

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy



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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- that all children in our early years setting at The Vineyard access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through their 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 and/or carers
- every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on the requirements set out in the [2023 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At The Vineyard, children aged between 4 and 5 years old are admitted into their Reception year of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This ends when the children move into Key Stage One.

At The Vineyard, we will:

- support children in making a confident transition into school
- provide a happy, caring and safe learning environment
- plan learning experiences that meet the individual needs and interests of every child through a balanced provision of adult-led and child-initiated opportunities
- support children to become confident, independent and competent learners so that they are able to reach their potential
- provide a broad and balanced high-quality curriculum in line with EYFS guidance
- foster positive home school links with parents and carers

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2023 EYFS statutory framework.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, three areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and 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

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

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

4.1 Planning

Planning in Reception is based upon topics/themes with discrete teaching of phonics, maths and reading. 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 and provide challenging and enjoyable enhancements to our continuous provision. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

Staff plan activities and enhancements that enable the 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. In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

4.1.1 Enabling Environments

At The Vineyard, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development by enabling the children to feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to both indoor and outdoor environments, organised into distinct learning areas with excellent continuous provision and planned enhancements. Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff.

We aim to:

- plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities.
- use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world.
- encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.
- ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

4.2 Teaching

At The Vineyard in Reception, we see play and first hand experiences as central tools for learning in an enjoyable and challenging way. 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 interactions.

At The Vineyard, we will:

- provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school
- provide a relevant, creative and diverse curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and will foster independence and self-confidence
- use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress
- encourage active learning through first hand experiences in both indoor and outdoor play. We encourage children to initiate their own learning as much as possible
- provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs

5. Assessment

At The Vineyard, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations are used to shape future planning and are recorded in an online learning journal, some of which are shared with parents and carers. Staff also consider informal family feedback when assessing.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts in Reception, staff will administer the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) together with their own baseline assessment.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals outlined in the Development Matters curriculum. This will help indicate 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 and Carers

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

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. Parent/Teacher meetings, informal discussions and the EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities and any areas identified for development.

Each child is assigned a class teacher who ensures that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The class teacher supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The class teacher, supported by the SEND team, also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy, Keeping Children Safe.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the EYFS Phase Leader and approved by the SD&P Committee of the Governing Board every two years.

