



Dunchurch Boughton C of E Infant Academy and Nursery

Roots to grow. Wings to fly.

Policy Version	Date	Author	Changes
V1	November 2025	Suzanne Marson	Initial Issue – new policy written to the new statutory Early Year Foundation Stage Framework

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (published September 2025)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- Public sector Equality Duty
- All current academy policies, including the policies published by the Diocese of Coventry Multi Academy Trust

Vision and Ethos

Our vision as a Church of England Infant school, deeply rooted in a strong Christian tradition, is to develop happy children with enquiring minds. We support children to develop a spirit of curiosity and respect for themselves, others, and the environment which we live in so that they will have the skills and resilience to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

As part of the Diocese of Coventry Multi Academy Trust, we have a shared vision of ‘Living life in all its fullness’, educating for

- wisdom, knowledge and skills: enabling discipline, confidence and delight in seeking wisdom and knowledge, and developing talents in all areas of life.
- hope and aspiration: enabling healing, repair and renewal, coping wisely when things go wrong, opening horizons and guiding people into ways of fulfilling them.
- community and living well together: a core focus on relationships, participation in communities and the qualities of character that enable people to flourish together.
- dignity and respect: the basic principle of respect for the value and preciousness of each person, treating each person as a unique individual of inherent worth.

Our theologically rooted school vision is based on the Parable of the Mustard Seed, taken from the Gospel of Matthew, reflecting our local rural community and the young age of our children.

Jesus told his followers the Parable of the Mustard Seed:

- A farmer went to plant some seeds in his field.
- He looked at the mustard seeds – they looked very small and not at all important.
- The farmer planted the seeds in good soil and took great care to ensure they had everything that they needed.
- Slowly, the little seeds grew into small plants.
- Each day the farmer tended to the plants, and they continued to grow taller and taller still.
- The plants grew into the biggest of all plants, into the size of a tree! The birds came and nested in the branches of the trees.

- The parable teaches us that the smallest things we do can grow into something bigger than we could ever imagine.

The meaning of the parable can be interpreted as below:

- Just like the mustard seeds who appeared small in the beginning, children start their journey at the academy at a young age.
- Dunchurch is the good soil for the children, providing them with the teachings of academic learning, values, learning behaviours, extra-curricular trip and visitors, character and personal development and the word of God.
- Provided with high quality teaching, learning experiences, and a development of character the children begin to develop their roots.
- Through the development of values and learning behaviours, children persevere and become resilient, and begin to learn how they can begin to make a difference in the world. The roots become stronger still, supporting the children to grow.
- As farmers, the adults continuously tend to the children with love, supporting them to develop deep roots that enable them to grow and flourish into all that they can be.
- Just like the branches of the mustard tree that are safe spaces for the birds, our school is a welcoming safe space for all, regardless of background or ability.
- Having developed strong roots to grow, just like the birds in the parable, our children are ready to grow their wings and fly onto their next stage of education, be that their next class or next school.
- Great things come from small beginnings – just like our small children who have grown and flourished in their time at school.

At Dunchurch, we strive to provide the rich soil that enables our children and adults to develop the deep roots to enable them to grow and flourish, from small beginnings comes great things. We aim that everyone feels valued and has respect for themselves, others and the environment in which we live, living together as a school family, just as the birds did within the plant. Within our community, we nurture growth and support everyone to have the courage to face challenge and the resilience to persevere, even when confronted by difficulties. We endeavour to provide abundant opportunities which provide a platform for unique strengths and talents to blossom, providing all with the wings to fly.

Aims

This policy sets out our approach to ensuring a high quality of teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, underpinned by our Christian ethos which is woven through all aspects of school life.

At Dunchurch Boughton C of E Infant Academy and Nursery, we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children, thereby providing them with a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable experiences that enable children to become confident and independent learners. We value the individual child, and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and to help every child to reach their full potential. We ensure that children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the foundational knowledge and skills needed for learning, development

and good progress throughout the Early Years and beyond. Teaching and learning are of a high quality and consistency so that every child makes good progress, with the aim that no child gets left behind.

As outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage, 'All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on their future life chances.' We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS, the non-statutory Development Matters, and the principles that guide and shape practice within Early Years settings:

- ❖ 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 with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- ❖ Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or those who are otherwise considered vulnerable.

We ensure that every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

Structure of the EYFS

Early Years are organised within their year groups. There is a 2 ½ - 3 year old nursery room, a pre-school unit and a reception unit. Both the pre-school and reception unit consist of two classrooms. Children are taught in their classes during lesson inputs and then mix as a year group during continuous provision.

Early Years is overseen by a Nursery Manager and Reception Lead, Together, they make up the role of Early Years Lead.

Deliberate choices are made when setting up the continuous provision environment. There is always a home corner role play which is enhanced depending on the times of year and key learning taking place. Key resources have numbers, shapes and shadows within the environment to maximise learning opportunities at all times, even during tidy up time. There are plentiful opportunities for children to engage with open ended loose parts and self-selected learning tasks through the different areas of learning, with research demonstrating that this provides opportunities for more complex play and thinking. Outside areas provide lots of opportunities for children to develop their gross motor, communication and language and personal, social and emotional development skills.

There are high expectations in place for all children. Clear routines are in place, enabling school to become a highly predictable place with clear expectations, supporting children to feel safe in their environment.

Learning and Development – Our 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

Our curriculum has been designed to align with the Development Matters Framework, ensuring that children have the foundational knowledge that they need to achieve their Early Learning Goals and be successful in Key Stage One. There is a clear progression throughout all subjects within school.

Our curriculum is designed to recognise children's prior learning, both from previous settings and their experiences at home. It is coherent, progressive and ambitious for all, enabling children to have the knowledge and skills they need to be ready for their next stage of education. Within the Early Years curriculum, there is a focus on ensuring that children acquire a wide vocabulary and learn to communicate effectively, which can be evidenced within whole school progression maps. The curriculum is fully aligned with the school curriculum, whilst still maintaining an early years approach.

We believe that high level engagement ensures high level attainment. We therefore provide an engaging curriculum that maximises opportunities for meaningful cross-curricular links and learning experiences, as well as promoting the unique child by offering extended periods of play and sustained thinking. We develop children's interests and ideas to foster a lifelong love of learning both in and outside of school.

Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. There are ample opportunities for children to learn through play across the EYFS. As children grow older and move into the reception year, there is a greater focus on teaching the foundational skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning, preparing the children for Key Stage One.

Learning is not left to chance; direct teaching takes place throughout all Early Years year groups in school. Children learn through a carefully timetabled balance of child-initiated and adult-directed play and activities, enabling adults to challenge and support children whilst also allowing opportunities for self-initiated play. Small group work sessions enable the teacher to systematically check for understanding, identify and respond to misconceptions quickly, and provide real-time verbal feedback which results in a strong impact on the acquisition of new learning.

The curriculum is planned for using both the classroom and outdoor areas. Deliberate decisions are made about the areas of learning that are enhanced and progress throughout the year. The indoor and outdoor areas do not mirror each other, but instead complement each other. Children have free access to both indoor and outdoor areas when in continuous provision.

Characteristics of effective learning are taken into account when planning the provision:

- ❖ **Playing and exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'

- ❖ **Active learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements
- ❖ **Creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

The provision in place, which includes a balance of guided activities, adult-led tasks, and loose-parts play, allows children to explore and learn actively, think creatively and critically, and take safe risks in their learning.

Learning and Development – Adult Interactions

Our enabling environment and warm, skilful adult interactions support the children to become strong and independent as they begin to link learning to their play and exploration right from day one. We develop and support adults to ensure high-quality interactions with children, demonstrating metacognition and sustained, shared thinking to solve problems, widen vocabulary and develop critical thinking skills.

Sustained shared thinking is promoted as an approach when adults interact with children, providing a narrative to their play, asking questions, and guiding further learning. Adults model communication skills and vocabulary development, along with encouraging children to explore, explain their ideas, evaluate their activities, and ask and answer questions through their interactions.

Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support. Assessment does not involve long breaks from children or involve excessive paperwork. Instead, assessments are mainly drawn from practitioner knowledge of the children and their judgement against the school progression matrix and statutory assessments. Practitioners are not required to prove these judgements through a collation of physical evidence such as learning journals.

-Assessment for learning is used:

- To understand children's interests and what they know and can do, enabling shaping of teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge.
- During the lesson to identify gaps in knowledge, deepen understanding and correct misconceptions.
- Within adult interactions through continuous provision to identify gaps in knowledge, deepen understanding and correct misconceptions.
- Using low stakes quizzes and retrieval to inform short term planning and adaptive teaching.

-Summative assessment is used:

- Termly to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, and to identify any children needing additional support.
- To evaluate the impact of the planned curriculum on all groups of children.
- To review and improve the long term plans and enrichment opportunities.
- To assess children's speech and language development – this includes a WellComm screen for every child on entry, repeated at the beginning of the school year.

Statutory assessments take place within the reception year group:

-Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA):

- Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the reception baseline assessment.

- The requirements of the RBA are set out in Annexe B of the statutory framework.
- The results of the RBA are made available to parents on request.

-EYFS Profile:

- This is completed for each child at the end of the EYFS, no later than the 30th June, assessing against the 17 Early Learning Goals. This assessment is carried out for all children, including those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Teachers assess pupils using their knowledge of what the child understands and can do, indicating whether they are:
 - Meeting expected levels of development ('expected')
 - Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')
- The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. It provides a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, demonstrating their attainment against expected levels and their readiness for year one.
- The results are shared with parents and/or carers for their child via their school report in July, along with commentaries on the different learning areas.
- The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with local schools and those in the trust, to ensure consistent assessment judgements.
- EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.
- Reception teachers must ensure that a copy of the profile report is given to the child's next teacher in year one, with the profile informing a handover discussion between the teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs. This informs the planning of learning and activities in year one.
- In exceptional circumstances, after discussion and only in agreement with parents and/or carers, a child might remain in EYFS provision beyond the end of the academic year in which they reach age 5. In these exceptional cases, assessment should continue throughout the child's time within EYFS provision, and the Profile should be completed once only, at the end of the year before the child moves into year one. If the child is only continuing in EYFS provision for part of the following year, the Profile should be completed at the end of the child's time in the EYFS before they move into year one. The data should then be submitted at the end of that academic year with the rest of the cohort. It is recommended that the decision for the child to remain in the EYFS is made before starting the Profile for the cohort. However, if the decision is made after the Profile has already been completed, then a new assessment will need to be made and submitted the following year with the new cohort. We will discuss our intention to defer the child's statutory assessment with the Local Authority. This will ensure the child's data is not considered missing when we submit Profile outcomes for the current cohort.

Statutory assessment also takes place when children are between 2 and 3 years old. The nursery progress check at age two is different from the health check carried out by a Health Visitor. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed. It also focuses on any areas of possible concern, which may indicate a disability, special educational need or developmental delay. These checks should be undertaken by the nursery where the child spends more time. If we are the only nursery setting for the child, or if a child spends more time at our nursery than another setting, practitioners must carry out the two year old check when a child is between two and three years of age. The Nursery Manager oversees this and ensures that the check takes place, and a copy placed on the child's record. We have a school letter and recording format in place, based upon the non-statutory guidance: [Progress check at age two.](#)

Non-statutory assessments take place across the EYFS year groups, including:

- A baseline upon entry to the year group

- Termly assessments against the EYFS areas of learning
- Wellcomm screening at the start of each year group, with further support and screening taking place where children score red or amber
- Teaching Talking Profiles for identified children

Inclusion

Our Deputy Headteacher is also our Inclusion Lead and oversees this area across school, including in Early Years. Our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policies, along with procedures in school such as our English as an Additional Language (EAL) framework apply to all areas of our Early Years provision. Where a practitioner has a concern about a child's progress, staff discuss this with the child's parents / carers and the relevant staff in school. The SENDCo will support staff to consider if a child needs and additional support, including whether they may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support. For children whose home language is not English, we immerse them in the use of English, using our EAL framework to identify key words and phrases that will support the children to be successful. For full information, please see out SEND policies and EAL framework.

Staffing

Within our Early Years, we have a team of well-trained, skilled practitioners who hold full and relevant qualifications. All children have a named key worker. In nursery, this is a named adult. In reception, this is the class teacher. The key worker has a deep understanding of the individual needs of the children, along with an understanding of their safety and welfare requirements. One of the roles of the key worker is to keep parents informed about their child's learning and development. Parent's evening sessions are held by each key worker twice over the course of the academic year, along with a written report being issued in July.

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe, secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the people caring for them.

The school takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously and follows the safeguarding and welfare requirements that cover the steps that providers must take to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

- A full Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is in place which applies to all children in school, including Early Years. This can be found on the policies page of the school website.
- The lead Designated Safeguarding Lead for both reception and nursery is the Headteacher. There are multiple Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads in place (please see the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy).
- A full Safer Recruitment and Employment procedure is in place to ensure that only those who are suitable work within school and nursery. This includes enhanced criminal records checks, barred list checks and references. The procedure can be found on the policies page of the Multi Academy Trust.

- A Whistleblowing policy is in place. This can be found on the policies page of the Multi Academy Trust.
- Our school attendance expectations and procedures are also applicable and outlined for our nursery children. The full policy can be found on the policies page of the school website.
- Smoking and vaping is strictly prohibited from all areas of the school site, regardless of if children are present or not present.
- Staff members must never be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. Any suspicions that this is the case will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy.
- If a staff member is taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, they should seek medical advice. Staff members must only work directly with children if the medical advice received confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that person's ability to look after children properly. All medication on the premises must be stored securely, and out of reach of children at all times, in a locked storage area.
- A full relationships and behaviour policy is in place, which is also inclusive of the EYFS.
- An Intimate Care policy and logs in place for those children who require intimate care. There are suitable toilets and hand basins available within the Early Years space. Privacy is considered where children need support with changing.
- Children are usually within sight and hearing of staff, and always within sight or hearing e.g. when using the toilet.
- The Early Years staff to child ratios on pages 32 to 34 of the statutory framework are followed at all times.
- The floor spaces used, including indoor and outdoor spaces, are fit for purpose and suitable for the ages of children within school. The indoor space requirements outlined in pages 39 and 40 of the statutory framework are met in full.
- There are full fire evacuation and lockdown procedures in place throughout school, this is inclusive of the Early Years areas.
- We do not provide sleeping areas. Children who join us must be able to cope with a full day without needing a daily nap.
- There are full procedures in place so that we are aware of who is on site.
- Children never leave the premises unsupervised and are only released into the care of individuals where the parents have notified us prior to collection.
- Where children attend an offsite visit, regards to ratios and risk assessments are put into place. The trip leader is responsible for producing the risk assessment.
- We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by insert your approach here, for example by talking to children about:
 - The effects of eating too many sweet things

- The importance of brushing your teeth

Food, Drink and Safer Eating

All children are supervised when eating and are always within sight and hearing of an adult. At least one paediatric first aider is always present when children are eating. Children are provided with a snack of fruit and milk during the morning. Children sit together as a group to have their fruit and milk. Parents can choose to provide their child with their own packed lunch, or they can receive a school hot lunch. The children have their lunch in the school hall, sat together as a group.

Providing healthy, balanced and nutritious food ensures that all children:

- Get the right amount of nutrients and energy they need while they are growing rapidly, which is especially important for children who might not have access to healthy food at home. This can help prevent children from becoming overweight or obese.
- Develop positive eating habits early on. Children's early experiences with food can shape future eating habits. This can impact children's long-term health including maintaining a healthy weight, and good oral health.

Our hot school meals are provided through a catering company whose contract sits with the Diocese of Coventry Multi Academy Trust. The catering company ensure that the meals are based on the 4 main food groups (fruit and vegetables; potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates; dairy or dairy alternatives; and beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins) and that nutrition guidance is met, including for the early years. There is a three weekly rolling cycle across the seasons to ensure that the children are eating a variety of food. The contractor follows appropriate preparation of foods to minimise choking, and other staff are vigilant for these when children bring their own packed lunch. Staff in the setting are aware of allergies and know what steps to take in an emergency, including the paediatric first aiders in the room.

When children in the EYFS are eating, an adult must be facing them. This is so that staff can spot any signs of choking, food sharing and any allergic reactions. Dietary information is gained before children start nursery or school, so staff are always aware of any children with allergies. If a choking incident takes place, or a child ingests food that they are allergic to, staff must complete an accident/near miss form to ensure that this is recorded. An investigation will then take place to address any identified actions needing to be taken.

Fresh drinking water is always freely available to children at all times. Each child has their own named water bottle where they can freely access this. Only fresh tap water and plain milk is provided for children to drink.

First Aid and Medical Conditions

There are a number of paediatric first aiders within school, and there is always a paediatric first aider on site and available at all times when children are present, including on trips out of school. All first aid qualifications are renewed within a three year time period. A list of staff who are paediatric first aiders is on display around school. There are full policies in place for Health and Safety and Medication and Management Procedures through the Multi Academy Trust. If medication requires specialist knowledge, such as epilepsy or diabetes medication, then staff will receive training. Prescription medications are only administered when prescribed by a doctor, dentist,

nurse or pharmacist. Medicines containing aspirin are only given if they have been prescribed by a doctor. Medication is only given where written permission for that specific medication has been obtained from a parent / carer.

A first aid kit with appropriate items for use of children is always accessible within school. If a child injures themselves, this is recorded in the accident book. In the case of a more serious injury, such as an injury requiring a hospital visit, a broken bone or time off school, this is recorded on an accident form which is logged via the Multi Academy Trust Health and Safety Advisors. An investigation takes place by a senior member of staff when such an incident has been reported.

Staff inform parents / carers of all accidents or injuries on the same day. In all cases, an accident slip will be sent home. A minor head bump also results in a text sent home to parents or carers. In more serious cases, such as where a broken bone is suspected or it is felt a child needs to visit the hospital, a telephone call to the parents or carer is always made.

Staff Supervision

A Supervision procedure is in place, outlining regular supervision for staff who work in the EYFS. Effective supervision provides support, coaching and training for the practitioner and promotes the interests of children. Supervision fosters a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement, which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.

The Headteacher is responsible for supervising the Early Years leaders. The Early Years leaders are responsible for supervising the other staff who work within reception or nursery.

Supervisions are carried out on a termly basis.

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2025.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where the information can be found
Safeguarding policy and procedures	Safeguarding and child protection policy – school website
Procedure for responding to illness	First aid procedure – internally within school Health and Safety policy – Multi Academy Trust website
Administering medicines policy	Medication policy and management procedure – Multi Academy Trust website

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where the information can be found
Emergency evacuation procedure	Health and Safety policy – Multi Academy Trust website Internal procedures – internally within school
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	Safeguarding and child protection policy – school website Volunteering appointment and safeguarding checks guide – Multi Academy Trust website Internal procedures – internally within school
Procedures for a parent/carer failing to collect a child and for missing children	Procedure for a parent/carer failing to collect a child – available internally within school Attendance policy – School website Procedure for children's absence and children missing in education – available internally within school
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	Complaints policy – Multi Academy Trust website