Ormiston Academies Trust

Ormiston Queensmill Academy
EYFS Policy

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1. Aims

1.1 This policy aims to:

- That children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe
- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them 'school readiness' and 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

1.2 This policy is guided by the following principles:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- The importance of learning and development, with a consideration that children develop and learn at different rates

2. Guidance

2.1. This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS framework), effective from 1 September 2026, and the latest version of the Department for Education's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education.

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

3. Structure of the EYFS

3.1 Our early years department comprises Nursery and Reception aged pupils. Each of our classrooms have direct in-class access to a smaller, calming sensory room with a bubble tube. Other areas of the provision include a small soft play, body shop, wet room, art/drama room, quiet space/library, lunch hall/PE hall, therapy room and 2 smaller intervention spaces. 3 out of the 4 classrooms have direct access out onto our purpose-built playground. Here pupils can engage with our climbing frame, swings, trampoline, climbing poles, outside learning area and sandpit/water play. This creates lots of opportunities for our pupils to engage in the curriculum both inside and outside of the classroom.

4. Curriculum

4.1 Our early years setting follows an adapted curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. 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:

- 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

These 7 areas are embodied by our 5 school-wide curriculum strands:

- Cognition and Learning
- Communication and Interaction
- Relationships, emotions and me
- Community and independent living
- Creative and physical development

4.2 Planning

Our staff are ambitious for all children, and plan activities and experiences for the children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to ensure a strong foundation for children's development.

Staff consider the individual strengths and needs of each child as detailed in their EHCP. They use this information, alongside pupil interests to plan challenging and enjoyable learning experiences.

In planning and guiding the children's activities, staff reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and take these into account.

4.3 Teaching

All our teachers receive training in a range of autism specific teaching strategies and interventions. The school day is structured for children with the support of visual timetables and predictable, structured activities. This encourages children to feel safer and more secure and enables them to learn more effectively. Children's emotional and sensory needs are supported through regular access to our sensory suite, use of sensory circuits and through direct teaching on emotional regulation. Teachers and teaching assistants work in partnership with a range of professionals including a speech and language therapist and occupational therapist.

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. Children are encouraged, and supported, to engage in learning and activities that will support the development of key life skills including regular visits to the community.

Throughout the day there is opportunity for whole-class learning, small group work and 1:1 intervention time as well as collaboration with our Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapist.

4. Assessment

4.1. An initial meeting will be held within the term of the new school year. During this meeting we will share initial observations and discuss the outcomes that have been set in their EHCP's. Teachers will also share yearly targets linked to the EHCP outcomes and how they will work on these throughout the year.

At the beginning of each term, teachers will set targets for their pupils towards the strands in the skill-based curriculum. These will be communicated to parents once set via an individual sway link. Targets are reviewed by teachers at the end of each term termly with photographic evidence towards progress uploaded to the sway link.

All new children will be assessed by a Speech and Language Therapist and an Occupational Therapist through observation and collaborative work with the class teachers. Relevant goals and programmes are then written for each child and reviewed on an on-going cycle. Therapists also work collaboratively to set targets with class teachers that work towards EHCP outcomes.

5. Working with parents and carers

5.1. We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. On a daily basis parent communication takes place via email, phone and a child's home school book. A teacher or teaching assistant will write in a child's home school book each day to inform parents of their child's mood, eating and activities in the day. Parents are encouraged to write in the book daily to inform the class team on anything happening at home that may impact their child in school (froe example, howe they slept).

We hold more than two emergency contact numbers for each child, where possible. We request at least two emergency contacts during the admission process and regularly remind parents/carers to keep this information up to date. Emergency contact information includes:

- Full names and relationships to the child
- Contact telephone numbers (mobile and landline where available)
- Home and work addresses
- Information about who has parental responsibility and who is authorised to collect the child

6. Staff

6.1 Staff training

We will:

- Train all staff in safeguarding procedures in line with Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance
- Support all staff to feel supported and confident in implementing our safeguarding policy and procedures
- Renew training every 2 years, or more often when it's needed to help maintain skills; keep up to date with any changes to our safeguarding procedures; or because of any safeguarding concerns
- Outline how training is delivered, and how staff are supported to put it in place, in our child protection and safeguarding policy

Our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will:

- Provide ongoing support, advice and guidance to all staff
- Attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework
- Liaise as needed with local statutory children's services agencies and our local safeguarding partners

6.2 Safer recruitment

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

- Obtaining at least 1 written reference for any member of staff (including students and volunteers) before they are recruited
- Carrying out the necessary checks, including the appropriate level of DBS check
- Recording information about staff qualifications and identity checks, vetting processes and references

See our safeguarding policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures.

6.3 Whistle Blowing

We make sure that all staff (including trainees) and volunteers are aware of our whistle-blowing 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.

In the event that an individual feels that they need to blow the whistle on misconduct, they should report their concern to the head of school, Aymeline Bel. If the concern is about the head of school, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to National Director of Inclusion and Partnerships, Wasim Butt.

See our whistle-blowing policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures and more detail on our procedures for handling whistle-blowing.

6.3.1 Malicious or vexatious allegations

If an allegation is made in good faith, but investigation finds no wrongdoing, there will be no disciplinary action against the member of staff who raised the concern.

If, however, an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, we will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the person making the allegation.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We recognise that children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure; when their individual needs are met; and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

All practitioners are alert to any issues of concern in children's lives at home or elsewhere. See our child protection and safeguarding policy for more information.

7.1 **Reporting allegations or concerns**

If we have concerns about children's safety or welfare, we will immediately notify our local authority children's social care team, in line with local reporting procedures. In emergencies, we will also inform the police.
If a concern or allegation is about:

- A member of staff (including supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors) posing a risk of harm to children, we will report it to the head of school, Aymeline Bel, as soon as possible
- The headteacher, we will report it to the National Director of Inclusion and Partnerships, Wasim Butt.
- Where we believe there's a conflict of interest in reporting to the headteacher, we will report it directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO), Chanel Johnson.

We will then follow the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy for managing the allegation.

If an allegation of harm or abuse by anyone living, working or looking after children at the premises is made (whether the alleged harm or abuse happened on the premises or elsewhere), we will inform Ofsted as soon as it is reasonably practicable and within 14 days of the allegation being made. We will also inform Ofsted about the action we have taken in response to the allegation(s).

7.2 **Staffing ratios**

We operate at using the ratio of 1 adult to every 2 children. This is further adjusted in line with individual Section F provisions specified in pupils Education and Health Care Plans.

7.3 **Paediatric First Aid Training (PFA)**

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. The PFA certificate is for a full course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the EYFS framework. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.
We have on display staff who have a current PFA certificate.

7.4 **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

We also have a DSL who has lead responsibility for safeguarding children. They are also responsible for:

- Liaising with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSPs (local safeguarding partners)
- Providing support, advice and guidance to all other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required
- Attending a safeguarding training course that complies with the criteria set out in annex C of the latest EYFS framework

7.5 **Absence**

We're required to promptly follow up on absences.

If a child is absent for a prolonged time or if their parents/carers haven't told us about the absence, we will attempt to contact the parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts.

We will consider patterns and trends in a child's absences and their personal circumstances and use our professional judgement when deciding if the child's absence should be considered as prolonged.

Any concerns will be referred to local children's social care services and/or a police welfare check requested.

See our attendance policy for more on this, including our expectations of parents/carers to report child absences.

7.6 **Oral Health and Tooth Brushing**

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years through target setting around personal care and outcomes in pupils EHCP. Each class works with an occupational therapist who support in this area. Classes cover a range of areas including:

· Healthy eating and food exploration

· The importance and routine of brushing your teeth

· Toileting

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's child protection policy.

7.7 **Safer Eating**

While children are eating, there will always be at least 1 member of staff in the room with a valid PFS certificate (from a course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the latest EYFS framework). All children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating and seated safely.
Before a child joins our setting, we will get information on their:

- Dietary requirements and preferences
- Food allergies and intolerances
- Health requirements

We will share this information with all staff involved in food preparation and handling.
We will make sure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis; the differences between allergies and intolerances; and that children can develop allergies at any time, especially during the introduction of solid foods.
We will consult with parents/carers to:

- Create allergy action plans for their child – with the help of health professionals, where appropriate
- We will also keep this information up to date and share it with all staff

We will prepare food in a way that:

- Prevents choking
- Meets each child's individual developmental needs

In the event of a choking incident that requires intervention, we will record details of the incident and make the child's parents/carers aware. We will periodically review the records to identify whether we can change anything in our practice to make eating safer and then take action as appropriate.

7.8 **Accident or injury**

We keep a first aid box (which contains appropriate items for children) always accessible.
We keep a written record of accident or injuries and any first aid treatment.
We will inform parents or carers the same day as, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, of any:

- Accident or injury sustained by the child
- First aid treatment given

We will notify the relevant authority of any serious accident, illness, or injury to, or death of any child while in our care and inform them of the action taken, as soon as reasonably practicable, but in any event, within 14 days of the incident occurring.

7.9 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 fire safety and hygiene requirements.
We take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, staff, and others on our premises in the case of fire or any other emergency. We have:

- An emergency evacuation procedure
- Appropriate fire detection and control equipment (for example, fire alarms, smoke detectors, fire blankets and/or fire extinguishers) which is in working order
- Clearly identifiable fire exits and fire doors free of obstruction and easily opened from the inside

We do not keep, and do not allow to be present on our premises at any time, any dog of a type banned under section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.
We do not allow smoking in or on our premises when children are present or are about to be present, and we make sure that staff do not smoke, vape or use e-cigarettes when children are present, or about to be present.

7.10 **Toileting and privacy**

During nappy changes and toileting, we balance children's privacy with safeguarding and support needs. Our approach to personal care includes:

- Nappy changing and toileting routines carried out with sensitivity and respect for children's dignity
- Maintaining appropriate supervision to ensure children's safety
- Following intimate care plans for individual children where needed
- Ensuring staff are trained in appropriate personal care procedures
- Recording any concerns about a child's presentation or behaviour during personal care
- Working closely with parents/carers about toileting and personal care routines and providing support and advice to parents where needed. Each class works with the Therapy Team who supports this area.

Please see the intimate care policy for more information.

7.11 **Screen use**

We have regard to the DfE's help for early years providers: screen use guidance when making decisions about how and when children use screens in our setting.

7.12 **Organising premises for confidentiality and safeguarding**

We make sure that:

- There is an area where staff may talk to parents and/or carers confidentially
- There is an area for staff to take breaks away from areas being used by children
- Children are only released into the care of individuals of whom the parent and/or carer has explicitly notified us
- Children do not leave our premises unsupervised

We take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised persons entering our premises and have an agreed procedure for checking the identity of visitors.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Tessa Harris, EYFS Phase Lead, every year. It will be monitored by Aymeline Bel, Head of School.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

This isn't an exhaustive list of policies and only includes policies specific to the EYFS. For a full list of our policies, see Ormiston Queensmill Academy - Policies

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting children with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent/carer failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy