

Austhorpe Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date: 07/09/2026

Review Date: 07/09/2027

Early Years Intent

Our goal is for children to leave Reception as independent, confident learners who are resilient and prepared for the next phase of their education. We believe every child has the ability to SHINE.

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) encompasses the learning and development of all children from birth until the end of Reception Year. At Austhorpe, we adhere to the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Early childhood lays the groundwork for children's lifelong learning. We strive to make learning an exciting, fun, and engaging experience where children can explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise, and solidify their growing knowledge, skills, understanding, and attitudes. During the Foundation Stage, these learning experiences are often integrated through play, reading, conversation, and meaningful interactions with both adults and peers.

Aims/Objectives

We believe it's essential for children to cultivate a lifelong love of reading and become confident, fluent, and independent readers. At Austhorpe, reading is at the heart of our curriculum, as we recognise it as a vital life skill that opens doors for success across all subjects. We teach daily systematic phonics following the Read Write Inc phonics scheme. We also emphasise the importance of regularly reading to children and actively involving them with stories, non-fiction, rhymes, and poems. Additionally, we create opportunities for them to use and integrate new vocabulary in diverse contexts, supporting their growth and development.

As outlined in the 'Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage':

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.'

Statutory Framework of EYFS

We adhere to the 'Statutory Framework of the EYFS' and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/ carers;
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. As part of our practice we:
 - Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven curriculum areas, using play as the vehicle for learning;
 - Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
 - We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support;
 - Work in partnership with parents and carers;

- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment and by the children's own ideas and interests;
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated, child initiated and adult supported;
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors.

Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), there are seven areas of learning and development. All areas are important and interconnected. Three are identified as the prime areas, which underpin children's learning, development and ability to form relationships:

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

These are supported by four specific areas:

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

These areas are not taught in isolation; they are carefully integrated to ensure a cohesive and meaningful learning experience.

Our curriculum is delivered through a balance of adult-led, adult-initiated and child-led learning. Each area is underpinned by the Early Learning Goals, which outline expected outcomes by the end of Reception.

The learning environment is organised to support independence, safety and engagement. Clearly defined areas enable children to access resources confidently and make purposeful choices. Opportunities are provided for active play as well as quieter, reflective learning.

We place significant value on outdoor learning. Children benefit from a secure outdoor space and access to a woodland area, which broadens experiences and supports development across all seven areas. Outdoor provision is carefully planned to provide opportunities for exploration, physical development and sensory engagement.

Play is central to our approach. Through play, children develop confidence, resilience and problem-solving skills, supported by skilled adult interactions that deepen learning.

We explicitly promote the characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

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

Practitioners carefully plan opportunities that enable children to play and explore, actively engage in their learning and develop creative and critical thinking. These characteristics underpin all learning experiences and support children to become confident, independent learners.

Children are provided with rich, first-hand experiences that foster curiosity, creativity and independence.

Our curriculum follows a thematic approach, informed by children's interests and prior knowledge. At the start of each topic, practitioners assess what children know and use their questions and ideas to shape future learning. This ensures a balance between adult direction and child-led enquiry, with a strong emphasis on depth of learning.

We explicitly support the development of self-regulation and executive function skills by helping children to manage their emotions, focus their attention, remember instructions and develop flexible thinking. Through secure relationships, consistent routines and skilful adult support, children develop the resilience and independence needed for future learning.

We enhance our continuous provision through carefully planned **weekly provision challenges**, which are designed to extend learning, consolidate skills and encourage purposeful engagement across all areas. These challenges are differentiated and support progression for all learners.

A key strength of our practice is a sustained focus on **high-quality adult interaction**, using the **ShREC approach** (Share attention, Respond, Expand, Converse). Adults model language, extend vocabulary, scaffold thinking and engage in meaningful back-and-forth interactions to support communication and cognitive development.

Developing children's communication and language is a priority across the curriculum. We provide a language-rich environment and place great emphasis on high-quality interactions, vocabulary development and sustained shared thinking to support children's understanding and expression.

Vocabulary development is carefully planned across all areas of learning, with adults explicitly teaching, modelling and revisiting ambitious language within meaningful contexts.

At Austhorpe, our provision- both indoors and outdoors- is thoughtfully designed and regularly reviewed to meet children's evolving needs, ensuring all children make strong progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Provision is adapted and scaffolded where necessary to ensure all children, including those with SEND, can access the curriculum, participate fully and make meaningful progress.

Positive behaviour is promoted through clear expectations, nurturing relationships and consistent routines. Children are supported to develop kindness, respect, cooperation and independence, enabling them to become successful members of the school community.

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Practitioners use ongoing observations, interactions and professional knowledge of each child to identify next steps and inform future planning. Assessment is used to support children's learning and development and is not reliant on the collection of excessive evidence.

During the first six weeks of Reception, children participate in the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment in accordance with Department for Education requirements.

We complete ongoing observations and the children's progress is reviewed continually. Throughout their time in Reception, parents/carers are welcomed in to share their children's learning, we host a coffee morning and invite families in to be informed about the teaching of Read Write Inc, so that they are confidently able to support learning at home, as well as additional events throughout the year to maintain a strong parent partnership.

At the end of the year the EYFS profile provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements including whether they have reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD).

Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the class teacher - who uses the exemplification documents, and their knowledge of the children to make a 'best fit' judgement.

The children are assessed as either 'Emerging' or 'Expected' against each area of the EYFS curriculum.

Safety including safeguarding and welfare requirements

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount at Austhorpe Primary School. We have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure their safety.

In Reception we provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to take risks, follow rules and stay safe. We comply with the welfare requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and understand that we must:

- Promote the welfare of all children;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately;
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the environment is safe and all equipment and furniture is fit for purpose;
- Ensure all children have a challenging and enjoyable learning experience.

The EYFS staff hold the Paediatric First aid qualification, which is a statutory requirement of the EYFS.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff receive regular safeguarding training and follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Staff are vigilant to signs that a child may be at risk of harm and take appropriate action in line with statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures.

At Austhorpe Primary School, we promote healthy lifestyles and support children to make positive choices about their health and wellbeing. Children are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits through planned learning experiences, snack and mealtime routines, and discussions about nutrition. We also promote good oral health by teaching children the importance of brushing their teeth, making healthy food and drink choices, and attending regular dental check-ups, in line with EYFS statutory requirements.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of each individual child and supports them to learn and develop at their own pace, enabling children to achieve and, where appropriate, exceed the Early Learning Goals.

We are committed to identifying and removing barriers to learning at the earliest opportunity, ensuring all children, including those with SEND, are able to access a fully inclusive curriculum and achieve their potential.

We work closely with the parents/carers of our high achieving children to ensure that their individual needs are met and their talents fostered. We ensure that these children are challenged appropriately to reach their full potential.

We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child, early intervention and the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents/carers and outside agencies.

Use of Screens in Reception

At Austhorpe Primary School, the use of digital technology in Reception is carefully planned and implemented in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework. Technology is used to support and enhance children's learning and development, with clear educational purposes linked to the EYFS curriculum. Adults actively engage with children during screen-based activities, using discussion, questioning and shared interaction to extend learning and promote communication and language development.

Our approach reflects the Department for Education's guidance on screen use for children aged 2 to 5 years. In line with Department for Education guidance, we recognise that children aged 2 to 5 should have no more than one hour of screen time per day, and less where possible. Consequently, the use of screens within Reception is kept to a minimum, carefully planned and used only where it adds value to children's learning and development.

We recognise that children may already access screens outside school; therefore, screen use within Reception is carefully considered, limited and used only where it enhances learning and development.

Technology forms one part of a broad, balanced and play-based curriculum that prioritises high-quality interactions, physical activity, outdoor learning, exploration, creativity and first-hand experiences. Through this approach, children develop the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to engage confidently, safely and responsibly with technology, while ensuring their overall wellbeing and development remain at the heart of our provision.

Parent Partnerships

At Austhorpe we believe that it is important that we have strong and respectful relationships with parents. We recognise parents and carers as children's first and most enduring educators and work in close partnership with families to support children's learning, development and wellbeing. We believe that strong relationships can support the children in their transition to school. These partnerships begin before the children transition into Reception, when the team make a home visit to each family, we deliver a book bag and a story and spend time chatting and getting to know the families. We use Tapestry as an online platform to communicate with parents and record 'Wow' moments both at home and at school which can be shared. The class bear chooses who he wants to go home with every weekend, the children and parents upload their adventures onto class dojo and these are shared in class every Monday. Throughout the year we host a coffee morning, inviting parents and families into school.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned, the EYFS staff complete home visits in the summer term before the child starts. This ensures we meet the children in their own environment. We provide them with a book, which we use in the first half term of Reception. The children come in in a staggered intake, in groups of 10 to ensure they settle in their new environment. We have a 'Parents as Partners' document which asks questions regarding children's likes, dislikes and interests. This ensures we can adapt our provision to meet individual needs.

At the end of the EYFS, our Reception teacher meets with the Year 1 teacher to liaise with them and discuss the individual children and their specific needs. The children's assessment data and writing books are sent with them to Year 1 so that their new teachers are able to plan for their 'next steps in learning' from the moment they enter their new class.

Uniform

Please find all details relating to school uniform on our school website- [Austhorpe Primary School - Red Kite Learning Trust - Uniform](#)

Please note that for health and safety reasons, children are not allowed to wear makeup, jewellery and long hair should be tied back (this means hair that can be tied back should be).

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according the EYFS statutory framework.	
Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	See EYFS Policy
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See safer working practice policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See safeguarding policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See health and safety policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy