

Blanford Mere Nursery and Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

Approved by:	Full Governors	Date: 03.12.2025
Last reviewed on:	December 2025	
Next review due by:	December 2028	

1. Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the statutory standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to five years. This policy applies to all EYFS provision in Blanford Mere Nursery & Primary School including Nursery and Reception. It complies with the EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers effective from 1 September 2025.

2. Aims

Our EYFS provision aims to ensure that all children are safe, secure and well cared for so that children can be the best that they can be. We are committed to providing high-quality education that enables children to achieve the best possible outcomes. We deliver a broad and balanced curriculum across all seven areas of learning and support children to develop self-belief, independence, resilience and determination. We also work to ensure smooth transitions from home to school and from Reception into Key Stage 1. We do this through opportunities to stay and play as well as opportunities for transition days across key stages.

3. Statutory Framework

All EYFS provision at Blanford Mere adheres to the statutory requirements relating to learning and development, assessment (including completion of the EYFS Profile), and safeguarding and welfare. These statutory expectations guide all aspects of practice within the setting.

4. Learning and Development

The EYFS curriculum is organised around the seven areas of learning: Communication and Language, Physical Development, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, and Expressive Arts and Design. Teaching combines a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children learn through meaningful play and structured experiences, with opportunities provided both indoors and outdoors to support their development in all areas.

Staff make sure that the children experience the 3 key characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring; active learning; and creating and thinking critically.

They respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interactions and relationships.

As the children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more focus on teaching essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning, to help the children prepare for Key Stage 1.

5. Assessment

Ongoing formative assessment is used throughout the year to inform teaching, planning and next steps for each child. Tapestry is used within our school to capture learning for each child. At the end of Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for every child and assesses their attainment against the seventeen Early Learning Goals indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. Results from the EYFS Profile are shared with parents and carers and are submitted to the Local Authority by 30 June each year.

6. Safeguarding and Welfare

From September 2025, EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements include safer recruitment procedures in which references must be secured prior to employment and all safeguarding checks completed. All staff receive safeguarding training every year with ongoing training mapped across the entire school year. Attendance is carefully monitored, with unexplained absences followed up and multiple emergency contacts

held for each child. A qualified Paediatric First Aider is present on site at all times. Children must be supervised within sight and hearing during mealtimes, and appropriate arrangements are in place for privacy during toileting and changing. A clear whistleblowing procedure ensures staff can raise concerns safely.

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

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.
- See our attendance policy for more information on this, including our expectations of parents/carers to report child absences. Our policy can be found on the school website. <https://blanford.sch.life/>

Safer recruitment

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

- Obtaining a reference for any member of staff (including students and volunteers) before they are recruited
- Recording information about staff qualifications and identity checks, vetting processes and references

See our safeguarding policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures [insert information about where to find this].

Whistleblowing

We make sure that all staff are aware of our whistleblowing 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 a member of staff feels that they need to blow the whistle on misconduct, they should report their concern to the [headteacher/other member of staff]. If the concern is about the [headteacher/other member of staff], or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to [the chair of the governing board/other named governor].

See our whistleblowing policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures and more detail on our procedures for handling whistleblowing [insert information about where to find this].

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. Staff:Child Ratios and Qualifications

Staffing ratios comply with statutory EYFS requirements. Our Reception classes may operate with a ratio of 1:30 when led by a qualified teacher, or 1:13 when supervised by an Early Years Practitioner. All staff hold qualifications that meet statutory standards, including QTS and recognised Early Years Educator

qualifications. From September 2025, the Experience-Based Route (EBR) is accepted as a valid pathway for gaining recognised early years qualifications.

8. Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Risk assessments are routinely undertaken to ensure that the learning environment is safe, secure and suited to young children's developmental needs. Procedures are in place for managing illness, administering medication and ensuring safe sleep practices where required. Food hygiene standards are maintained at all times, and children's dietary needs are carefully followed in line with updated nutrition guidance.

At Blanford Mere we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance (May 2025) to ensure that all children in our EYFS provision—from birth to five years—have access to healthy, balanced, and nutritious food. Our approach reflects the EYFS statutory requirements, supporting children's rapid growth, encouraging positive eating habits, and helping to reduce health inequalities. For children aged 1 to 5, we provide a wide variety of foods from the four main food groups, limit foods high in salt, sugar, and saturated fat, and offer only plain water and milk. Children can bring a balanced packed lunch to school or have a school lunch provided by our school lunch provider Dolce. We work closely with Dolce to carefully plan portions appropriate to each child's age, ensure textures are suitable for developing infants, and create menus that are both cost-effective and inclusive, catering to dietary, cultural, and faith-based needs. This guidance underpins our everyday practice, helping us provide a nurturing and healthy eating environment tailored to the needs of our EYFS children.

Toileting and privacy

We make sure that there are enough toilets and hand basins available for the children and that suitable nappy changing facilities are available. If a child needs intimate care, a personalized plan is created and shared with parents.

9. Parental Engagement

The school values parents as partners in their children's learning. Regular communication, information workshops and parent meetings help to keep parents informed and engaged. Parents are invited to workshops that enhance their children's learning and experiences within school. Parents are also offered guidance and support to help them extend their children's learning at home.

10. Inclusion and SEND

The school is committed to equality of opportunity and values all children equally. Provision is inclusive, and reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that children with special educational needs or disabilities can fully participate in the curriculum. Early identification of needs is prioritised and support is provided in line with the school's SEND policy.

11. Transitions

Transition arrangements are designed to support children as they move from home or nursery into Reception and subsequently from Reception into Year 1. Information sharing between settings and with parents ensures continuity of learning and supports children's wellbeing during periods of change. We further support transition through opportunities to stay and play as well as opportunities for transition days across key stages.

12. Monitoring and Review

Implementation of the EYFS policy is monitored by the EYFS Lead and the Headteacher. Governors oversee the quality of provision, safeguarding arrangements and outcomes for children. The policy is reviewed every three years or sooner if required in response to changes in statutory guidance.