

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy 2026-2027

Webheath Academy Primary School



Approved by:	Local Governing Body	Date: October 2026
Last reviewed on:	October 2026	
Next review due by:	October 2027 or earlier if guidance changes	

1. Aims and principles

At Webheath Academy Primary School, we aim to provide a safe, inclusive, stimulating and ambitious Early Years Foundation Stage in which every child is supported to develop, learn and thrive. We aim to:

- provide a broad, balanced and carefully sequenced curriculum that develops the knowledge, skills and language children need for future learning and life;
- provide high-quality teaching and care so that every child can make progress from their starting points;
- develop communication, language and vocabulary across all areas of learning;
- offer positive relationships, purposeful play and enabling environments indoors and outdoors;
- identify and respond to children's needs promptly, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), children who may be vulnerable and children who need additional challenge;
- work in partnership with parents and carers, valuing their knowledge of their child;
- promote equality of opportunity, inclusion, respect and anti-discriminatory practice; and keep children safe, healthy and well cared for.

Our practice is guided by the four EYFS principles:

- A Unique Child — every child is an individual who is continually learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Positive Relationships — children learn to be strong and independent through warm, respectful and consistent relationships.
- Enabling Environments — children learn and develop in environments that respond to their needs and interests and support a strong partnership between practitioners and families.
- Learning and Development — children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. Our provision includes and supports children with SEND.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers](#) effective from 1 September 2026, and relevant legislation and statutory guidance. It should be read alongside the school's related policies, including safeguarding and child protection, SEND, behaviour, health and safety, online safety, attendance, complaints and data protection.

Practitioners may use Development Matters as non-statutory guidance to support curriculum planning and professional judgement. The statutory framework takes precedence wherever requirements differ. This policy will be reviewed when statutory guidance or school practice changes.

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Structure of the EYFS

At Webheath we have:

A 30-place Pre School for children aged 3–4.

A Reception year group with an intake of 60 children.

The school offers funded early education places in line with current government and local authority arrangements and eligibility. Any additional paid sessions, wraparound care, lunch arrangements, session times and charges are published separately and may be updated independently of this policy.

Staffing, supervision, admissions and attendance arrangements are organised in accordance with the current statutory framework and the school's relevant procedures.

4. Curriculum

Our curriculum is ambitious, broad and balanced. It is informed by the EYFS educational programmes, children's starting points, interests and experiences, ongoing assessment and the knowledge and skills children need to learn over time. Learning is planned progressively so that children revisit, practise and build on prior learning.

The seven areas of learning and development are interconnected and equally important. The three prime areas are particularly important for building the foundations for learning, relationships and wellbeing.

Prime Areas:

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development:** Self regulation, Managing self, Building relationships.
- **Communication and Language:** Listening & Attention and Understanding, Speaking.
- **Physical Development:** Gross Motor and Fine Motor.

Specific Areas:

The following four areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society:

- **Literacy:** Comprehension, Word reading and Writing.
- **Mathematics:** Number, numerical patterns.
- **Understanding the World:** Past and present, People, Culture and Communities, The Natural World.
- **Expressive Arts and Design:** Creating with Materials, Being imaginative and Expressive.

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning are embedded throughout our provision:

- **Playing and Exploring** — engagement, curiosity and finding things out.
- **Active Learning** — motivation, concentration, persistence and enjoyment.
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** — developing ideas, making links, solving problems and choosing ways to do things.

We place particular emphasis on communication, language and vocabulary. Adults model language, introduce and revisit meaningful vocabulary, share stories and rhymes, engage children in back-and-forth conversations and create opportunities for children to explain their thinking.

4.1 Planning and inclusion

Practitioners plan a coherent curriculum through explicit teaching, shared experiences, stories, songs, routines, purposeful play and child-initiated learning. Planning takes account of children's prior knowledge, interests, language, culture, developmental stage and individual needs. It is adapted in response to what children know and can do.

The prime areas receive particular attention when children are younger or when a child needs support with foundational skills. Adults identify barriers to learning and use appropriate adaptations, targeted support and additional challenge. Where concerns arise about a child's development, staff discuss these with the family, follow the school's SEND procedures and seek advice or specialist support where appropriate. Reasonable adjustments are made so that children can participate meaningfully.

Practitioners use developmental guidance to inform professional judgement rather than as a checklist to be completed. The aim is to understand each child's development and plan appropriate next steps.

4.2 Teaching and learning

Learning is supported through a balance of planned adult-led teaching and child-initiated activity. Adults use warm, responsive interactions, modelling, demonstration, explanation, questioning and feedback to extend learning. They know when to join children's play, model a skill, introduce a resource or give children time to practise independently.

As children develop, teaching is adapted to strengthen the knowledge and skills needed for the next stage of learning, including the transition to Year 1. Preparation for Year 1 does not replace the EYFS approach with an inappropriate early version of the Key Stage 1 curriculum; practical, play-based learning and the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning remain important.

Preschool and Reception provide regular teaching of early literacy and mathematics. In Preschool and Reception, phonics teaching follows Sound!Start Phonics for Letters and Sounds. In Reception, phonics is taught daily, following the programme's systematic progression. Staff implement the programme consistently, revisit previously taught knowledge and skills, and provide additional practice or support for children who need it. Mathematics teaching follows the school's NCETM and White Rose mastery approach.

4.3 Continuous Provision

Continuous provision is planned to help children revisit learning, practise skills, develop independence and follow interests. Resources are carefully selected, accessible, well organised, clearly labelled where appropriate and available for children to use as independently as possible. Provision is reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains safe, inclusive, purposeful and challenging.

Adults observe children's engagement and intervene thoughtfully to extend language, model skills, deepen understanding, introduce new ideas or support collaboration. Enhancements are purposeful and linked to the curriculum, while allowing children to make choices and develop their own ideas.

4.4 Outdoor Learning

Indoor and outdoor environments are complementary learning spaces. Children have regular opportunities to access outdoor learning and, where arrangements and safety allow, to move between indoor and outdoor provision. Outdoor learning supports all seven areas of learning, including physical development, wellbeing, communication, exploration of nature, growing, creativity and problem-solving.

The outdoor environment is organised so that children, including those with SEND, can participate safely and as independently as possible. Staff consider suitable clothing and footwear, weather conditions, accessibility, risk assessment, supervision, equipment and resources. Staffing arrangements and ratios must meet current statutory requirements at all times. Focused teaching and responsive interactions take place outdoors as well as indoors.

5. Assessment

Assessment is ongoing and informs teaching and curriculum planning. Practitioners draw on their knowledge of each child, observations during everyday learning, conversations with the child and family, and examples of what the child knows, understands and can do. Assessment is proportionate and purposeful; staff avoid unnecessary recording that takes time away from interacting with children.

5.1 Starting points and school baseline assessment

When children join Preschool or Reception, staff gather information about their starting points and needs through transition information, conversations with families and appropriate baseline activities during the first weeks. The school's own baseline assessment helps staff identify strengths, potential barriers and areas where additional support or challenge may be needed. It informs teaching and is not a substitute for ongoing professional assessment.

5.2 Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)

The Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is an age-appropriate assessment of early mathematics and early literacy, communication and language. It must be administered to participating pupils within the first six weeks after they start Reception, in accordance with the current statutory assessment and administration guidance. It provides a starting point for measuring the progress made by pupils between Reception and the end of Key Stage 2.

The RBA is distinct from the school's own baseline assessment and ongoing formative assessment. Staff follow the current administration guidance, including requirements for accessibility arrangements, assessment

security and recording the status of pupils who do not participate. The assessment is not used to label children or replace practitioners' knowledge of their development.

5.3 Ongoing assessment and tracking

Staff assess learning in the moment and use observations and professional discussion to shape future teaching. Tapestry is used to share meaningful learning observations with families, and progress may be reviewed termly using the school's agreed assessment system, including Arbor. Records are purposeful and proportionate, and information is handled in accordance with the school's data protection and safeguarding procedures.

5.4 EYFS Profile and Good Level of Development

At the end of Reception, staff complete the statutory EYFS Profile for each eligible child, in line with the current EYFS Profile Handbook and local authority deadlines. Teachers make a best-fit judgement against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs), recording whether the child is "Expected" or "Emerging".

A child is assessed as having a Good Level of Development (GLD) when they reach the expected level in all the ELGs in the three prime areas — Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, and Physical Development — and in the specific areas of Literacy and Mathematics.

Teachers use professional judgement based on their knowledge of what each child knows, understands and can do. Children with SEND must be assessed using the adaptations and reasonable adjustments they normally use to carry out daily activities, so that they can demonstrate their development.

EYFS Profile outcomes are shared with parents and carers and with the Year 1 teacher to support a successful transition. Where a child's development or progress causes concern, staff work with the family to agree next steps and, where appropriate, additional support.

6. Working with parents

We recognise parents and carers as children's first educators and value their knowledge, experiences and aspirations for their child. We aim to build trusting, respectful relationships and share information regularly about children's learning, development, wellbeing and next steps.

Communication may include conversations at drop-off and collection, parent consultations, written reports, workshops and Tapestry. Families are encouraged to share relevant observations and achievements from home. Staff consider how to communicate accessibly with families who may need translation, interpretation or other adjustments.

6.1 Tapestry and learning journals

Tapestry supports the sharing of meaningful examples of children's learning and development between school and home. It can help staff and families celebrate progress, share interests and discuss next steps. It is not a substitute for high-quality interaction or professional judgement, and staff are not expected to record every learning moment.

Photographs, videos and other personal information are handled in accordance with the school's data protection, safeguarding and acceptable-use procedures. Access to learning journals is managed appropriately.

6.2 Key person

Each Preschool child is assigned a key person. The key person helps ensure that the child's care and learning are tailored to their individual needs, builds a secure relationship with the child, works in partnership with parents and carers, shares relevant information with colleagues and helps families access additional or specialist support where appropriate.

7. Transition

7.1 Into Preschool and Reception

We aim to make transitions welcoming, inclusive and responsive to individual children. Before children start, staff gather relevant information from families and, where possible and appropriate, from nurseries or other settings. Visits to existing settings, transition sessions and information-sharing help staff understand children's interests, strengths, communication, routines and support needs. We recognise that it may not be possible to visit every setting.

Families receive information about school routines, the curriculum and practical arrangements. Staff work with parents and carers to support settling-in and adapt transition arrangements where a child is anxious or requires additional support. Attendance and the move towards full-time provision are managed in line with school arrangements, the child's needs and applicable statutory requirements. We aim to have all children in full time as soon as possible.

7.2 From Reception to Year 1

Transition to Year 1 is planned collaboratively by EYFS and Year 1 staff. Staff share relevant information about children's learning, development, strengths, interests and support needs. Children have opportunities to become familiar with the next environment, adults and routines. The transition is gradual and responsive, retaining practical, active and play-based approaches where these best support children's learning and wellbeing.

8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff follow the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, procedures for reporting concerns, staff code of conduct and statutory EYFS welfare requirements. Staff receive the training and updates required for their roles, and concerns are passed on promptly through the school's safeguarding procedures.

The EYFS environment and daily routines support children's safety, dignity, health and wellbeing. This includes appropriate supervision, risk assessment, safe use and storage of equipment, procedures for accidents and incidents, hygiene, toileting and intimate care, safe food practices, and the management of allergies, medication and medical needs in line with school policies.

Staff promote children's oral health through age-appropriate discussion and routines, including the importance of toothbrushing and healthy choices. The school has regard to the current statutory requirements and guidance concerning children's use of screens and technology. Digital devices, where used, are purposeful, age-appropriate and supervised, and do not displace active play, physical activity, social interaction, reading or direct experience.

Online safety, use of photographs and digital communication are managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding, online safety and data protection policies. Staff follow current procedures for concerns or allegations relating to adults working with or around children.

9. Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Headteacher and EYFS Phase Leader, or other designated leaders, monitor the quality and consistency of provision through professional discussion, observation, curriculum review, assessment information, feedback from families and evaluation of children's experiences and progress. Monitoring supports improvement and should not create unnecessary paperwork.

This policy is reviewed at least annually and sooner if statutory requirements or school practice change. The updated policy is approved by the governing board or other responsible body in accordance with the school's governance arrangements and is made available to staff and families.

10. Related documents and official guidance

- EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers (effective 1 September 2026).
- Development Matters — non-statutory curriculum guidance for the EYFS.
- EYFS Profile Handbook — current edition.
- Reception Baseline Assessment: 2026 administration guidance and assessment and reporting arrangements.
- School safeguarding and child protection policy.
- School SEND policy and information report.

- School behaviour, preschool behaviour, health and safety, online safety and data protection policies.
- School admissions, funded childcare and charging information.
- Key Person policy
- Healthy eating, packed lunches, and supervision of eating policy

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy

Policy lead: EYFS Phase Leader

Approved by: Governing body

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