



Tudhoe Learning Trust

Early Years Foundation Stage

Policy & Procedure

Approved by: Chief Executive Officer **Date:** September 2025

Last reviewed on: September 2025

**Next review due
by:** September 2026

1. Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Although academies will take an individual approach to Early Years, teaching in the EYFS in each setting is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through four themes: 'A Unique Child', 'Positive Relationships', 'Enabling Environments' and 'Children Learn in Different Ways and at Different Rates'.

Tudhoe Learning Trust EYFS settings strive to provide:

1. Quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
2. A secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
3. Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
4. Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

2. Areas of Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape educational programmes in Tudhoe Learning Trust early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas, the prime areas, are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

Settings also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Practitioners will consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and will use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.

Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively and become ready for school.

The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas - this may be in the Nursery or Reception phase, as all children develop at their own rates.

However, throughout the early years, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, practitioners will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. Practitioners will consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability, which requires specialist support. They will link with the school SENCO, helping families to access relevant services from other agencies as appropriate.

Each area of learning and development will be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others.

All TLT settings recognise that children learn through a combination of leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners will respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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.

EYFS staff also take account of children's schematic development in planning interesting and relevant opportunities that children will enjoy.

EAL

For children whose home language is not English, settings take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning whilst ensuring resources and experiences are fully inclusive.

3. Key Person

Each child will be assigned a key person. Academies will inform parents and/or carers of the name of the key person, and explain their role, when a child starts attending a setting. The key person will help ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person will seek to engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. They should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

In Reception Classes across Tudhoe Learning Trust, it is most likely that the allocated Key Person will be the Class Teacher. In Nursery settings the role may be shared amongst all staff to ensure key worker groups are kept small in order to develop attachment and nurturing relationships with the youngest children.

A quality learning experience for children requires a quality workforce. Tudhoe Learning Trust academies will endeavour to ensure every setting has a well-qualified, skilled staff - the EYFS Champion supports and develops an ongoing programme of CPD across all schools.

4. Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs and to plan activities and support. On-going assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners observing and interacting with children to understand their level of development, interests, and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

In their interactions with children, practitioners will respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share. Observations and staff discussions will shape the EYFS Curriculum, ensuring that it is accessible and suitably challenging for all children. Assessment will not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive documentation.

The administration and management of assessment is limited to that which is absolutely necessary to promote children's successful learning and development. Parents and/or carers will be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development - primarily through technological apps which help to share and celebrate children's achievements. They will also be encouraged to share regular discussions about children's development and to plan opportunities for parents to take an active role in children's progress.

Practitioners will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. They **are not required** to prove this through collection of any physical evidence.

5. Baseline assessment on entry into Reception

The statutory Reception Baseline Assessment will be carried out in the first 6 weeks in which a child starts Reception. The RBA is an age-appropriate assessment of early mathematics and literacy, communication and language. The assessment has two components, each consisting of practical tasks using physical resources. There is an online scoring system for the practitioner to use as the pupil engages with the tasks. The RBA will be used to create school-level progress measures for primary schools which will show the progress pupils make from reception until the end of key stage 2.

Practitioners will continue to carry out our baselines assessments in the form of observations, interactions, conversations with parents and previous settings. This allows practitioners to get a well-rounded picture of the children's development on entry to EYFS. In turn, this allows the learning to be tailored to meet the specific needs of the children. The process also serves to identify 'vulnerable starters' who arrive with barriers to learning and accessing the curriculum - targeted and timely support can then be given.

6. Assessment at the end of the EYFS - the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile will be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well- rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1.

The Profile will reflect on-going observation; all relevant records held by the setting; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. Each child's level of development will be assessed against the early learning goals. Practitioners will indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or not yet reaching expected levels. This is the EYFS Profile. Year 1 teachers will be given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. These will inform a dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assist with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Academies will share the results of the profile with parents and carers and explain when and how they can discuss the Profile with the teacher who completed it. For children who attend more than one setting, the Profile will be completed by the academy where the child spends most of the time. If a child moves to a new school during the academic year, the original school will send their assessment of the child's level of development against the early learning goals to school within 15 days. The Profile will be completed for all children, including those with special educational needs or disabilities. Reasonable adjustments to the assessment process for children with special educational needs and disabilities will be made as appropriate. Academies may consider whether they may need to seek specialist assistance to help with this. Children will have differing levels of skills and abilities across the Profile, and it is important that there is a full assessment of all areas of their development, to inform plans for future activities and to identify any additional support needs.

7. Information to be provided to the Local Authority

Academies will report EYFS Profile results to local authorities who will share the data with relevant Government departments.

Whilst local authority moderations will no longer take place, Tudhoe Learning Trust EYFS settings will all take part in moderation sessions throughout the Summer Term - as coordinated by the EYFS Champion. Tudhoe Learning Trust will also continue to develop partnerships with schools outside the Trust, sharing best practise and moderating judgements.

8. Admissions

Nursery

Parents are encouraged to apply for a Nursery place well in advance of their third birthday. Application forms for admissions are available from each Academy school office and Nursery places are allocated at the first available opportunity after the child turns three (each school operates a different schedule for intakes and offers different options

for entitlement and sessions). Parents who are unsuccessful at gaining a place are placed on a waiting list.

Reception

Parents of children who require a reception place will apply online to their Local Authority. Application forms are usually available from the September before the child is due to start school. Please see the school admissions department of your local authority, the Academy website and/or School Admission Policy for details.

All prospective parents are invited to visit the schools and can be taken on an informal tour. Before children start Nursery or Reception, they will be invited to visit their class with their parents. Staff use the visits as an opportunity to start pupils' profiles and gather important information about the child.

Parents as Partners

Throughout Tudhoe Learning Trust we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the EYFS framework. We understand that an effective partnership between the setting and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. Practitioners will endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents. We value the role of parents as children's primary educators. Practitioners will encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual.

Equal Opportunities

All practitioners have a responsibility to maintain positive attitudes to diversity and difference, ensuring that inclusive practice is delivered in the EYFS setting. All children, irrespective of gender, ability, special educational need, ethnicity, culture or religion, and social circumstances, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development within the EYFS settings across the Trust.

Welfare Requirements

Each Trust school must ensure that all Welfare Requirements are in place. This is done through an audit of Welfare Requirements on a regular basis. Audits are completed in response to any changes in circumstances in settings, with an at least annual review taking place.

Further Information

If you would like any further information or advice in relation this Policy and Procedure please contact the Trust Early Years Champion Tel: 01388 811765 or Email: office@tudhoelearningtrust.co.uk