

EQUITAS ACADEMIES TRUST



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Review Date: June 2026

To be Reviewed: June 2028

Agreed: Raising Standards Board

Policy Lead: Foundation Lead

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

At Chilwell Croft Academy we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. In the Foundation Stage children learn best through play-based activities and first-hand experiences. Each child is unique and is valued as an individual and we aim to provide a secure foundation through learning and development opportunities based around the needs of each individual child.

1. AIMS

- To recognise the child as an individual, to realise and expand their potential and to support them in their desire to learn and develop sustained shared thinking
- To encourage self-confidence and self-worth whatever their gender, race, religion, ability, disability, or special needs
- To value the cultural diversity within our school and community
- To provide a happy, safe, warm, and caring environment with spaces for children to play, discover and explore.
- To work with parents as partners in an atmosphere of mutual respect, recognising and valuing the importance of children's questions, curiosity, exploration, and communication
- To provide a high-quality curriculum in line within the Early Years Foundation Stage document
- To provide well balanced learning experiences that promote all areas of learning in order that children can develop emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually
- To encourage active learning through first-hand experiences both in indoor and outdoor play, through both verbal and nonverbal communication

2. THE EARLY YEARS CURRICULUM

"Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people, and in the world around them. Development is not an automatic process; it depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments." EYFS 2021

The Early Years Foundation Stage Guidance (EYFS) highlights four key themes which underpin the Early Years Curriculum.

In reception we follow The Early Years Foundation Stage, a separate curriculum to the rest of the school. Guidance is given on effective learning and teaching through the seven areas:

Prime Areas

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

Specific areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Equitas Academies Trust

The Characteristics of Effective learning move through all the areas of learning. These are Playing and Exploring, Active Learning and Creating and Thinking Critically.

All areas of learning are important and interconnected. The prime areas are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

[Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK](#)

3. ORGANISATION & SCHOOL TIMES

We have two Reception classes, and these are run as a unit with 60 full time places.

Reception Class

Morning 8.40am – 11.45am

Lunchtime 11.45am – 12.45pm

Afternoon 12.45pm – 3.20pm (Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday)
12.45 - 1.50pm (Tuesday)

4. ADMISSIONS

Children begin Reception in the September after they turn 4 years old. Staff visit feeder nurseries and offer home visits, where appropriate. Parents are invited to visit the Academy to meet the teachers and have a look round. All Reception parents are invited to a meeting in July when they are provided with information about the provision that will be made for their child. Staff will also be available to answer questions and introduce themselves to the children. In the July prior to the children starting school staff liaise closely with the local Nurseries (Newtown and Brearley Nursery). Children visit the school to explore the new environment and meet the staff. This helps to make the transition process more comfortable for each child starting full time school.

5. STAFFING

EYFS Lead

Two Reception Teachers

Two Teaching Assistants

6. PLANNING IN THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

Planning should ensure:

- Children's learning is developed and extended through play-based activities.
- Equal opportunities regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, or special educational needs.
- Reinforcement and extension of children's knowledge and understanding.
- A wide range of teaching strategies and experiences meet children's individual needs.
- A wide range of opportunities to motivate, support and enhance children's learning.
- Resources are used positively to reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Challenging opportunities meet the needs of differing abilities.

Commented [NW1]: please see my changes in purple regarding staffing notes.

Equitas Academies Trust

- Child initiated learning is valued, supported, and extended with appropriate provocation and intervention from adults.

6.1 MEDIUM TERM PLANNING

Termly planning is completed for all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage in which adults can identify the learning objectives for the children over each area of the curriculum and each area within the classroom, as well as the resources that will be used for that term.

6.2 SHORT TERM PLANNING

Weekly meetings are held when all Early Years staff are involved in the planning and evaluation process. It provides the opportunity to reflect on learning taking place and to discuss how to move children's learning forward. Short term plans provide a balance of adult and child-initiated learning experiences mainly focused on Maths and Literacy.

Key vocabulary/questions and assessment opportunities are also included to ensure consistency in teaching opportunities.

Daily phonics lessons are planned for Reception children using the 'Read, Write, Inc.' scheme. Children are set in ability groups for phonics learning.

7. AREAS OF CONTINUOUS PROVISION

To ensure a balanced curriculum in Reception there is a balance between adult directed and child-initiated activities and children have access to a wide variety of experiences which promote independent learning. The activities that are planned are cross curricular linked across the seven areas of the curriculum and are based around the interests of the children.

The continuous provision plan ensures appropriate activities are planned for on a daily/weekly basis.

8. THE UNPLANNED CURRICULUM – child-initiated learning

Children are often motivated by a particular event or discovery and are keen to pursue their interest. Practitioners can provide a provocation to help foster and develop children's interests and therefore provide more meaningful contexts.

9. OBSERVATION, INTERPRETATION AND ASSESSMENT

Documentation and assessment form an integral part of everyday practice. This is an ongoing process, which yields a basis for the next steps in children's learning. Assessment criteria are clearly identified in medium- and short-term planning documents.

The assessment process involves:

- Observations of children
- Photographic evidence
- Video recording
- Children's work
- Floor books
- Reading records

Equitas Academies Trust

The EYFS profile document is used to record termly progress for all children in Reception and baseline assessments are carried out within the first four-six weeks of a child entering Reception. This data is analysed half termly by the Early Years leader and informs planning for the next half term.

10. PARENT PARTNERSHIP

Every effort is made to ensure that Reception children feel a sense of belonging with the whole Academy. They join in achievement and class assemblies and take part in whole school performances where appropriate.

We aim to build positive relationships with parents, as we believe they play a very important role in their child's education. Parents are encouraged to attend parent's evenings, achievement assemblies, class assemblies and school performances. They are also welcomed to accompany their children on school visits and help in the classroom. Parents are encouraged to come to weekly reading workshops and events throughout the year, which helps parents to learn more about their child's learning within Early Years.

When required we also liaise with several outside agencies including health visitors, speech therapists, school nurse and the early years team.

11. VISITS

Visits within the local area include the park, library, shops, and the Post Office in Newtown. Reception children also take part in visits relating to the current theme they are learning, e.g. the farm. Risk assessments are always carried out prior to any off site visit in accordance with the school policy.

Adult pupil ratios for visits beyond the school premises are:
Reception age children: 1 adult to 6 children.

12. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The Academy Special Needs Co-ordinator and Reception staff work closely with parents to identify children with special educational needs and develop effective strategies to meet these needs. This involves liaising with several outside agencies including local and community health services. Staff work closely with the Early Years Special Needs team, SALT, physiotherapists, and Educational Psychologists. Action plans are designed and implemented together with professionals and parents. Targets are also discussed with the child if appropriate and their views are considered.

These targets are reviewed termly and reflect the needs of individual children. All children are given learning opportunities that enable them to develop to their full potential.

13. TRANSITION FROM NURSERY TO SCHOOL

It is essential that we aim to establish a smooth and successful transition to school. This is facilitated by:

- Visits to partnership nursery establishments
- Induction morning for parents to attend

Equitas Academies Trust

- Communication with outside agencies
- Home Visits by class teacher and teaching assistant, where appropriate.
- Stay and play sessions
- A staggered intake

14. MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Early Years Leader will discuss practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback. The Head teacher and Early Years Leader will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of whole school monitoring.

Date of next review June 2028