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Bourne Alliance
Multi Academy Trust

Policy Document for: **EYFS**

Due for Review: Autumn 2027

Additions/amendments in this version

Sept 26	*Reviewed against new guidance for Sept 26*
Page 1	*Updated legislation link*
Page 3	*Addition of outreach specialist teachers*
Page 5	*New section on children whose home language is not English*
Page 5	*New section on children who remain in EYFS*
Page 7	*Added section on safer eating*
Page 8	*Addition regarding characteristics of effective learning*
Page 8	*Added section on behaviour*
Page 8	*Added section on screen use*
Page 9	*Added section on safeguarding*
Page 9	*Added section on sleep in EYFS (Oct 26)*

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is important in its own right and also for preparing children for later schooling. In BAT MAT Trust schools, we believe that this stage lays the foundations for each child's future learning and is therefore a very significant time.

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
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers effective from 1 September 2026 (edited Sept 26)

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Aims and objectives

Within Early Years education we offer our children learning that is based on the following principles. We:

- Build on what each child already knows and can do;
- Are inclusive to all groups of learners and individuals, taking into account children's backgrounds, ethnicity, gender, EAL and SEND.
- Provide a rich and stimulating environment, including challenging, exciting and imaginative indoor and outdoor learning environments
- Provide a wide range of opportunities for independent learning, adult directed learning, adult led learning and child-initiated learning.

- Encourage parents and carers to become involved in their children's learning
- Provide a positive, supportive environment where children feel safe and secure to learn.
- Develop positive attitudes towards learning from an early age.
- Give children a wealth of knowledge based on the Early Years Foundation Stage seven areas of learning.
- Provide an extensive range of opportunities for assessment in well thought out and detailed planning.

The role of parents and carers

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there's 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. During the year, staff will upload evidence of learning to the 'Tapestry' portal and encourage parents to do the same to provide a rounded picture of the child as they move through the year. The EYFS profile at the end of the year helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and stage of development at the end of the year. Teachers also keep a folder of work showing adult led and child initiated work (edited Jan 26).

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. Teachers encourage parents/carers to make appointments to meet with them if they have any concerns or wish to discuss anything.

We will

- Invite the parent and child to meet the new class teacher at the school in the term before they start school. This is through Stay and Play sessions, as well as a welcome meeting where parents/carers are also given their new intake packs
- Undertake some visits by the teacher to children's nurseries prior to them starting school.
- Staff will make contact with previous settings for a smooth handover regarding the children's likes, dislikes and age/stage of development
- Offer parents and carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress through an open door policy and through Parent/Teacher meetings and using the Tapestry online Learning Journal system.
- Offer a range of workshops for parents to learn more about our approaches within school, and then the opportunity to attend classes for a short time to take part in the learning alongside their children within the classroom.
- Encourage parents to support their child in home learning activities, recording these as their own observations to use towards the assessments made. Parents and carers are encouraged to record home learning on Tapestry so this can be celebrated with the class and children.
- Encourage parents and carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- Offer a range of activities supported by the PTFA groups within the Trust schools, throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and home.
- Provide various activities that involve parents and carers such as inviting parents and carers to curriculum meetings, SEND meetings in order to discuss the kind of work that the children are undertaking in class and how they can continue to work with their child at home.
- Parents receive an annual written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year.

We encourage any parent or carer who has a concern about their child to make an appointment to see their child's teacher in the first instance.

Safeguarding

Children in EYFS continue to be safeguarded by staff in line with our main **safeguarding and child protection** policy and procedures.

This includes ((added Sept 26)

- Ensuring that the staff and are suitable by passing the expected checks of Enhanced DBS and barred list check in line with KCSIE 2026
- Supervision whilst waiting for DBS is no longer permitted
- All regular volunteers have Enhanced DBS checks even if supervised
- All staff must disclose to the Headteacher/DSL anything that may affect their suitability to work with children. The school informs staff of their ongoing duty to disclose

- The Trust has suitable whistleblowing procedures should they have concerns about poor or unsafe practice in the EYFS. See the **whistleblowing** policy.
- The school will follow their **attendance** and **safeguarding** policies to follow up on absence in a timely manner.
- The EYFS provision continues to follow the expectations for Health & Safety including investigations where needed for accidents or near misses.
- Dogs are not permitted on the school sites, apart from where previously risk assessed and checked such as for school dogs or therapy dogs. This excludes an breed banned under the Dangerous Dogs Act.
- Any allegations of harm will be actioned under the **allegations of abuse against staff** policy which is in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

Curriculum in Early Years Foundation Stage

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 are equally important and inter-connected. 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:

- 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

Teachers also consider the 3 characteristics of effective learning when planning for their class:

- Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things – having a go
- Active learning – concentrating and keeping on trying if they encounter difficulties and they enjoy their achievements
- Creating and thinking critically – having and developing their own ideas, making links between ideas and developing strategies for doing things

Curriculum planning

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

Staff use:

- Development Matters guidance
- Birth to 5 Birth To 5 Matters – Guidance by the sector, for the sector
- Educational Programmes Statutory Framework for School based providers https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2
- Bourne Alliance MAT Subject Knowledge and Skills Progression Grids

to 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. The schools also make use of the specialist teacher knowledge from Aspire school and their outreach teachers if required (added Sept 26)

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

The educational programmes within the EYFS curriculum provide the basis for planning throughout the foundation stage. In addition, indoor/outdoor independent learning and adult directed planning are completed on a weekly and daily basis which highlight the objectives for the week and activities children will take part in to achieve these objectives. The school makes use of learning activities outside the classroom, where a planned programme of appropriate activities takes place at all times of year.

The EYFS team use our Trust curriculum intent to support their planning and create learning which can be built on by future year groups. The knowledge in EYFS is connected onwards into the mainstream curriculum from year 1 onwards.

Teaching and Learning within EYFS

Within the Trust mainstream schools, we are continually developing teaching and learning within EYFS and aim to provide each and every child with a well-balanced, stimulating and meaningful learning experience.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners 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.

We do this by:

- Providing children with a safe and nurturing environment in which they feel safe and secure to learn.
- The regular identification of training needs for all adults working in the EYFS; a range of INSETS within school to develop the understanding that Teachers and Teaching Assistants have of how children in early years develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- A carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the objectives by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage but is flexible enough to use their interests along the way;
- Well-planned medium term plans and weekly planning based around the seven early learning goals.
- Regular monitoring of our work to evaluate its impact on pupils' progress and their wider social, personal and emotional development.
- Continuous monitoring of work completed and child voice to provide feedback for teachers so that they can identify next stages of learning and improve their practice.
- Peer observations across EYFS and Key Stage 1 to develop a better understanding of the curriculum in different year groups, share teaching skills and good practice and enable EYFS practitioners to ensure pupils are ready for Year 1.

- Regular lesson observations and learning walks by leadership and those with subject responsibilities to ensure consistency, share good practice and to provide feedback to promote school improvement.
- Encouraging the partnership between teachers and parents/carers that helps our children to progress in all areas of the curriculum and helps them to feel secure at school and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- Providing home learning opportunities which are appropriate for the age group and engaging for both parent and child.
- Providing supporting and interactive learning environments which provide extensive learning opportunities for children.
- Establishing good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school.

The schools have a strong approach to continuous professional development (CPD) for all class facing staff so that staff can enable children to achieve their best possible educational outcomes.

Inclusion within the Foundation Stage

We believe that all our children matter. We give them every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of their wide-ranging life experiences when we plan for their learning.

Within the Early Years Foundation Stage, we have high expectations that challenge the children so that every child achieves to their best regardless of their stage of development. We help them do this by planning to meet the individual needs of every child as well as the needs of different groups of learners. These include boys and girls, children with SEND, children from all social and cultural backgrounds including those entitled to free school meals, children from different ethnic groups and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support all children, and to help them to learn effectively.
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Employing resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid discrimination and stereotyping.
- Planning adaptive activities that challenge all children, their educational needs and cater for their stage of development.
- Monitoring children's progress and providing support where necessary (such as speech therapy, 1:1 support, working with the Educational Psychologist).
- Identifying and informing the SENCo of any concerns, seeking advice where necessary.
- Teachers produce Individual Learning Plans for any child who requires additional support – these may use the support of the SENCo in the school. These plans are then shared with parents.
- Identifying groups of learners within our setting and ensuring that all groups and individuals are planned for effectively and make good progress.
- Regular data analysis carried out by the EYFS leader, along with the leadership of the school, which enables us to identify individual needs and groups of learners' needs.
- Collaborating with local Mainstream and SEND schools to ensure our offer can meet the needs of pupils at all Early Years stages
- Committing to ongoing SEND CPD for all staff

Children whose home language is not English
(added Sept 26)

The teachers will take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. However, they will ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for children to learn and reach a good standard of English during EYFS, ensuring that children are ready to benefit from the opportunities for them when they move into year 1 and beyond.

When assessing communication, language and literacy skills, teachers will assess their skills in English, If the child does not have a strong grasp of English, the teachers will work with the family to explore the child's skills in their home language to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay.

Children who remain in Year R beyond the end of the academic year

(added Sept 26)
In exceptional circumstances, after discussion and only in agreement with parents and/or carers a child may remain in EYFS for another year rather than moving into year 1. Where this is the case, the EYFS profile will not be submitted until the following year. The school will also inform the local authority.

Assessment

In our 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. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

During the year, teachers assess if pupils are Emerging or Expected toward an Early Learning Goal. Teachers use the Birth to 5 framework and Siren exemplification to support their judgments. Birth to 5 supports practitioner knowledge of developmental next steps, inclusivity for all pupils, accurate assessments, planning for small steps of progress and better tracking for those pupils with ILPs.

Assessment within Early Years Foundation Stage is an important and valuable tool which helps teachers to identify the needs of individual children and groups of learners in order to plan the next steps of their learning.

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers 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 upon request. This profile is then shared with the Year 1 team, along with information about the child where they are 'emerging' to help inform their new teacher.

Observations and Continuous Assessment in EYFS

Throughout the year we plan for a range of learning and assessment opportunities. Through observations and by collecting evidence we are able to establish which objectives and Early Learning Goals each individual child has achieved. We are then able to monitor both progress and attainment.

We keep records of children's learning journeys through the use of the 'Tapestry' online Learning Journal system and from our evidence and observations we are able to plan for next steps in each child's learning journey. The teacher keeps records for each child and examples of each child's work, showing

developmental stages and progression. Parents all have their own login to the system which enables them to see their own child's observations whenever they choose, and these are discussed further with parents during parent consultation meetings.

Assessment in Early Years Foundation Stage takes the form of observations of pupil understanding and pupil voice to ensure quality evidence of pupil knowledge and skills and from evidence from home and evidence gathered from teacher directed tasks.

Baseline Assessments

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). Baseline assessments also enable us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort and to plan for individual children and groups of children. We use this information to inform planning and set targets for the children. The school does not receive a breakdown of this data, but teachers capture their observations from the RBA administration, and along with the observations of the child and discussions with the parents/carers they can then plan appropriately.

Ensuring Quality Data - Moderation

In order to ensure quality assessment, Reception teachers work together for agreement trialling and moderation to ensure data is agreed and that teachers' judgements are robust and accurate. Training with the local schools, internal moderation with Senior Leaders and external moderation with other schools are important parts of this process. Additionally the Alliance schools (a group of local Swale schools) holds three moderation meetings to which practitioners are asked to bring along work samples to be moderated before end of year data is finally submitted to the local authority. After all data is collected and moderated these assessments are analysed by the school and the local authority.

All information and assessments are passed on to the child's next teacher during an end of year transition meeting, so they can then use this information to develop their plans for the year ahead.

Welfare of Pupils

- The class teacher is responsible for the pastoral care of each child as well as the academic side of school life. Teaching Assistants support the class teacher in this important role.
- The school has a number of adults both within and outside of the EYFS teaching team who are qualified in Paediatric First Aid.
- Medication will be kept in the school office, well out of reach of pupils and administered in accordance with the **Administration of Medicines Policy**.
- The mainstream Trust schools comply with the **Behaviour Policy**. We do not use capital punishment under any circumstances. Physical intervention is only permitted to avert immediate danger of injury to self or others. Such occasions will be recorded and reported to the Governors. Parents will be informed on the same day or as soon a reasonably practicable.
- All safeguarding and child protection concerns will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and procedures followed in accordance with the school's **Child Protection and Safeguarding** Policy.

Safer eating

(added Sept 2026)

- Staff with paediatric first aid observe children at snack and lunch times to ensure safer eating (edited Sept 26)
- Before a child start in EYFS, the school ask for any information about special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerance that the children have – in line with the **allergy** policy
- Where a child has an allergy, an allergy plan will be requested which is completed by a health professional. This is pinned in Arbor
- Staff are trained in allergy awareness in line with Benedicts Law and the **allergy** policy

- Should a child choke, this will be recorded on Medical Tracker and the Senior staff will undertake an investigation to see if there are further steps which can be taken to reduce risk of choking

Toileting and privacy

We make sure that there are:

- Enough toilets and hand basins available for the children
- Suitable and hygienic nappy changing facilities
- An adequate supply of necessary items such as spare clothes
- Separate toilet facilities for adults
- During disposable underwear changing and toileting, we will balance children's privacy with their safeguarding and support needs, if a child needs support then an intimate care plan will be shared with parents and signed with consent.

Oral health and tooth brushing

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, through our PSHE sessions and by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- Inviting oral hygienists in to talk to the children
- Providing fruit for snack and water or milk

Transition to Year 1

Towards the end of the Reception year, the teachers will begin to prepare the children for Year 1.

We do this by:

- Gradually moving the timetable in the summer term to one more akin to that of Year 1.
- Scheduling transition afternoons towards the end of the summer term, when all classes will spend 2 afternoons with their new teacher in their new classroom.
- Allowing the children to spend time in the Year 1 classrooms with Year 1 staff – taking messages, showing work produced etc, more frequently for those children with special needs.
- Presenting to parents the expectations for a child in Year 1, the differences in timetable, home learning and class learning.
- Allowing time for the teachers of the existing classes to 'handover' to the Year 1 teachers, giving information on family background, learning styles, friendship groups, academic achievement, progress achieved through the year etc.
- Ensuring we have an open-door policy for any concerns the parents and/or children may have.
- At Grove Park, Year 1 staff visit their new class in term 6 so that children know what their new teacher looks like, and the year R staff will visit their old class in term 1
- All ELG outcomes are handed up to the year 1 class in transition, along with a professional dialogue about each child. Teachers will also discuss the characteristics of effective learning demonstrated by each child. This information all helps year 1 teams prepare well for the children when they start in year 1 (added Sept 26)

Behaviour

(added Sept 26)
In EYFS, staff follow the school Behaviour policy which uses a restorative approach to help children to take accountability for their behaviour and learn.

Where a child is working at a lower stage of development or may have additional needs which impact on their cognition or speech & language, reasonable adaptations are made in line with other school procedures, using support from SENCOs, specialist teachers and outreach teachers.

Screen use

(added Sept 26)
The schools follow Help for early years providers : Screen use This guidance recommends that children age 2-5 should be limited to 1 hour a day or less. The staff are aware that children may meet this threshold of time at home. Where screens are used these are carefully considered to ensure they are for educational purposes.

All digital content should be:

- checked to ensure it is suitable for early years children, prior to showing it to the children
- slow-paced, repetitive and predictable – teachers must avoid fast-paced, over-stimulating content - this includes content which has a lot of cuts, movement and flashing on screen, complex audio with lots of fast-talking characters or overlapping music and dialogue, or complex plots
- advert-free, as young children cannot discern between advertisements and other content
- free of scrolling and autoplay features, to ensure children are not inadvertently exposed to inappropriate content or able to access content for longer than planned use - this includes algorithm-driven content, such as video platforms

AI: the provision does not use toys with AI built on. The Trust AI policy and risk assessments are used for all children in schools.

The teachers also follow the guidance Help for early years providers : Internet safety to inform how the internet is used in EYFS. Children are taught about safe use of devices in EYFS in line with the curriculum. The Trust have a Tech in the Curriculum group who lead on the safe use of digital technology and how this can support education.

See also **EYFS screen use policy**

These limits are not in place where children are using technology to support them with their SEND or to support learning English.

Mobile phones

Mobile phones must not be used during class time by any adult (teachers and/or parents/carers). This includes using mobile phones to take pictures of children apart from the authorised use of the school's Kindles or ipads. See the **digital devices, technology & social media** policy for more details.

Where school Kindles are used to take photos for assessment purposes and therefore uploaded to Tapestry, these **must** remain on the school site. Once uploaded the photos and any other evidence naming the child will then be immediately wiped as part of GDPR. See the school **Data Protection** policy for more details.

Sleep

(added Oct 26)
Children in EYFS can occasionally sleep – when this happens, sleeping children are frequently checked and kept within sight and hearing at all times.

In the area the child is sleeping, there must not be:

- No soft furnishings that could obstruct breathing
- No sleeping on sofas or beanbags where entrapment is possible
- No loose blankets over the head
- Ensure the child is not too hot
- Ensure the sleep area is safe, flat, and supervised

Sleeping children will have regular visual checks, staff will be aware of child's breathing and sleep position and the staff will immediately respond if the child wakes or becomes distressed.

Any child who has been observed to sleep for the first time will have a risk assessment drawn up with agreement of the parents.

If a child falls asleep unexpectedly, staff should frequently check them, ensure they are in a safe sleep area and keep in sight and hearing at all times.

Impact assessment

An initial impact assessment has been carried out for this policy and is graded as follows:

A	Positive impact is explicitly intended and very likely
B	An adverse impact is unlikely, and on the contrary the policy has the clear potential to have a positive impact by reducing and removing barriers and inequalities that currently exist
C	An adverse impact is unlikely. On the contrary there is potential to reduce barriers and inequalities that currently exist. There is insufficient evidence, however, for this assessment to be made with as much confidence as is desirable
D	Adverse impact is unlikely, but positive impact is also unlikely
E	Adverse impact is probable or certain, since certain groups will be disadvantaged, either proportionately or absolutely, or both. Remedial action is therefore necessary