



Cheshire Academies Trust  
*Inspiring hearts and minds*

# CAT EYFS Policy

Next Update: Autumn 2026

## Quality of the Curriculum

### Introduction

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. Our EYFS practitioners value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development. We understand our responsibilities to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy, safe and supported.

This policy sets out how our trust implements the requirements of the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE, 2024)**.

### Aims and Objectives

This policy has been developed in alignment with current DfE guidance and seeks to ensure:

- **Quality and consistency**, so that every child makes good progress and no child is left behind.
- A **secure foundation** through planning for learning and development that reflects each child's needs and regularly assessed progress.
- **Partnership with parents** to support learning and development.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring all children are included and supported.

### Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006 & 2016
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Education Act 2011
- **DfE (2024) Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (effective 4 September 2024, updated 2025)**
- **STA (2024) Early Years Foundation Stage Profile: 2024 Handbook**
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)**
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)

## Teaching and Learning

### Curriculum Intent

Our curriculum is the breadth of what we want children to learn. It is designed to meet the needs, interests and stages of development of all children. Teaching encompasses a rich and intentional range of interactions as all interactions, routines, environments and activities that shape learning.

Practitioners use their professional judgement to decide what children need to learn next and to plan learning experiences that are meaningful, developmentally appropriate and engaging.

Educational provision and practice within the early years will be centred around the requirements of the DfE's 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'. Our work is guided by the four principles;

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults
- Learning and Development

## **Planning the Curriculum**

Our curriculum is ambitiously planned to ignite curiosity, deepen understanding and respond meaningfully to children's evolving interests and developmental needs. Practitioners draw on continuous assessment and rich professional knowledge to shape a dynamic and coherent learning journey. This planning process is fluid and responsive, ensuring that children encounter experiences that challenge, inspire and extend their thinking. Children are encouraged to take ownership of their learning through purposeful exploration, while adults skilfully scaffold progress through thoughtfully designed provocations, interactions and direct teaching. Our indoor and outdoor environments are intentionally organised to empower children to access resources independently, collaborate with peers and pursue ideas that matter to them. The outdoor provision offers unique opportunities for physical, social and creative development, enabling children to engage with learning on a broader scale and in diverse ways. Through this ambitious approach, we ensure every child is supported to thrive as a confident, capable and motivated learner.

The EYFS is split into 2 areas of Learning and Development. These include the Prime Areas of learning and the Specific Areas of learning.

### **The Prime Areas of learning include:**

Personal, Social and Emotional Development  
Physical Development  
Communication and Language

### **The Specific Areas of learning include:**

Literacy  
Mathematics  
Understanding the World  
Expressive Arts and Design

Prime areas are fundamental, work together and move through to support development in all other areas. The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge. These characteristics underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner. The Characteristics of effective Learning are:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

## **Assessment and Recording**

Assessment supports recognition of children's progress, helps us understand their needs, and informs planning.

### **Types of Assessment**

We use three forms of assessment:

- Ongoing formative assessment – daily observation, interaction and responsive teaching.
- Summative assessment – review of learning over time.
- National statutory assessment:

- Progress Check at Age Two
- Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)
- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

Assessment is based on professional judgement and does not require unnecessary evidence collection.

### **Progress Check at Age Two**

- Completed between ages 2 and 3.
- Summarises strengths, emerging concerns and next steps.
- Shared with parents.
- Where possible, completed as part of the integrated review with health visitors.

### **Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)**

- Completed within first six weeks of Reception.
- Activity-based assessment covering early maths, literacy and language.
- Administered according to the STA Reception Baseline Assessment and Reporting Arrangements.
- Used to measure progress from Reception to Year 6.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)**

- Completed in the summer term of the academic year a child turns 5.
- Based on practitioner knowledge and ongoing assessment. Profile judgements will be made on the basis of the cumulative evidence recorded over the course of the year. Evidence may include: photographs, videos, written works, child's voice or information from parents or outside agencies.
- Considers attainment against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs).
- Judgements recorded as emerging or expected.
- Includes commentary describing the Characteristics of Effective Learning.
- For exemptions see the 'Early Years Foundation Stage Handbook 2024'.

### **Data Collection and Submission**

- Data submitted to the LA in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Senior leaders ensure accuracy and quality of data.
- Headteachers will complete the declaration forms.

### **Moderation**

- Moderation is collaborative and rooted in practitioner knowledge.
- Trust-led moderation opportunities support consistency and professional development and will be held in the summer term.

### **Inclusion and SEND**

We value all children as individuals, irrespective of background, ability, or need.

We support inclusion by:

- Following the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and the *assess-plan-do-review* cycle.
- Early identification of needs and timely intervention.

- Providing resources that reflect diversity and avoid stereotypes.
- Using tailored strategies and teaching approaches.
- Ensuring safe access to all activities.
- Deploying teaching assistants effectively for targeted support.

The SENCO oversees SEND provision in the EYFS.

## **Partnerships with Parents**

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, as well as their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Meeting with parents prior to the child starting school.
- Creating an 'open door policy' and encouraging parents to talk to staff about any concerns that they have or to discuss their child's progress.
- Shared contribution to their learning journey.
- Workshops, open events and collaborative activities.

Parents receive written reports at the end of Nursery and Reception.

## **Transitions**

### **Into Nursery**

When a child begins nursery, transition is tailored around their needs. The children begin settling in sessions in their room and familiarising themselves with their new environment. The children are allocated a Key Person who is the family point of contact.

### **From Pre-school / Feeder settings**

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition.

Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures, allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express. The children will have stay and play sessions where they can meet their teacher and spend time in their new classroom environment.

Members of staff make contact with feeder settings, including childminders, nannies and nurseries, to gather information for the baseline assessments.

### **From Reception Class to Key Stage 1**

The Reception and Year 1 staff work closely to ensure children have a positive transition into Year 1.

Reception staff share information including the Early Years Profile and Characteristics of Learning with the Year 1 teachers. This informs Year 1 about each child's stage of development and learning needs, and assists with the planning of the curriculum in Year 1. The school will provide opportunities for the children and parents to meet their Year 1 teacher.

## **Safeguarding and Welfare**

Staff take all necessary steps to keep children safe. Our safeguarding practice:

- Follows the 'EYFS Statutory Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements (2024)'.

- Aligns fully with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024'.
- Is detailed in the CAT Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Includes regular staff training and induction.
- Risk assessments are completed for indoor and outdoor environments

## **Safer Eating and Mealtime Procedures**

We follow the DfE's *Safer Eating* guidance to ensure children are protected from choking and food-related risks. Staff supervise children closely during all snack and mealtime routines, ensure food is prepared in an age-appropriate way (including safe textures, sizes, and serving methods) and implement procedures for safe seating, safe drinking and calm eating environments. Foods that present a higher risk of choking are modified appropriately and staff receive training to identify and respond to choking hazards. Mealtime routines promote safety, independence and positive eating habits.

## **Staffing, Ratios and Qualifications**

- Staffing ratios and qualification requirements follow Section 3 of the EYFS Framework (2024).
- In Reception, when a qualified teacher is present, the ratio of 1:30 applies.
- All staff receive appropriate CPD and safeguarding training.

## **Achievement, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Early Years Leader:

- Monitors EYFS provision and pedagogy.
- Conducts learning walks, planning reviews and assessment monitoring.
- Ensures high-quality provision and compliance with statutory requirements.

Trust-wide EYFS cluster meetings support:

- Sharing of effective practice.
- Policy development.
- Moderation.

## **Leadership and Management**

Continuous Professional Development

- Staff engage in CPD aligned with trust priorities.
- Opportunities include LA-led training, trust cluster meetings and internal school development.

## **Governance**

- The Trust Board approves this policy.
- Local Governing Bodies monitor implementation and impact.

