THE NEW GUILD TRUST

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

POLICY

This policy has been adopted on behalf of all four academies in The New Guild Trust:

Moorpark Junior School
Jackfield Infant School
Alexandra Junior School
Alexandra Infants' School

Approval and Review

Committee to Approve Policy	Trust Board
Date of Trustee Board / Academy Committee Approval	February 2026
Chair of Trustee Board / Academy Committee	Mrs L Eagle
Signature	*L. Eagle*
Accounting Officer	Mrs K Peters
Signature	*K. Peters*
Policy Review Period	12 months
Date of Policy Review	February 2027

Version Control			
Version	**Date Approved**	**Changes**	**Reason for Alterations**
Initial	Jan 2021	No change	
	Jan 2022	No change	
	Jan 2023	Section 3 EYFS: The Four Themes; and Reference to Early Adopter Framework 2020 removed.	Reflect update to Statutory Framework
	Feb 2024	Years relevant updated	
	Feb 2025	No change	
	Feb 2026	Section 9	Transition statement added

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Aims and Objectives
3. Characteristics of Effective Learning
4. Planning
5. Observations
6. Assessment
7. Learning Environment
8. Health and Safety
9. Transition
10. Safeguarding and Welfare
11. Monitoring and Review

1. Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. This policy adheres to the Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2025.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. The New Guild Trust greatly values the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

2. Aims and Objectives

The Trust aims to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

As a Trust, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school;
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress;
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children;
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

3. Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Playing and exploring - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
  Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

- Active learning - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.
  Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn

to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

- Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.
  Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

4. Planning

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. The class teacher uses the national schemes of work, where appropriate, to support their planning for individual children. The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. The planning is based upon themes with discrete phonics, maths and reading directed teaching. However, planning, which is based upon a different topic which is identified as vehicle of interest to deliver the children's next steps in learning, also therefore responds to the needs, achievement and interest of the children. Our medium-term planning identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals.

5. Observations

Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's online Learning Journeys.

6. Assessment

Children's level of development is recorded using the Development Matters age-bands. In Nursery, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using a MAT Baseline Assessment within the first three weeks of starting school. During the first few weeks in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using the DfE statutory Reception Baseline Assessments (RBA) which is a short practical task-based assessment in Language, Communication and Literacy along with Mathematics. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

We record each child's level of development against the 17 Early Learning Goals as Emerging or Expected. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

The teacher keeps progress records, online learning journals and records examples of each child's work.

Tracking grids are updated at the end of each half term. This provides a summary sheet for each child which feeds into the assessment and tracking process. We record each child's level of development at intervals throughout the year to ensure children are on track to meet the Early Learning Goals.

At the end of the final term in Reception a summary of these assessments is sent to the LA for analysis. Information is shared with parents at consultation meetings and in the end-of-year report.

Parents receive an annual written report that discusses the child's characteristics of effective learning and offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress.

7. Learning Environment

The Foundation Stage classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative, etc.

Children have access to both inside and outside areas across the day; this has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and in different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. All areas of the curriculum can be explored outside.

8. Health and Safety

The features of effective teaching and learning in our Trust are defined in each school's policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 or 2.

The more general features of good practice that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, carers and other settings that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- The 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;
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- The support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- The identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs;
- The clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- The regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the Foundation Stage.

9.Transition

In line with the EYFS Statutory Framework, the school recognises the importance of supporting children's emotional well-being and securing strong partnerships with parents to ensure a positive start to school. Prior to entry, staff work closely with children and their families through planned home visits to establish relationships, share information and gain an understanding of each child's

individual needs, interests and experiences. Children and parents are invited to attend play and stay sessions, enabling children to become familiar with the learning environment, routines and expectations in a supportive and welcoming context. Parent information events are provided to share key information about the EYFS curriculum and how learning and development are supported both in school and at home.

Where appropriate, children may be supported through a bespoke transition timetable, informed by ongoing assessment and parental partnership, to ensure children feel safe, secure and confident as they settle into school.

Children who join part way through the academic year are offered the same transition entitlement, ensuring continuity of care, consistency of practice and equality of opportunity in line with statutory expectations.

9. Safeguarding and Welfare

As a Trust, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for the EYFS.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

It is important to us that all children are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy).

"Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene. Intimate care procedures are discussed with parents and permission is gained prior to starting school.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child.

Please also refer to each individual school's policy on procedures for Continence.

10. Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of those working in the Early Years Foundation Stage to follow the principles stated in this policy.

- This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Trust and individual schools SLT.
- Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and other stakeholders.
- The next scheduled review date for this policy is the Spring Term 2026.