



The Forest CE Federation

**Early Years Foundation Stage
Policy
2025 – 2026**

Forest Federation
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” (EYFS 2012)

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), effective from 1 September 2025.

A Unique Child

At the Forest Federation we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as achievement assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our schools.

In our schools we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, 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 through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs.

- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

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

Learning activities in the EYFS at the Forest Federation are planned to meet the seven areas of learning and development which are:

Three Prime Areas (these areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive)

The 3 prime areas:

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

Four Specific Areas (through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied)

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

Through planning, observation and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- 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 celebrating their achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

At the Forest Federation we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), effective from 1 September 2025.

- follow the school safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Paediatric first aid (PFA) We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.
- promote the welfare of children.

- promote good health, encourage healthy eating and prevent the spread of infection by taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so. Adults working with children are DBS checked.
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs. The Reception staff meet daily to discuss observations of children and parents/carers are invited to contribute to learning journeys to help us plan effectively.
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill. (In the case of illness during school time parents or carers will be notified. It is the school's policy that children remain at home for 48 hours after having an upset stomach or having been sick in order to prevent the spread of illness).

Staff work collaboratively to ensure we meet all these requirements.

Safer eating

While children are eating, there will always be at least 1 member of staff in the room with a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate (from a course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the latest EYFS framework). All children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating, and seated safely, in a designated eating space.

Before a child joins our setting, we will get information on their:

- Dietary requirements and preferences
- Food allergies and intolerances
- Health requirements

We will share this information with all staff involved in food preparation and handling. At each mealtime and snack time it will be clear which staff member is responsible for checking that the food meets all the requirements for each child.

We will make sure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis, the differences between allergies and intolerances

Positive Relationships

At the Forest Federation we recognise that children learn to be strong independent individuals from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We prepare children and parents for school in the following ways.

- An Open Evening is held before the children start school to give parents information and to enable them to talk to staff about their child.
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher and teaching assistant before starting school during Transition afternoons.
- We offer parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress, teachers are available most mornings for an informal chat. Open mornings are held regularly where parents are welcomed into school to share their children's work.
- There are formal meetings for parents two times a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress. Parents receive an end of year report on their child's attainment and progress.
- A range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents, coffee mornings, Sports Day and VIP assemblies celebrating school achievements.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school, the EYFS teacher acts as a 'Key Person' to all children in their EYFS class, supported by one teaching assistant.

Enabling Environments

At the Forest Federation we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Planning within the EYFS is organised around half termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning; however, the teacher may alter these plans in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. As the EYFS is part of a mixed class of Year 1 and Year 2 children, the children all take part in the same theme, but adapted to suit the needs of the children. At times, the children within the EYFS may take part in a 'mini-theme' if appropriate, for example when starting school.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observations, and the use of floor books. Teacher adds the relevant Development Matters or Early Learning Goal statements.

An on-entry baseline assessment based around observations and a in school booklet is undertaken individually with the children during the first few weeks of September. As well as the Government National Baseline Assessment. 'best fit' judgement assessments are completed at the end of Term 2, Term 4 and in June, when data is then submitted to the Local Authority.

For each of the ELGs, we make a 'Best-Fit' judgement as to whether a child is meeting the level of development or not meeting the end the level of development. We provide this information in a written report to parents and give parents an opportunity to discuss these judgements with the class teacher.

The Learning Environment

The classrooms are organised to allow children in both the EYFS and Key Stage One (KS1) to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS and KS1 classrooms have access to an outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help them to develop in all seven areas of learning.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow the principles stated in this policy, under the guidance of the Class Teacher, Mrs Howie EYFS Lead and Mrs Hollis the Executive Headteacher. The Headteacher and Mrs Howie will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of whole school monitoring.

Date of Policy: September 2025

To be reviewed: September 2026