



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Embrace Multi Academy Trust strives to maintain and improve good provision and outcomes at each of its member schools. Based upon our shared ethos and our values of wisdom, collaboration, respect, integrity, inclusivity, and compassion, we aim to support the learning and development of every person within the trust and our policies are written from this perspective.

Version	Approval Level	Document History	Date	Review Period
V1	Trust			

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1 Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Children access a broad and balanced EYFS curriculum that provides a secure foundation for future learning and development.
- There is quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child is left behind.
- Strong partnerships are established with parents and carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

2 Legislation

This policy is based on the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework effective from 1 September 2025.

It also has regard to relevant safeguarding legislation including Working Together to Safeguard Children and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

As a Trust, Embrace ensures this policy complies with academy funding agreements and governance requirements.

3 Structure of the EYFS

Across the Embrace Trust, the EYFS includes Pre-school and Reception provision. Pre-school provision may include part-time and full-time places subject to local arrangements and funding. Reception provision forms part of statutory school education and follows infant class size legislation.

4 Curriculum

The EYFS curriculum follows the statutory framework and includes seven areas of learning: Prime areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Teaching is informed by the characteristics of effective learning: playing and exploring; active learning; and creating and thinking critically.

5 Assessment

Assessment in the EYFS is ongoing and forms an integral part of learning. This includes:

- Progress checks for children aged 2–2yrs 9mths in the Prime areas are completed with a written summary shared with parents.
- Reception and Pre-School Baseline Assessment carried out within the first 6 weeks of Reception and the first 6 weeks of a child being in Pre-School. This is a statutory requirement.
- Both Pre-School and Reception have data check points. These are through observations and are tracked against statements at three points throughout the year.
- EYFS Profile completed by 30 June in the academic year the child turns 5, moderated internally and externally where required and shared with Year 1 teachers and parents.

6 Working with Parents and Carers – Nursery Visits and Class Dojo communication

In Pre-School, each child is assigned a key person who works closely with families to support learning and wellbeing. Parents are encouraged to share information and are asked to provide more than two emergency contacts where possible. Strong communication underpins effective partnership.

In Reception, the Class Teacher is the key person along with additional support staff, where needed.

7 Staff and Ratios

Embrace Trust ensures suitable, qualified and experienced staff always work with children. Although, we welcome student teachers and volunteers these are not counted in our ratios as they do not possess the relevant qualifications.

Pre-school ratios:

- **Age 2:** 1 adult to 5 children
- **Age 3–4:** 1 adult to 13 children when led by a qualified teacher/ Level 6 qualification, otherwise 1 adult to 8 children

Reception:

- Infant class size legislation applies: one qualified teacher for up to 30 children.

During snack and mealtimes, children are seated together in a line and closely supervised. A member of staff with current paediatric first aid training is present at all times to monitor children while they are eating and to respond promptly in the event of choking or any other concern. All staff receive safeguarding training annually. Safer recruitment practices and whistleblowing procedures are in place [Policies - Embrace Multi Academy Trust](#)

8 Safeguarding and Welfare

Embrace Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is appointed in each setting. Procedures are in place

for managing concerns, allegations, attendance, health, oral health, safer eating, accidents, toileting and privacy.

Serious incidents are reported to the appropriate authorities and Ofsted within statutory timescales.

8.1 Pre-school Attendance

Parents are requested to contact the school office or the Pre-school team via Class Dojo to report absence on a day where a child is due to attend. Where a child is absent but the Pre-school has not been informed a Class Dojo message is sent to parents, if there is no reply to this a member of Pre-school staff will phone the parent.

Attendance of children in Reception classes and above is monitored and addressed in line with the school [Attendance Policy](#).

8.2 Toileting

Toileting procedures in the preschool support the care, dignity and developing independence of children. Staff support children sensitively with nappy changing or toilet use in line with individual needs, while encouraging independence where appropriate, such as handwashing. All hygiene procedures are followed, including the use of gloves and thorough cleaning after each change, and waste is disposed of safely. The nappy-changing station is arranged to ensure privacy and dignity for the child whilst remaining visible to other staff, maintaining safeguarding at all times. Parents and carers are informed promptly if a child has a toileting accident whilst at preschool. A written record is kept of any intimate care or support provided, which is shared with parents verbally or via Class Dojo. [INTIMATE CARE POLICY](#)

9 Admissions

Admissions to Pre-school and Reception follow Trust admissions procedures and local authority coordination. Pre-school admission does not guarantee a Reception place. Admissions are fair, transparent and inclusive, and comply with equality legislation.

10 Monitoring Arrangements

This policy is reviewed annually and approved by the Embrace Trust Board. It is shared with governing bodies and staff to ensure consistent implementation across the Trust.

11 Appendix – Statutory Policies and Procedures

The Trust maintains statutory policies and procedures including safeguarding, medicines, health and safety, complaints, absence, missing children and visitor management, use of reasonable force guidance which are available on the Trust website.

Appendix A

Early Years Safeguarding and Welfare

Applies to: All staff, volunteers, students and visitors

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children in our Early Years provision. We aim to create a safe, secure and nurturing environment where children are protected from harm and their health, wellbeing and development are supported at all times.

This policy is based on the statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements of the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** and is underpinned by the following guidance:

- *Early Years Foundation Stage Framework*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education*
- *Prevent Duty Guidance*

Child Protection and Safeguarding - in line with whole Trust [Safeguarding policy and Staff Code of Conduct](#)

Safeguarding Arrangements

- We have written safeguarding and child protection procedures that cover:
 - Identifying and responding to safeguarding concerns
 - Reporting allegations against staff, volunteers or visitors
 - The safe use of mobile phones, cameras and digital technology

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- A **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is appointed.
- The DSL:
 - Liaises with children's social care, the police and other agencies
 - Provides advice and support to staff
 - Attends appropriate safeguarding training and DSL updates

Staff Training

- All staff receive safeguarding training on induction.
- Training is updated regularly to ensure staff can:
 - Identify signs of abuse or neglect
 - Respond appropriately and promptly
 - Understand local safeguarding procedures

Reporting Concerns

- Concerns about a child's welfare are recorded and reported immediately to the DSL.
- Social care or the police are contacted where there are serious concerns.
- Ofsted is notified of allegations of serious harm or abuse by staff within **14 days**.

Suitable People

Safer Recruitment – in line with whole Trust [Safeguarding policy](#)

- We operate safer recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.

- Enhanced DBS checks (with barred list checks where appropriate) are obtained for all adults aged 16+ who have regular contact with children.
- Additional overseas criminal record checks are completed where required.

Disqualification and Suitability

- Staff are required to declare relevant convictions, cautions or disqualifications.
- Individuals not yet suitability checked are never left unsupervised with children.
- Staff who are disqualified from childcare are not employed in the setting.
- Referrals are made to the DBS where staff are dismissed due to safeguarding concerns.

Health and Conduct

- Staff must not work under the influence of alcohol or substances.
- Medication that may affect a staff member's ability to work is monitored.
- Staff medication is securely stored and inaccessible to children.

Staff Qualifications, Training and Support

- Staff are treated fairly and equally in line with equality legislation.
- All staff receive an induction covering:
 - Safeguarding and child protection
 - Health and safety
 - Emergency evacuation procedures
- Supervision arrangements are in place to support staff wellbeing and professional development.
- The EYFS Manager:
 - Holds at least a relevant Level 3 qualification
 - Has appropriate experience
- There is a named deputy, should the Pre-School manager be absent.
- At least one paediatric first aider is on site at all times.

Staff Ratios and Supervision

- Statutory EYFS staff-to-child ratios are met at all times, including outings.
- Children are always within sight or hearing of staff.
- Staff under 17 are supervised at all times.
- Reception classes do not exceed 30 children per teacher.

Health

Illness and Infection

- Clear procedures are followed for illness and infection control.
- Parents are informed of illness policies and accidents the same day.

Medication

- A written medication policy is in place.
- Medication is only administered with written parental consent.
- Records are kept for all medication administered.
- Parents are informed on the same day.

Food and Drink – inline with guidance [Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance](#)

- Meals and snacks are healthy, balanced and nutritious.
- Dietary requirements and allergies are recorded and followed.
- Fresh drinking water is accessible at all times.
- Food hygiene training is in place for relevant staff.

Behaviour Management

- Physical intervention is only used to prevent harm and is recorded.
- Parents are informed of any physical intervention.
- Corporal punishment or any degrading punishment is strictly prohibited.

Safety and Suitability of Premises

- We comply with health and safety legislation, including fire safety.
- Fire equipment is regularly checked and evacuation procedures are in place.
- Smoking and vaping are prohibited on the premises.
- Indoor and outdoor space requirements meet EYFS standards.
- Risk assessments are carried out regularly and recorded.
- Children are released only to authorised adults.
- Procedures are in place to prevent unauthorised access.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in line with whole School SEND Policy

- Children with SEND are supported appropriately.
- The SEND Code of Practice is followed.
- The school SENDCO supports Pre-School staff with the identification and support for children with SEND.
- Reasonable adjustments are made in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Information and Record Keeping

- Records are:
 - Accurate
 - Secure
 - Confidential
 - Accessible to authorised persons only
- Parents have access to their child's records where appropriate.
- We comply with:
 - UK GDPR
 - Data Protection Act
- A copy of the full complaints procedure is available on request or can be found at [Complaints-Policy-2024-26.pdf](#)
- Complaints relating to EYFS are investigated and responded to **within 28 days**.
- Ofsted is informed of notifiable events within required timescales.

Partnership with Parents

- Parents are provided with clear information about:
 - EYFS provision
 - Staffing and key persons
 - Routines and activities

- Policies and procedures
 - How to contact Ofsted
- Two-way communication is encouraged and valued.

Appendix Review

This appendix will be reviewed:

- Following changes to legislation or EYFS guidance
- Following any safeguarding incident

APPENDIX B

Admissions Appendix

Admissions to the Early Years provision are managed in line with the school's Early Years Policy and Admissions Procedures and the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework. Our admissions processes are fair, transparent and inclusive, ensuring equality of access for all children and families.

Early Years provision includes Pre-school and Reception classes. Admissions support the school's commitment to providing a secure, supportive and stimulating environment which meets the developmental needs of young children.

Pre-school Admissions

- Pre-school places are available for children subject to availability and eligibility criteria set by the school and local authority.
- Admission to the Pre-school does not guarantee a place in the Reception class.
- Pre-school sessions, hours and eligibility are clearly communicated to parents/carers before admission.
- Parents are provided with induction information to support a smooth transition into Pre-school.

Reception Admissions

- Admission to Reception is managed in accordance with Leicestershire County Council's admissions scheme.
- Parents must apply for a Reception place via the local authority application process.
- Places are allocated based on published oversubscription criteria and statutory timelines.
- Children admitted to Reception join the EYFS and follow a carefully planned transition programme.

Equality and Inclusion in Admissions

- No child is discriminated against on the basis of:
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Disability
 - Gender
 - Family background or circumstance
- Reasonable adjustments are made to support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- Admission arrangements comply with the Equality Act 2010 and SEND guidance.

Induction and Transition

- We provide a structured induction for children and parents, which may include:
 - Stay-and-play sessions
 - Meetings with staff
 - Sharing information about routines and expectations
- Transition arrangements are designed to ensure children:

- Feel safe and secure
- Develop positive relationships
- Settle confidently into Early Years provision

Partnership with Parents

- Parents and carers receive clear information about:
 - EYFS provision
 - Daily routines
 - Learning through play
 - Safeguarding and welfare arrangements
- Two-way communication between home and school is encouraged from the point of admission onward.
- Parents are invited to share relevant information about their child's needs, routines and interests.

Review of Admissions Procedures

Admissions arrangements are reviewed regularly to ensure they:

- Remain compliant with statutory guidance
- Meet the needs of children and families
- Reflect the school's safeguarding and welfare responsibilities

At the heart of an EYFS curriculum is:

- The Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- An Enabling Environment
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

- Children feel **safe, valued, and respected**.
- Positive relationships where adults know each child well — their interests, home context, and learning style.
- Strong emphasis on **wellbeing and self-regulation** (co-regulation embedded throughout the day).
- Clear behaviour expectations rooted in **emotional coaching**, not punishment.

What it looks like in practice?

- Calm, predictable routines with visual supports.
- Adults model language for feelings: *"I can see you're frustrated—let's find a way to fix this together."*
- Children are becoming independent: hanging coats, collecting resources, solving small problems.

Positive Relationships

- Warm, communicative, consistent adults who scaffold learning through sensitive interactions.
- Adults use purposeful language: open questions, modelling vocabulary, narrating thinking.
- Parents are genuine partners in learning.

What it looks like in practice?

- Interactions that extend play, not interrupt it.
- Parents confidently sharing milestones and worries; staff genuinely listening.
- Adults sitting *with* children, not over them.

Enabling Environments

- High-quality continuous provision that encourages independence, curiosity, and sustained shared thinking.
- Resources are open-ended, accessible, labelled, and maintained.
- Both indoor and outdoor environments are equally valued and purposefully planned.

What it looks like in practice?

- Clear workshop-style areas: blocks, small world, creative, reading, writing, maths, sensory, outdoors.
- Invitations to play that spark thinking without being over-themed.
- Children selecting, using, and returning resources independently.

Learning and Development

- A curriculum that is **sequenced**, ambitious, and built around what children need to know next.
- A strong balance between **child-initiated learning** and **well-timed, purposeful adult input**.
- Development Matters used as a guide, not a checklist.

What it looks like in practice?

- Staff know the progression of skills: e.g., “before children draw recognisable figures, they need core strength, then shoulder rotation, then mark-making control”.
- Adults observe thoughtfully, not constantly.
- Interventions are short, focused, and rooted in genuine misconceptions or needs.

Well Designed Learning Environment Designed Learning Environment *schools to add school specific information e.g. Forest School*

Indoor provision

- Clearly defined areas (e.g. role play, construction, writing, maths, small world, reading) and at times these areas may crossover
- Resources are accessible, open ended and well organised to promote independence (labelled, low level storage)-ended and well organised (labelled, low-level storage)
- Purposeful enhancements linked to learning intentions, not clutter
- Calm, inviting spaces that reduce cognitive overload
- An opportunity rehearse previous skills
- Print rich environment: -rich environment:
 - Environmental print
 - High quality texts quality texts
 - Phonics prompts used meaningfully (not wallpaper)

Outdoor provision (statutory requirement)

- Equal importance given to outdoor learning
- Opportunities for:
 - Gross motor development
 - Turn taking
 - Risk taking within safe boundaries taking within safe boundaries
 - Problem solving and exploration solving and exploration
 - Mark making and maths outdoors making and maths outdoors

Strong Adult–Child Interactions (The Biggest Driver)

- Model high quality language quality language
- Use sustained shared thinking
- Ask open ended questions ended questions
- Extend children's vocabulary intentionally
- Narrate learning and model thinking aloud
- Intervene at the right moment, not too early or too late

Examples:

- "I wonder what would happen if..."
- "Tell me more about your idea."
- Recasting children's speech to model correct grammar

Communication and Language at the Core

Strong foundations start with language.

- Daily structured language opportunities:
 - Storytelling
 - Songs and rhymes
 - Talk rich routines-rich routines
- Explicit vocabulary teaching
- Visuals and scaffolds to support:
 - EAL learners
 - Children with SLCN
- Clear expectations for listening, turn taking and conversation-taking and conversation

Early Literacy (Reading and Writing) *RWI, Writing for Pleasure*

- Systematic, synthetic phonics taught daily
- Phonics teaching:
 - Follows a clear progression
 - Is consistent across adults
- Children apply phonics in:
 - Play
 - Reading books matched to phonic knowledge
- Adults read aloud every day, using high quality texts-quality texts

Writing

- Purposeful mark making everywhere (indoors and out)-making everywhere (indoors and out)
- Children are book makers and write every day
- Writing linked to play and real-life contexts-life contexts
- Correct pencil grip and posture modelled
- Adults value attempts, not just outcomes

Early Mathematics - *Ten Town*

- Number sense developed through play and routines
- Frequent opportunities to:
 - Count
 - Subitise
 - Compare quantities
- Mathematical language modelled naturally:
 - More / fewer / same
 - Bigger / smaller
 - Full / empty
- Shape, space and measure embedded across provision

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) *Jigsaw and Everyone's Welcome*

Strong foundations depend on emotional security.

- Clear routines and consistent expectations
- Adults modelling:
 - Emotional regulation
 - Respectful relationships
- Explicit teaching of:
 - Sharing and turn-taking
 - Managing feelings
 - Perseverance and resilience
- Calm, supportive responses to behaviour

Encouraging children to stay healthy

- Encouraging tooth-friendly practices
- Role-modelling healthy eating
- Avoiding sugary snacks

The PSED curriculum promotes British Values (democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance) and the Prevent Duty is upheld by EYFS staff.

Observation, Assessment and Next Steps

Effective EYFS bases:

- Use ongoing formative assessment, not excessive paperwork
- Know each child's:
 - Strengths
 - Barriers
 - Next steps
- Use assessment to:
 - Adapt provision
 - Target interventions
- Identify needs early (speech, SEMH, SEND)

Inclusion and High Expectations for All

- Adaptations and scaffolds rather than lowered expectations
- SEND support embedded into daily practice
- Cultural diversity reflected in:
 - Books
 - Resources
 - Language
- All children seen as capable learners

APPENDIX D – Pre-school sleeping arrangements

The EYFS framework (2024) requires providers to ensure children's safety and well-being, specifically through rigorous, frequent checks (often every 10–15 minutes).

Key EYFS Safe Sleep Practices:

- **Supervision:** Children must be frequently checked to ensure they are safe. Best practice suggests physical checks every 10 minutes.
- **Positioning:** Babies must always be placed on their back to sleep.
- **Environment:** Use a firm, flat, waterproof mattress in a cot. Keep cots free of pillows, bumpers, soft toys, and loose bedding.
- **Safety:** Ensure all sleep areas are clear of hazards, such as dangling cords or nappy sacks.
- **Temperature:** Avoid overheating by using appropriate, light layers.
- **Prams/Buggies:** Babies should only sleep in a pram if it has a flat bassinet, usually for children 6 months and under, and they should be moved to a cot when possible.
- **Partnering with Parents:** Work with parents to agree on sleep routines, ensuring the child's needs are met.

Appendix E – Embrace Alignment with the DfE “Best Start in Life” Strategy (2025)

Purpose of this Appendix

This appendix outlines how Embrace Multi Academy Trust responds to the wider national priorities set out in the DfE Best Start in Life Strategy (2025). It complements statutory EYFS requirements and ensures the Trust's Early Years practice is aligned with emerging national

direction across family support, inclusion, early health, childcare access, and workforce development.

1. Strengthening Early Help & Family Support

Embrace will work alongside local Family Hubs and Early Help services to ensure families can access parenting support, SEND pathways, and community health services. Signposting will be provided through admissions, websites, and parent events.

2. Working in Partnership With Health Services

Schools will liaise with health visitors, oral health teams and NHS services to promote child development, early identification of need, and public health messages such as vaccination awareness and oral health routines.

3. Improving Access to Early Education and Childcare

Embrace schools will help families understand and access government-funded childcare entitlements, including 15- and 30-hour provisions, and ensure equity of access for children with SEND or additional vulnerabilities.

4. Strengthening the Early Years Workforce

The Trust supports evidence-informed CPD, high-quality induction, coaching, and progression routes including Level 3 qualifications, EYITT, and early years leadership development.

5. Reception Year: Transition, Curriculum and National Priorities

Reception practice will reflect national expectations, ensuring continuity from Preschool through Year 1, and engaging with evidence-based programmes such as early literacy and early maths where available.

6. Tackling Disadvantage and Supporting Vulnerable Children

The Trust will use Early Years Pupil Premium and SEND funding effectively to support children affected by disadvantage, providing targeted interventions and monitoring attendance and engagement.

7. Data, Safeguarding and Information Sharing

Embrace will maintain accurate, secure records in line with UK GDPR and collaborate with safeguarding partners, early help, and health services to share information appropriately.

Review Arrangements

This appendix will be reviewed annually, or following any changes in national Best Start policy, early help structures, or EYFS statutory guidance. It will be approved by the Embrace Trust Board as part of the annual EYFS policy review.