



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents/carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

3. Structure of the EYFS

Children begin the EYFS in Little Otters, starting at age 2 and 9 months (the term they turn 3 years old).

The EYFS team create a timetable that allows the adults to work in both settings, facilitating a smooth transition for the children. During the last term of the academic year, pre-school children (from all settings) are given the opportunity to attend weekly, one-hour, induction sessions to familiarise themselves with the school, Reception class and adults before starting school in the September.

Children then transition into the reception class. The experiences that the children meet enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning. The children learn through a careful balance of child initiated and adult led activities.

During child-initiated learning, children are encouraged to choose activities, moving from inside to outside as they wish. Emphasis is placed on children talking about their choices, playing independently, and accessing the resources they need. Adults participate in children's play to secure and extend their learning, as well as building on their interests. Planning is scaffolded around interactions during child-initiated learning to ensure that the curriculum reflects both the children's needs and interests. Adult-led activities are interspersed throughout the day to teach specific skills, such as phonics or number, but the majority of the children's day is spent learning through play.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 EYFS statutory framework.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. Underpinning these areas are the three ‘Characteristics of Effective Learning’:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and Critical Thinking

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff work closely with the SENDCo to consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children’s activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

5. Assessment

At Slimbridge Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Experienced staff review each child’s progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child’s development. This ‘progress check’ highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). Little Otters use a ‘Baseline Assessment Opportunities’ guide to aid tracking of pre-school progress.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

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

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Before children start their first year at school, parents are invited to a 'Reception Induction' meeting and there is an opportunity for a home visit from the teacher and teaching assistant. During the first term, reception parents are invited to a meeting in school to find out more about the curriculum, especially the teaching of phonics and how to help their child at home.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development at routine parent appointments and through regular updates via the online learning journal, 'Tapestry'. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Within the Little Otter's setting, each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. In Reception class and in Little Otters, the Teacher/key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The Teacher/key person/SEND CO (Miss Hannah Beale) also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by encouraging healthy eating, including snacks and talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- Hand washing, particularly after using the toilet and before eating.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be monitored by the EYFS Governor, reviewed and approved annually by the Full Governing Board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy

Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy