



Four Swannes Primary School

EYFS Policy

2025-2026

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Aims

This policy aims to outline our philosophy for teaching and learning at Four Swannesr Primary School. Developing this policy has enabled us to explore and confirm our educational philosophy, pedagogical approaches and our understanding of the Characteristics of Effective Learning for children in our school. It gives us a framework to remind us of our educational intentions and to measure our own performance. It is a way of sharing with parents, governors, Local Authority personnel and other interested bodies our approach to teaching and learning. It ensures a rigorous and consistent approach to the teaching and learning of young children.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes which we have used to develop this policy.

We put into practice the four principles of the Early Years Foundation stage which guide the work of all our staff and are grouped into four distinct, but complementary themes:

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured	Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person	The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning	Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

A Unique Child

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. At Four Swannes, we embrace the uniqueness of each child. We value and celebrate each child and their family and are honoured to be part of each child's unique learning journey.

Positive Relationships – A Key Person

All staff involved aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At Four Swannes School each child is allocated a key person.

The key person approach is aimed at enabling and supporting close attachments between children and practitioners. Attachment provides a sense of security so that children can become confident, independent and capable young learners. The role of the key person is to meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, talking to the parents, and working in partnership with them.

Learning and Development.

We recognise that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

The Early Years Foundation Stage guidance identifies three characteristics of Effective Learning:

Playing and exploring (engagement)

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

Active learning (motivation)

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keep trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically (thinking)

- Having their own ideas
- Making Links
- Choosing ways to do things

We recognise that children learn best through playing and interacting. Through child initiated play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children and adults as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express experiences in controlled and safe situations. Children need to have independence and control over their learning with the support of a sensitive adult. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning. In offering this approach to learning we can truly support the uniqueness of each individual child and support the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

An Enabling Environment

We have a workshop style environment indoors and outside. Some tables and learning areas are left clear for children to choose according to their needs, interests and fascinations. The children select what they want to do in each area. Children are able to take control of their own learning and are able to choose for the majority of the day to learn either inside or outside. Staff occasionally will set up areas in a learning bay as a result of their observations to offer a provocation to continue a learning thread. We insist that children are active in their learning and offer hands on practical learning opportunities.

The principle is that resources are accessible to the children and they are varied, open-ended and high quality. This gives children the opportunity to select resources to support their self-chosen activity. Resources are always available and clearly labelled to ensure children can access and tidy items away independently.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for group and school providers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101321/Statutory_framework_for_the_early_years_foundation_stage_for_group_and_school_providers.pdf)

3. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. However, 3 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:

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

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

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

3.1 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 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.

3.2 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.

4. Structure of the EYFS

[Nursery Admissions - 30 hours | Four Swannes Primary School](#)

3-year-old provision (Nursery): Children may attend the nursery provision from the term after they turn three years of age. Children may attend for up to 30 hours. 15 hours of this is funded unless they are eligible for the 30 funded hours provision. This funding must be applied for through HMRC <https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare> Parents not entitled to the 30 hours funding may also apply for additional hours which are parent funded.

4-year-old provision (Reception): Children may join this provision from the September after they have turned four years old. This is for normal school hours and they will fall under all attendance regulations from the date of their fifth birthday when they reach statutory school age. These children attend school for the normal school day. All of these hours are fully funded.

Children who are in the school nursery must make an application for the reception class in line with the admission policy: [Admissions | Four Swannes Primary School](#)

For any questions, please contact the school office or email to admin@fourswannes.herts.sch.uk

5. Assessment

At Four Swannes Primary Schools, 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.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

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 ('exs')
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('wts')
- Working significantly below the expected standard ('pre')

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.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. 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.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate. The key worker may change if a child begins to develop a stronger relationship to a particular adult in the setting.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by following the JIGSAW early years PSHE programme for example by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- Healthy plates
- Importance of physical activity
- Mental health support e.g. restricting screen time.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policies: [Four Swannes Primary School](#)