- assessments and a range of relevant external contributors
- moderation across EYFS team
- moderation across the Trust
- reports from external professionals and agencies

Transitions

We are committed to ensuring smooth and well-planned transitions for every child to support continuity of learning and emotional well-being. At each transition point, we:

- **Recognize individual needs** and work in partnership with families, previous settings, and professionals involved with the child.
- **Provide introductory sessions** for children moving into Nursery and Reception to build familiarity with the environment and staff.
- **Facilitate staff collaboration:**
 - Reception teachers meet Nursery staff in the final term to discuss each child's development.
 - Year 1 teachers meet Early Years staff to review progress against the Early Learning Goals.
- **Offer classroom visits** so children can meet their new teachers and explore their future learning spaces.
- **Plan responsive curricula** informed by transition discussions to meet the needs of all learners.

Our approach ensures that every child feels secure, supported, and ready for the next stage of their education.

Supporting Policies and Useful Links

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- Accessibility Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Child Protections and Safeguarding Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives Statement
- Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- SEND policy
- [DfE Early Years Foundation Stage Profile 2023 handbook](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education](#)
- [DfE Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) Framework](#)
- [\(Standards and Testing Agency\) - Reception Baseline Assessment and Reporting Arrangements](#)
- [Early Years Foundation Stage: Assessment and Reporting Arrangements \(ARA\)](#)
- [DfE Development Matters - Non-Statutory Curriculum Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#)

Monitoring and Implementation Policy

The policy is reviewed annually, although the Trust may vary or amend it periodically to ensure that we fulfil our obligation around the Early Years Foundation Stage Policy. All proposed changes to this policy would be made following the approval from the Committee.

	Name	Date
Policy written by	CET Board	December 2025
Review by Committee	CET Board	December 2025
Approved by Committee	Local Governing Board	March 2026
Adopted by Governing Board	Local Governing Board	June 2026
To be reviewed annually		
Review by	December 2026	

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