



THE FEDERATION OF NETTLESTONE AND NEWCHURCH PRIMARY SCHOOLS

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

Revision: 6



Date Agreed: May 2026

Review Date: May 2027

Co-Chair of Board of Governors

Executive Headteacher

All the Governors and staff of The Federation of Nettlestone & Newchurch Primary Schools are committed to sharing a common objective to help keep the children and staff of the school community safe. We ensure that consistent effective safeguarding procedures are in place to support families, children, and staff of the school.



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Document Control

Policy Owner: JH/CS				
Revision	Date Issued	Prepared By	Approved	Comments
1	Sept 2017	JH/CS		Policy created to represent needs and requirements of the Federation.
2	Dec 2019	JH/CS	Q&E	Minor changes to Enabling Environments and Assessments to better reflect what we do and changed the reference of 'his/her' potential to 'their' in the first paragraph.
3	Mar 2022	JH/CS/DB	PC	Policy reviewed.
4	April 2023	KJH/RS	PC	Policy reviewed. No amendments required.
5	May 2025	KJH/HR/CS	PC	Policy review. No changes required.



6	May 2026	HR/CS		Minor Changes to reflect current practice. Addition of mission possible as policy intent and reference to strong foundations.
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Introduction

The governors and staff at Nettlestone Pre-school and Nettlestone and Newchurch Primary Schools (The Federation) **believe that a strong Early Years education lays the foundations for children's future learning and well-being.** Across our Federation, we aim to help every child reach their full potential by providing high-quality early education that supports learning, health and happiness. Our EYFS provision reflects our school values through our five *Mission Possibles*, helping children to feel confident, curious and ready for Year 1 and beyond.

- **I can make healthy choices:** We help children learn how to look after their bodies by encouraging healthy eating, independence and self-care, such as choosing snacks and pouring their own drinks.
- **I can be respectful:** Children are taught how to be kind, polite and considerate of others, follow instructions, care for their environment and manage their feelings positively.
- **I can be resilient:** We support children to keep trying when things feel tricky, build confidence, and learn that mistakes are part of learning, helping them to become focused and determined learners.
- **I can make a difference:** Through visits, visitors and experiences in the local community, children learn about the world around them and understand that their actions and ideas matter.
- **I can make it happen:** Our classrooms and outdoor areas encourage children to explore, play and follow their own interests, helping them to build independence, creativity and confidence as learners.

1. EYFS education is based upon four themes as outlined in the most recent Framework:
 - A unique child.
 - Positive relationships.
 - Enabling Environments.
 - Learning and developing.
2. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Federation policies: *Complaints Policy, Accessibility Policy, Child Protection Policy, Single Equalities Policy, Positive Behaviour Policy, SEN Policy and Intimate Care Policy.*

A Unique Child

3. The Federation recognises that every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Our school ethos encourages all of our children to embody our five mission possible: I can make it happen, I can be respectful, I can make a difference, I can make healthy choices and I can be resilient.

Positive Relationships

4. All children are allocated a key person during their time in EYFS. Developing a positive relationship and secure attachment with their key person enables children to feel safe and have their emotional needs supported. We recognise that parents are the child's first and foremost educators and we work with them to develop strong links between home and school.



5. We do this by:
- Offering home visits with the teacher and teaching assistant for each family.
 - Offering a series of play and stay sessions in the summer term to enable the children to become familiar with the setting, their peers and the EYFS staff.
 - Inviting parents into school before their child starts to share information and explain school's expectations.
 - Using an online journal so that parents can see and contribute to their child's learning.
 - Hosting two pupil mentoring sessions a year to discuss their child's individual progress and their next steps in their learning.
 - Holding parent workshops to help parents support their children in maths, phonics and reading at home.
 - Providing an annual report for each child to summarise their first year at school.

Enabling Environments

6. We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have free flow access to an indoor and outdoor environment that has been designed to support all areas of learning.
7. We use our observations of the children to plan in the moment; this enables us to follow and build upon their current interests, knowledge and experience.
8. We recognise that play based learning is paramount and children across the Federation spend extended periods of the day in continuous provision, directing their own learning and having time to develop their ideas. Continuous provision provides the children with an opportunity to demonstrate all three characteristics of effective teaching and learning (as detailed in the section below). It also enables children to return to their explorations and consolidate their learning over the course of a day or a more extended period. We recognise that when children do this, they can explore what happens to things as they change over time and make changes to explore new ideas. Continuous provision also allows children to make choices and initiate play without interaction with an adult, therefore enabling them to embed and secure their learning in real life contexts.

Learning and Development

9. Across the Federation we recognise that children develop and learn in different ways. Effective learning and teaching is supported through:
- The understanding that all staff have the knowledge of how children develop and learn and how this must be reflected in their teaching.
 - A range of approaches that provide first hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication.
 - Our carefully planned environment offers rich opportunities to deliver the curriculum and helps children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS.
 - The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellect, physical, social and emotional abilities including two dedicated P.E. sessions a week with specialised sports staff.
 - We focus on helping children build the essential skills they need for a confident start in Key Stage 1, including developing strong muscles and good pencil grip for writing, learning how to talk in sentences and share ideas clearly, and building a solid understanding of numbers and maths words through everyday play and activities.



- The encouragement for all children to communicate and talk about their learning and to develop independence, resilience and self-regulation. To this end we provide a rolling snack café where children are encouraged to prepare their own healthy snacks and pour their own drinks.
- To support learning with appropriate accessible space, facilities and equipment both indoors and outdoors, including the effective use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) comprising of iPad, interactive TV, Bee-bots for basic coding/programming and a range of everyday electrical items.

Planning and Teaching

10. The EYFS staff will plan and teach a balanced range of activities and experiences to cover the seven areas of learning outlined in the new EYFS Framework.
11. We use clear, consistent routines in the classroom to help children feel safe and confident, so they can focus on learning new things. This means all children, especially those who need a little more support, are given plenty of teaching time and practice to build strong skills before moving on to more challenging learning.

Curriculum Timetable

12. Whenever possible and appropriate the Foundation Stage curriculum is developed within a cross-curricular context, linked to the children's interests and fascinations. English and Maths opportunities are abundant in all areas of continuous provision, inside and out.

Expanding our Cultural Capital

13. We seek opportunities to take the children out and about in the local community including woodland walks, beach visits and farm visits. We also invite local people in to share their knowledge with us, for example firefighters, police officers, artists and environment experts.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

14. The EYFS Statutory Framework provides a structure of learning opportunities through which we develop the different aspects of early education. These include:

Three Prime areas:

- Communication and language, personal social and emotional development and physical development.

Four specific areas:

- Literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

15. The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The EYFS team plan activities within the environment and these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.
16. The three characteristics 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 achievements.
 - Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.
17. Across the Federation children are exposed to a variety of learning opportunities within a happy, secure and interesting environment. Key skills are promoted through open-ended practical activities, enquiry and purposeful play.
18. It is the responsibility of the EYFS lead, in conjunction with the Head of School and Executive Headteacher, to provide a curriculum that considers the uniqueness and individuality of every child and this is then supported by the EYFS team.

Inclusion

19. All children and their families are valued across the Federation and all children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs and interests of all groups and abilities. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the Federation's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) is called upon for further information and advice if needed.

Assessment

20. Across the Federation EYFS practitioners watch, listen and interact as children engage in everyday activities, events and experiences and demonstrate their specific knowledge, skills and understanding. We believe that observational assessment is the most reliable way of building up an accurate picture of children's development and learning. This is especially true where the attainment demonstrated is not dependent on overt adult support. Observational assessment is central to understanding what children really know and can do. We also encourage parents to share WOW moments from home thus providing us with a more cohesive picture of the whole child.
21. Statutory Baseline Assessments are undertaken at the start of the reception year to determine the school's performance at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6.)
22. To make the move into Year 1 smooth and supportive, Reception teachers share clear and detailed information about each child's progress with Year 1 staff. This helps teachers quickly understand any areas where a child may still need extra help, such as particular sounds in phonics or number patterns, so support can begin straight away.

Online Learning Journal

23. We use an online Learning Journal system which allows staff and parents to access the information from any computer, phone or tablet via a personal password protected login.
- Staff access allows input of new observations and photographs and the option to respond to parental contributions.
 - Parent access allows input of new observations and photographs in addition to commenting on existing observations and photographs.
 - Parents logging into the system are only able to see their own child's Learning Journey and group/class photographs and observations.



- Parents are asked to sign a consent form giving permission for their child's image to appear in other children's Learning Journals and to protect images of other children that may appear in any photographs contained in theirs.

Online Security

24. Within the Federation we take online security seriously.
- The online Learning Journal system is hosted on secure dedicated servers.
 - Access to information stored on the journal can only be gained by a unique user ID and password.
 - Parents can only see their own child's information and are unable to login to view other children's Learning Journals.
 - The online journal includes a safety feature lock which activates after 5 minutes of no use. After this time the user needs to put in their individual pin to re-access the site or app.
 - Staff will never leave screens unattended when the online journal program is active and this prevents unauthorised access to the site.

Safeguarding in the EYFS

25. In line with Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years Education and Skills Setting Ofsted document, we aim to provide an environment where children feel protected and safe at all times. Through the key worker system and circle time activities the children will know who their trusted adults are and that they can communicate any concerns to them and feel listened to.