Summercroft Primary School – An Academy School
Achieving through care, challenge and creativity
EYFS Policy
Statutory Policy

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Statutory

Date of Approval: October 2026
This policy will be reviewed by the LPP Committee annually
Date for Review: October 2027
Signature S. Jess Date October 2026 Head Teacher
Signature Sophie Adams-Batti Date October 2026 Co- Chair of Governors

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Key September 2026 changes reflected in this policy

Explicit safer-sleep requirements (applied proportionately to the school's age range);

No banned dog breed may be kept or present on the premises;

Ofsted notification threshold updated from allegations of 'serious harm' to allegations of 'harm';

Enhanced DBS and barred-list checking requirements for staff and volunteers, with checks received before commencement;

Expanded suitability disclosures for staff and prospective staff;

A duty to have regard to DfE guidance on children's screen use;

KCSIE 2026 expectations, including Part One for all staff, strengthened DSL cover and clearer recording and information-sharing expectations.

Summercroft Primary School – An Academy School

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EYFS Policy

Statutory Policy

1. Purpose, scope and statutory basis

This policy sets out how Summercroft Primary School delivers the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in Nursery and Reception. It applies to all staff, governors, volunteers, students and agency workers working within the school's early years provision.

The school will meet the learning and development, assessment, safeguarding and welfare requirements of the statutory EYFS framework for group and school-based providers effective from 1 September 2026. The framework uses 'must' for mandatory requirements and 'should' for guidance that must be taken into account and followed unless there is a good reason not to.

This policy should be read alongside the school's child protection and safeguarding policy, staff code of conduct, safer recruitment policy, behaviour policy, SEND information report, intimate care policy, first aid and medicines policy, attendance policy, online safety policy, complaints procedure, emergency plan and data-protection policies.

> **Important**
>
> Where another school policy fully meets an EYFS requirement, this policy signposts to it rather than duplicating the procedure. If there is any inconsistency, the current statutory framework and statutory safeguarding guidance take precedence.

2. Aims and principles

We aim to:

Provide a broad, balanced, ambitious and coherently sequenced curriculum that builds the knowledge, skills and attitudes children need for life and Key Stage 1;

Ensure every child is safe, healthy, welcomed, valued and able to thrive;

Secure high-quality, consistent teaching while recognising that effective early-years practice combines play, adult modelling, direct teaching, observation and adult-guided learning;

Identify needs early and remove barriers through inclusive practice, reasonable adjustments and timely specialist support;

Build respectful, two-way partnerships with parents and carers as children's first educators;

Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice so that no child is disadvantaged.

Overarching principles

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 with responsive teaching and strong parent/carer partnership.

Children develop and learn at different rates; the framework includes all children, including those with SEND.

3. Roles and accountability

The governing board

Ensures the school fulfils its statutory EYFS, safeguarding, equality and SEND duties;

Holds leaders to account for curriculum quality, children's safety and welfare, staffing and improvement;

Approves this policy and ensures it is reviewed at least annually.

The headteacher

Has overall responsibility for implementation, resourcing, staffing and compliance;

Ensures safeguarding arrangements are effective and concerns are referred and notified without delay;

Ensures suitable induction, supervision, training and professional development.

The EYFS lead

Leads curriculum design, implementation, assessment and improvement across Nursery and Reception;

Supports consistent, inclusive practice and monitors the impact on different groups;

Works with the DSL, SENCO, headteacher, Year 1 staff and families.

All practitioners

Place the child's best interests, safety and wellbeing at the center of practice;

Know and follow the EYFS framework, school policies and local safeguarding procedures;

Remain alert to concerns at home, in the setting, online or elsewhere and report them immediately;

Understand each child's needs, interests, development and next steps and adapt provision accordingly.

4. Curriculum intent and organisation

Our curriculum reflects Summercroft's local environment, seasons and natural surroundings while helping children compare their lives with other places, cultures, communities and environments. It is language-rich, book-led, ambitious and responsive to children's prior experiences and interests.

The seven interconnected areas of learning and development are:

Prime areas	**Specific areas**
Communication and language	Literacy
Physical development	Mathematics
Personal, social and emotional development	Understanding the world
	Expressive arts and design

The educational programmes are delivered through planned activities and experiences across all seven areas. Communication and language, early reading, vocabulary, personal development, physical development and self-regulation are prioritised as foundations for wider learning.

Characteristics of effective teaching and learning

Playing and exploring: children investigate, experience things and 'have a go'.

Active learning: children concentrate, persist when difficulties occur and enjoy achieving.

Creating and thinking critically: children develop ideas, make links and choose strategies.

Learning environment and resources

Indoor and outdoor environments are safe, inclusive, language-rich and organised so children can independently select, use and return high-quality resources. Continuous and enhanced provision enables children to revisit, practice and deepen learning. Daily outdoor access is provided unless circumstances make this inappropriate; reasonable adjustments ensure access for disabled children.

5. Teaching, learning and assessment

Practitioners use a deliberate blend of child-initiated play, sustained shared thinking, adult modelling, direct instruction, group work, stories, investigation and purposeful practice. Planning starts with curriculum goals and knowledge of the children. Activities are adapted without lowering ambition.

Early reading, phonics, writing and mathematics

A love of reading is developed through daily high-quality diverse stories, poems, rhymes and non-fiction. Reception follows the school's validated systematic synthetic phonics programme, Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised. Reading practice books are closely matched to taught phonics. Early writing is developed through oral composition, meaningful mark-making, transcription and composition, supported by fine-motor and handwriting development.

Mathematics develops secure conceptual understanding through talk, practical experience, pattern, representation, reasoning and repeated practice. The school uses White Rose materials as a resource within its planned EYFS curriculum.

Assessment

Ongoing formative assessment is integral to teaching. Practitioners notice what children know, can do and are interested in, and use this to shape interactions and provision. There is no statutory requirement to keep written records of day-to-day observations.

The Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment is completed within the first six weeks after a child enters Reception, in accordance with current assessment and administration guidance.

Where the school admits a child aged two, the statutory progress check at age two is completed between ages two and three and shared with parents/carers; needs are addressed with relevant professionals.

In the final term of Reception, each child is assessed against all 17 Early Learning Goals as 'emerging' or 'expected'. The EYFS Profile is completed by 30 June, reported to parents and the required results submitted to the local authority.

Assessment is proportionate and does not create long breaks from interaction or excessive paperwork. It informs dialogue with families, the SENCO and Year 1 teachers.

6. Inclusion, SEND and equality

Every child is entitled to high-quality teaching and full participation. Staff use inclusive and adaptive teaching, accessible environments, appropriate communication approaches and reasonable adjustments. They avoid assumptions, represent diversity positively and challenge discriminatory language or behaviour.

Potential needs are identified early through relationships, observation, assessment and parent/carer dialogue.

The EYFS lead and practitioners work with the SENCO to follow the graduated approach: assess, plan, do and review.

Parents/carers are involved in decisions and specialist professionals are engaged where appropriate.

Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan receive the provision specified in the plan; deployment of additional adults promotes safety, learning, communication, belonging and independence.

The school has regards to the SEND Code of Practice and fulfils its Equality Act 2010 duties, including reasonable adjustments.

7. Safeguarding and welfare

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

All staff read KCSIE 2026 Part One in full, receive induction and updates, know the DSL and deputies, understand local referral routes and act immediately on concerns. Children are never promised confidentiality.

7.1 Child protection and safeguarding procedures

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) has lead responsibility, liaises with local authority children's social care and the safeguarding partners, and ensures suitable cover whenever unavailable.

Concerns are recorded promptly, accurately and securely using CPOMs, including actions, decisions, referrals made or not made, and the rationale. The child's voice and lived experience are considered.

Where there is concern about a child's safety or welfare, staff immediately follow the school and local safeguarding procedure. Children's social care is notified without delay and the police contacted in an emergency.

Allegations or concerns about adults, including low-level concerns, are managed under the school's safeguarding policy and KCSIE. The headteacher manages allegations about staff; the chair of governors manages allegations about the headteacher.

Ofsted is informed of any allegation of harm or abuse by anyone living, working or looking after children on the premises, whether the allegation relates to harm on the premises or elsewhere, as soon as reasonably practicable and in any event within 14 days where the notification duty applies.

Information is shared lawfully and proportionately to safeguard children. Data protection law is not a barrier to sharing safeguarding information.

7.2 Attendance, absence and collection

Parents/carers must notify the school of absence and the reason in line with attendance procedures.

Unexplained, repeated or prolonged absence is followed up promptly. Actions may include contacting parents/carers, using additional emergency contacts, considering patterns and vulnerabilities, implementing safeguarding procedures and contacting other agencies.

The school aims to hold more than two emergency contact numbers for each child where possible and keeps collection permissions current.

Missing-child and uncollected-child procedures are known to staff and shared with parents/carers.

7.3 Safer Eating, Health and Medicines

Food and drink are nutritious, prepared safely and appropriate to each child's age, development, allergies, medical needs, culture and dietary requirements. The school has regard to current DfE nutrition guidance.

Children are always within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating. Staff position themselves to supervise effectively, minimise distraction, prevent unsafe food sharing and respond to choking or allergic reaction.

Food is prepared and cut to reduce choking risk. Choking incidents requiring intervention are recorded, parents/carers informed and records reviewed for patterns.

Fresh drinking water is available and good oral health is promoted.

Medicines are administered only under the school's written procedures, with required permission, records and competent staff. Parents/carers are informed on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable, when medicine is administered.

Accidents, injuries and first aid are recorded and reported using Medical Tracker. Serious accidents, illness, injury or death are notified to the relevant bodies within statutory timescales.

7.4 Paediatric First Aid

At least one person with a current full paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate is on the premises and available whenever EYFS children are present and accompanies children on outings. PFA training meets the statutory criteria and is renewed every three years. Staff whose qualifications require PFA to count in ratios meet the applicable requirements. The number and location of trained staff allow a rapid response.

7.5 Safer Sleep and Rest

The school does not routinely provide care for children under two. Nevertheless, any child who sleeps or rests is supervised safely and their individual health needs are considered. If provision is extended to children under two, all paragraph 3.86 requirements of the September 2026 EYFS framework will be implemented before care begins, including separate firm, flat sleep spaces, back-to-sleep positioning, clear cots, temperature control, frequent checks, and sight-and-hearing supervision. Babies under six months must have an adult in the same room for every sleep.

7.6 Premises, Risk, Dogs and Outings

Reasonable steps are being taken to prevent children and staff being exposed to risks. Leaders can demonstrate how risks are identified, checked, removed or minimised; written risk assessments are used where helpful or legally required.

No dog of a breed or type prohibited under section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, including the XL Bully type, may be kept or present on the premises at any time.

Emergency evacuation arrangements, fire detection and control equipment and clear exits are maintained and practised.

Outings are risk assessed, appropriately staffed and supervised. Essential records, emergency contacts, medication and PFA provision accompany the group.

7.7 Screen Use, Devices, Images and Online Safety

The school has regard to current DfE guidance on screen use in early years settings.

Screen use is purposeful, limited, age- and development-appropriate, usually supported by an adult, and does not displace talk, play, movement, outdoor learning, sleep or relationships.

Only authorised school devices and systems are used to capture, store or share images and information. Personal mobile phones, cameras, smart watches and other imaging/sharing devices are managed under school policy.

Consent, privacy, filtering and monitoring, secure storage and professional boundaries are maintained. Children are introduced to simple, age-appropriate online-safety habits.

7.8 Behaviour, Intimate care and Dignity

Practitioners support co-regulation, self-regulation and positive behaviour through warm relationships, predictable routines, clear boundaries and developmentally appropriate teaching.

Physical intervention is used only where necessary to prevent personal injury, serious damage to property or in circumstances permitted by law and is recorded and reported to parents/carers on the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Intimate care protects dignity and privacy while maintaining safeguarding oversight. Children's communication and preferences are respected and individual plans used where needed.

8. Staffing, Suitability and Professional Development

8.1 Safe recruitment and ongoing suitability

The school verifies identity, qualifications, right to work, employment history and references and completes all statutory safer-recruitment checks.

From 1 September 2026, required enhanced DBS and barred-list checks must be received before a new employee or qualifying volunteer begins. Supervised volunteers are checked where required by the amended regulated-activity rules; the limited exception for occasional supervised help is applied only where lawful.

At least one written reference is obtained for staff, students and volunteers before recruitment. References are verified and concerns or inconsistencies followed up.

Staff and prospective staff are told they must disclose information that may affect suitability, including relevant arrests, charges, convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings, subject to the law on protected information.

Ongoing suitability is actively monitored. Staff must immediately disclose relevant changes; leaders act on concerns and make DBS, TRA, Ofsted, local authority or other referrals/notifications where required.

Required identity, vetting, qualification and reference information is recorded in the single central record and/or appropriate personnel records.

8.2 Ratios, Deployment and Key Person

Staffing arrangements and ratios meet the statutory framework and the needs, safety and circumstances of the children. Children are usually within sight and hearing of staff and always within sight or hearing, except where the framework sets a stricter requirement. Each child has a named key person (class teacher) who supports settling, individualised care, family relationships and access to specialist help.

8.3 Training, Induction, Supervision and Whistleblowing

Induction covers emergency evacuation, safeguarding, child protection, staff conduct, online safety and health and safety.

All practitioners complete safeguarding training that meets EYFS Annex C criteria. Training is renewed annually, with updates and refresher activity as needed. The DSL receives role-appropriate training and ongoing updates.

Leaders check that staff are confident and can apply procedures in practice; attendance alone is not treated as evidence of effectiveness.

Regular supervision provides support, coaching, challenge and confidential discussion of children's development, wellbeing and safeguarding.

Whistleblowing procedures apply to employees, agency staff, students and volunteers. They explain how to report unsafe practice and what happens next. Staff may use the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line or Ofsted where internal routes are unavailable or ineffective.

9. Partnership with Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are children's first educators. We build respectful, accessible, two-way relationships through induction, home visits where offered, stay-and-play opportunities, workshops, consultations, reading records, newsletters, knowledge organisers, Tapestry and prompt discussion of concerns.

Families receive information about the EYFS curriculum, routines, food and drink, staffing, the key person, SEND support, policies, emergency contact arrangements, complaints and missing/uncollected-child procedures.

Consent and information are kept specific and current, including collection, medical, dietary, image and outing arrangements.

Parents/carers are involved in assessment, SEND planning and transition and receive the statutory EYFS Profile outcome and annual report.

Communication is accessible; reasonable adjustments, translation or interpretation are offered where needed.

10. Transition

Transitions are planned around each child. Entry arrangements may include meetings, visits, information sharing with previous settings, home visits, phased familiarisation and individual plans. Vulnerable children and those with SEND receive enhanced transition support. The school uses HfL Smooth Transitions toolkit to support children's transition from different settings.

Before transition to Year 1, EYFS and Year 1 staff share relevant curriculum, assessment, welfare, medical, SEND and safeguarding information securely and in good time. Safeguarding files are transferred separately, securely and promptly in accordance with KCSIE and local procedures.

11. Monitoring and Review

The EYFS lead and headteacher monitor implementation through discussion with children, families and staff; observation of practice; curriculum and assessment review; safeguarding and welfare checks; training and supervision records; incidents, complaints and attendance patterns; and outcomes for different groups.

The policy is reviewed annually and sooner if legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding procedures, provision or identified risks change. The governing board receives assurance that statutory requirements are implemented in practice.

Appendix 1: Curriculum Overview

This appendix preserves the distinctive features of Summercroft's curriculum while allowing medium-term plans and knowledge organisers to respond to each cohort.

Area	Summercroft curriculum emphasis
Communication and language	Language-rich interactions, back-and-forth conversation, attentive listening, storytelling, vocabulary teaching, role play and support for children with speech, language and communication needs.
Personal, social and emotional development	Secure relationships, emotional literacy, co-regulation and self-regulation, resilience, collaboration, independence, healthy choices and respect for others.
Physical development	Daily movement and outdoor play; gross- and fine-motor development; safe, managed risk; health, hygiene and foundations for handwriting.
Literacy	A reading culture built around diverse, high-quality texts; systematic synthetic phonics; matched reading practice; rhyme, oral composition, transcription and meaningful writing.
Mathematics	Deep understanding of number, numerical patterns, shape, space and measure through practical experience, mathematical talk, representation, reasoning and practice.
Understanding the world	First-hand exploration of Summercroft's natural environment, seasons and community; comparison with other places, times, cultures, beliefs and environments; early scientific and geographical thinking.
Expressive arts and design	Imaginative play, storytelling, music, dance, drama and sustained exploration of media, materials, tools, techniques, artists and design.

Appendix 2 - September 2026 implementation checklist

Check	Evidence / action	Done
Governance	**Policy approved; linked policies cross-checked; review date and responsible roles recorded.**	☐
KCSIE 2026	**All staff read Part One in full; DSL/deputy cover confirmed; induction and updates recorded.**	☐
Recruitment	**Procedures prevent relevant staff/volunteers beginning before required enhanced DBS/barred-list checks; reference and suitability-disclosure wording updated.**	☐
Allegations	**Procedures and forms use 'harm' rather than 'serious harm' for applicable Ofsted notifications; 14-day timescale understood.**	☐
Training	**Safeguarding training meets EYFS Annex C, renews at least every two years and is evaluated through practice.**	☐
Attendance	**Absence procedure covers unexplained/prolonged absence, emergency contacts, patterns and safeguarding escalation.**	☐
Eating	**Children are within sight and hearing; choking controls, allergy arrangements and incident review are understood.**	☐
Sleep/rest	**Age-appropriate safer-sleep/rest arrangements are documented; under-two requirements implemented before any such provision begins.**	☐
Premises	**Site checks confirm no banned dog breed can be kept or present; emergency and outing risks reviewed.**	☐
Screen use	**Early-years screen-use guidance considered; curriculum use, devices, images, filtering and privacy procedures aligned.**	☐
Records	**More than two emergency contacts sought where possible; safeguarding decisions and rationales recorded securely.**	☐
Inclusion	**Reasonable adjustments, adaptive teaching, SENCO involvement and transition support are evident in practice.**	☐

References

Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers (effective 1 September 2026)

DfE summary: Changes to the EYFS framework from 1 September 2026

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (effective 1 September 2026)

Working Together to Safeguard Children

SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years

Development Matters (non-statutory curriculum guidance)

Help for Early Years Providers: screen use, safer sleep, food safety, nutrition and oral health