# Treasured, Courageous, Empowered




EYFS Policy

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential."

(Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework)


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**1. Aims**

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a secure foundation for learning, development and 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 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 current Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, effective from 1 September 2026. This framework sets the standards that schools must meet for children's learning, development and care and includes both learning and development requirements and safeguarding and welfare requirements.

It also has regard to

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, as current for the school year.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.
- Development Matters: non-statutory curriculum guidance for the EYFS.

**3. Vision and Intent**

At Morpeth First School, we want every child to have a successful start to their education. Our EYFS provision is rooted in the school's values of being Treasured, Courageous and Empowered. We provide a safe, nurturing and ambitious environment in which children develop confidence, independence, curiosity, communication skills, physical competence and a love of learning.

We recognise that children arrive with different experiences, interests, strengths and starting points. Our curriculum is therefore carefully sequenced while remaining responsive to children's needs and interests. We do not lower expectations because a child has SEND, is disadvantaged, is known to children's social care or faces other barriers. Instead, we adapt teaching, resources, routines and adult support so that every child can access ambitious learning.

**4. Curriculum**

**Planning**

Our EYFS curriculum is designed around the statutory educational programmes and the knowledge, skills and understanding children need to become confident learners. It is organised so that learning is progressive from Nursery through Reception and prepares children for Year 1.

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 we must teach. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Three areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important 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

We also support the children in 4 specific areas which help strengthen and develop the 3 prime areas, and ignite the children's curiosity and enthusiasm:

● Literacy

● Mathematics

● Understanding the world

● Expressive arts and design

The curriculum reflects the school's character curriculum, love of nature, respect for the environment and people and commitment to developing children as Treasured, Courageous and Empowered learners.

We give particular priority to communication and language because strong spoken language supports learning across all areas. We develop vocabulary deliberately through stories, conversations, modelling, questioning, songs, rhymes, role play and real experiences.

Reading is central to our curriculum. We develop a love of books and reading through high-quality children's literature, repeated reading, story experiences, vocabulary teaching and systematic phonics. Reception follows Read Write Inc. Phonics as the school's systematic approach, with practice and application carefully matched to children's phonics knowledge.

Writing is developed from the earliest opportunities to mark-make and represent meaning through to fluent transcription. Gross and fine motor development underpin writing readiness. Children receive explicit teaching and modelling of letter formation, handwriting, composition, spelling and transcription alongside purposeful opportunities to write.

Mathematics is taught explicitly and through meaningful play and daily routines. Children develop secure number sense, subitising, counting, cardinality, composition, comparison, pattern, spatial reasoning, measure and mathematical vocabulary.

Nature, the local environment and outdoor experiences are important features of our provision. Forest School-style experiences and regular outdoor learning give children opportunities to develop physical competence, vocabulary, observation, problem-solving, collaboration and respect for the natural world.

Planning remains flexible and is reviewed regularly so that ongoing assessment, children's responses and discussions with parents and carers inform future teaching and provision.

**Inclusion, Equality and Diversity**

Our School values the individuality of all children. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by considering the pupils' varied life experiences and needs. The achievements, attitudes and wellbeing of all our children matter. This policy helps to ensure that the school promotes the individuality of all our children, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

Staff teaching in the EYFS consider 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 parents and 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 adapt the practice and provision to meet the needs of all children, striving to create an inclusive environment that offers all pupils, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

The school's SENCO and School Leaders work together closely to ensure that we meet the statutory requirements as laid out in the 'SEND Code of Practice'.

**Teaching**

Teaching in the Early Years builds on each child's best start in life through nurturing relationships, high expectations and purposeful learning experiences. Staff support the characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically, using both the indoor and outdoor environments to provide rich opportunities for investigation, creativity, movement and problem-solving. Teaching responds to children's emerging needs and interests through warm, positive high quality interactions and, as children develop, increasingly focuses on the essential knowledge and skills needed for a confident transition to Key Stage1.

Our teaching includes:

- carefully modelled whole-class and small-group teaching;
- explicit teaching of vocabulary, phonics, reading, writing and mathematics;
- storytelling, story discussion and repeated reading;
- guided practice followed by opportunities for children to apply and rehearse learning independently;
- purposeful continuous provision that reflects current curriculum priorities;
- child-initiated play and exploration, with adults observing, joining, modelling, extending and challenging;
- high-quality questioning and sustained shared thinking;
- real-life experiences, visitors, trips, outdoor learning and practical investigation;
- opportunities to revisit and deepen previously taught knowledge; and
- careful adaptation for children who need additional support or challenge.

**5. Assessment**

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of our learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their progress, development and interests. Staff use these observations to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers and keep them up to date with the child's progress and development. Staff will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals. Pupil progress is rigorously monitored on a termly basis using our knowledge to identify our 'Notice and Focus' children. Staff discuss any pupils who are not meeting expectations with senior leaders to establish targeted Next Steps and Actions. Furthermore, regular formal Phonics assessments are conducted to maintain pace, ensuring the immediate identification and targeting of pupils requiring intervention. Pupil data is inputted into our data tracker three times a year, alongside records of any required learning interventions and support.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the reception baseline assessment (RBA).

In the final term of the academic year in which the child reaches age 5, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child (before 30 June in that term).

Each child is assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

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

We share the EYFS profile with the child's Year 1 teacher. This helps to inform a discussion between reception and year 1 teachers about the child's stage of development and learning needs, and helps with planning activities in year 1. The school shares the results of each child's 'progress check' and EYFS profile (but not the reception baseline assessment) with their parents and/or carers. The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. We submit EYFS profile data to the local authority on request.

**6. Working with parents and carers**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there's a strong partnership between our staff and each child's parents and/or carers. We keep parents and/or carers up to date with their child's progress and development which 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 (usually the class teacher) who helps ensure their learning and care are tailored to meet their needs. The key person also supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home and helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate. We ask parents/carers to provide 2 emergency contact numbers for their child (where possible). To ensure a smooth transition into our Reception class, we offer a Transition plan for all new pupils. This includes stay and play sessions in smaller quieter groups, parent meetings, classroom visits and a more bespoke plan for any children needing additional transition support. We use information from parents and any previous settings to help to build up knowledge of the child's interests and areas of strength or development prior to them starting in our setting.

Communication with families remains a priority throughout the year. In Nursery and Reception, we host formal Parent Meetings twice a year, alongside weekly seesaw posts and a half termly newsletter highlighting learning alongside upcoming events.

Throughout the year we offer phonics workshops, stay and play sessions, 'sharing assemblies' and we encourage parents to communicate with us informally on a regular basis either in person or via Seesaw.

At the end of the academic year, parents receive a formal report assessing their child's progress against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

For children requiring additional support to meet these expectations, we maintain regular dialogue with parents to review school-based interventions and discuss how learning can be supported and reinforced at home.

We also warmly welcome parents to join our active PTA.

**7 Staff**

**Staff Training**

The EYFS team includes qualified teachers and experienced support staff. Staffing arrangements are planned to meet statutory ratios and children's needs. Staff qualifications are checked against the current EYFS qualification requirements and standards.

Staff receive appropriate induction, safeguarding training, EYFS professional development and supervision. Leaders use professional discussion, observations and feedback to improve practice.

Professional development is focused on identified needs and curriculum priorities, including phonics, reading, writing and transcription, mathematics, SEND, behaviour and regulation, safeguarding and high-quality interactions.

Leaders monitor workload and avoid unnecessary paperwork. Professional accountability is focused on the quality and impact of teaching and care.

**Safer recruitment**

When recruiting staff, we will follow the procedures set out in the latest EYFS framework guidance on checking the suitability of new recruits, including:

- Obtaining a reference for any member of staff (including students and volunteers) before they are recruited
- Recording information about staff qualifications and identity checks, vetting processes and references.

**8 Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures**

**Whistleblowing**

We make sure that all staff are aware of our whistleblowing procedures, feel able to raise concerns about any poor or unsafe practice and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

Whistleblowing procedures may be needed if:

- staff believe unsafe practice in our setting is being ignored
- a safeguarding concern has not been followed up, acted on, or taken seriously
- staff are worried about a colleague's behaviour, and concerns have not been addressed

In the event that a member of staff feels that they need to blow the whistle on misconduct, they should report their concern following our school Whistleblowing Policy

**Staff Ratios**

For children aged 3 and over: [Keep the highlighted section below that applies to your setting, and delete the others] o

Where there is a person with qualified teacher status, early years professional status, or early years teacher status, an instructor or another suitably-qualified, overseas-trained teacher:

For Reception classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5 or older within the school year, we have 1 staff member with QTS for every 30 children. We also have a minimum of 1 classroom assistant working across the 2 classes.

For Nursery class, we at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children and this is organised to meet the statutory ratios and children's needs. Staff qualifications are checked against the current EYFS qualification requirements and standards.

**Oral Health**

We promote good oral health, hygiene and healthy lifestyles through daily routines, positive role modelling and age-appropriate learning. Children are taught the importance of brushing their teeth, limiting sugary foods and drinks, and choosing healthy snacks. This teaching is enhanced by visits from oral health professionals. Staff work in partnership with parents and carers to reinforce consistent habits at home, helping children develop the knowledge and independence needed to look after their own health and wellbeing.

**Safer eating, Nutrition, Food safety and Hygiene**

The school is committed to promoting safe eating practices in line with EYFS requirements to safeguard children and minimise the risk of choking, allergic reactions, and other harm during food consumption. We recognise that snack mealtimes present potential risks, particularly for younger children. We therefore implement robust procedures to ensure that all food provided and consumed within the setting is appropriate, supervised, and managed safely.

The school is committed to promoting children's health, wellbeing and development through the provision of healthy, balanced and nutritious food and drink in a safe and supportive environment. The school comply with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, which requires that: "Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious."

Fresh drinking water is readily available

Food allergies and dietary requirements are recorded, communicated and managed safely. See our Allergy Policy for more information

**Safe sleep**

It is a requirement that where the school provides care for children who sleep as part of the EYFS provision, it ensures that safe sleep practices are in place and followed consistently by all staff to reduce the risk of harm. Due to the age of the children in our setting regular sleep routines are specific to a small number of children who are at a stage of development where daytime naps are being reduced. Staff support parents with this transition and where children are still sleeping in school we follow current national safer sleep guidance.

We

- ensure that children sleep in a clear, safe sleep space with no pillows, duvets, soft toys, or heavy bedding
- use appropriate bedding and sleep equipment that meets safety standards. A flat, firm and waterproof mat is placed on the floor with one cotton cellular blanket if required.
- maintain a comfortable room temperature and monitor children appropriately while sleeping
- ensure sleeping children are checked regularly and never leave sleeping children unsupervised;
- work in partnership with parents/carers to understand and, where appropriate, follow a child's established sleep routines, while ensuring these routines are consistent with safe sleep guidance;
- complete individual risk assessments where a child has specific medical or developmental needs affecting sleep;
- ensure all staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities in this area.

Any concerns about a child's safety during sleep will be treated as a safeguarding matter and responded to in line with this policy.

**Screen use**

We follow the DfE guidance "Help for early years providers: Screen use, July 2026" Children should have a maximum of one hour of screen time and preferably less.

School devices and digital technology are used purposefully. Staff consider the developmental needs of children and ensure that digital experiences support, rather than displace, talk, relationships, books, physical activity, creative experiences and hands-on exploration. Any screen use should include a high level of adult interaction.

**Accident or injury**

All accidents, injuries, and existing marks are recorded promptly and accurately and shared with parents/carers as appropriate. The school ensures that an appropriate number of staff with current paediatric first aid training are on site at all times in line with EYFS requirements. Any concerns about a child's injury are reported and managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

**Safety of premises**

We make sure that our premises, including overall floor space and outdoor space, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children we care for and the activities provided on the premises. We comply with requirements of health and safety legislation, including risk assessment, fire safety and hygiene requirements.

**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 nappy changes and toileting, we will balance children's privacy with their safeguarding and support needs. See Intimate Care Policy for more information

**9. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved annually and in line with any change in legislation