



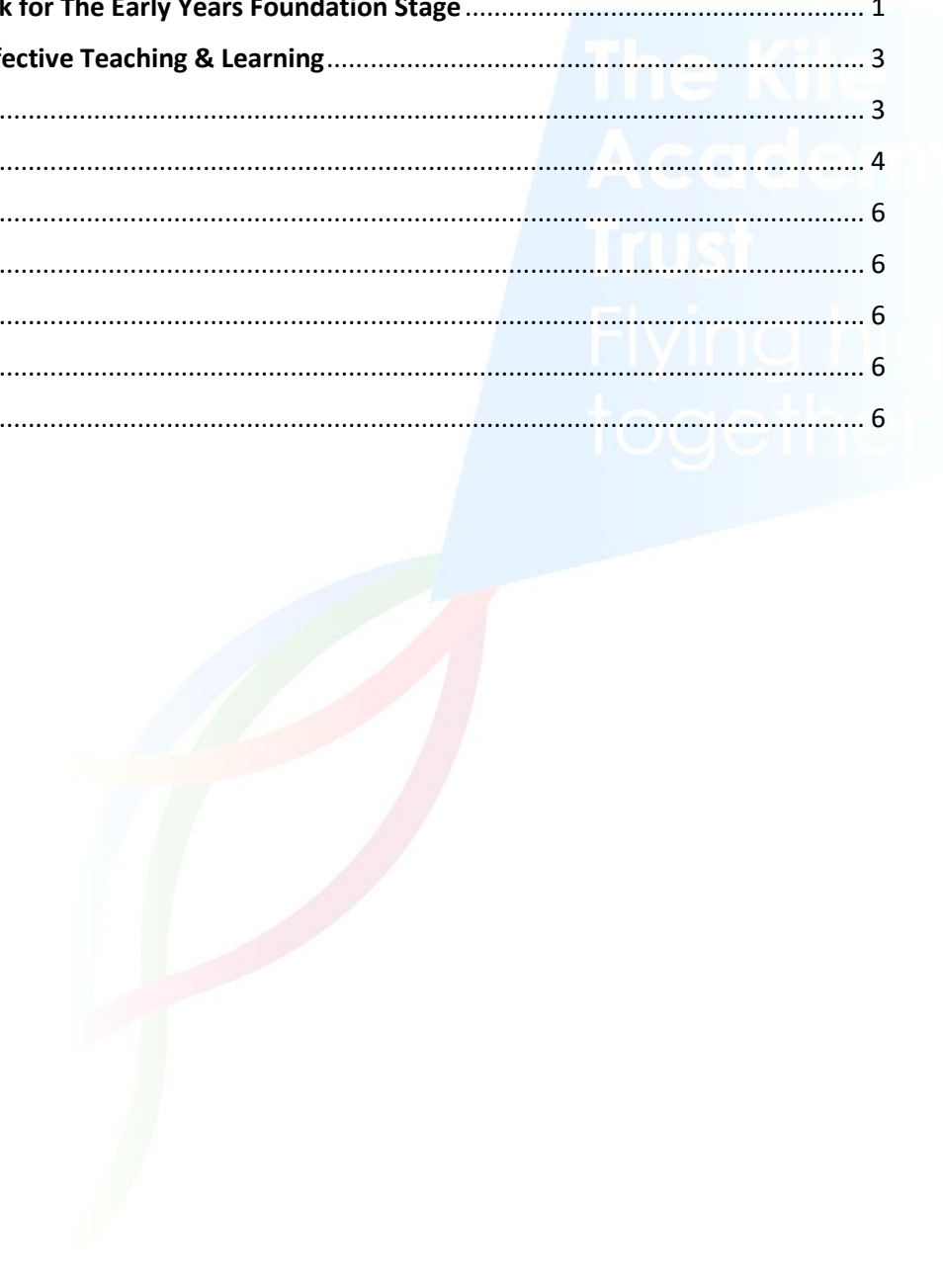
**The Kite  
Academy  
Trust**  
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together

# **KITE ACADEMY TRUST**

## EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

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## 1 Introduction

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) across the Kite Academy Trust to all its pupils aged two to five years. We value the importance of the EYFS in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of practitioners working in the individual academy EYFS settings, including both teaching and non-teaching staff. In the policy, the term 'setting' refers to the Early Years educational provision within each of the Kite academies. The term 'practitioner' refers to all members of staff working with children within the setting.

## 2 Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children across the Trust access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the wide range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life;
- Quality and consistency across the Trust in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress, and that no child gets left behind;
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers;
- Every child across the Trust is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

## 3 Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Department for Education's [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#) that applies from January 2024. This policy also complies with our funding agreement and Articles of Association.

## 4 Statutory Framework for The Early Years Foundation Stage

Although academies will take an individual approach, EYFS teaching in each setting is delivered in accordance with the Department for Education's Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (January 2024). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through four themes: 'A Unique Child', 'Positive Relationships', 'Enabling Environments' and 'Children Learn in Different Ways and at Different Rates'.

Kite EYFS settings strive to provide:

1. **Quality and consistency** in all Early Years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
2. **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly;
3. **Partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;
4. **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

### Areas of Learning & Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape educational programmes in the Kite Academy Trust Early Years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. The prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for

learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. The three prime areas are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

Settings also support children in four specific areas, through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

Educational programmes involve activities and experiences for children, as follows:

### **Communication & Language**

- Listening, Attention and Understanding
- Speaking

Children are given opportunities to experience a rich language environment by echoing back vocabulary, reading frequently, engaging in stories rhymes and poems; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves by holding conversations, storytelling and role play; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

### **Physical Development**

- Fine motor
- Gross motor

We enable children to pursue happy, healthy and active lives, which in turn will support their well-being. This is done by creating opportunities for children to develop gross motor control, stability, balance, co-ordination and agility and in addition to this, develop fine motor control and hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy.

### **Personal, Social & Emotional Development**

- Self-Regulation
- Managing Self
- Building Relationships

We support children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings and resolve conflicts peacefully; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

### **Literacy**

- Comprehension
- Word Reading
- Writing

Language comprehension is supported by adults talking with children about the world around them, the books they read together and songs they sing together. Word reading involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest and to develop a life-long love of reading. Writing involves supporting children with spelling, handwriting and composition. Children are given access to a wide range of high-quality texts to foster a love of reading.

## **Mathematics**

- Number
- Numerical Patterns

We teach children to count confidently and to develop a deep understanding of numbers to 10 and the relationship and patterns within those numbers. Children use manipulatives to secure a deep understanding of number. In addition, the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures.

## **Understanding the World**

- Past and Present
- People, Culture and Communities
- Natural World

We guide the children to make sense of their physical world and their community through listening to a broad range of texts and providing opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment. This enriches and widens children's vocabulary and will later support reading comprehension.

## **Expressive Arts & Design**

- Creating with Materials
- Being Imaginative and Expressive

We develop children's artistic and cultural awareness, which in turn supports their imagination and creativity. Children explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

# 5 Characteristics of Effective Teaching & Learning

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Children are encouraged to be independent, and we have many areas and activities where children can self-select materials and equipment. Through such child-initiated play the children can develop 'Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning' which are:

- playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'having a go';
- active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements;
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links.

A quality learning experience for children requires a quality workforce. The Kite Academy Trust will endeavour to ensure every setting has a well-qualified, skilled staff.

The level of progress children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the early learning goals as set out in the statutory framework.

# 6 Curriculum

## **Rationale**

We follow the Statutory Framework of EYFS, covering the seven areas of learning and development, allowing children to progress from their individual starting points and work towards achieving the Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception. We have carefully mapped out the progression of skills and knowledge through Early Years which informs our planning and allows us to monitor children's needs and stages of development. This document also flows into our Trust-wide progression maps for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

## **Planning**

Planning is shared collaboratively between Early Years teachers across the Trust, allowing for teachers with a specialism or particular interest in an area of learning to bring their expertise to the activities and experiences being planned. This ensures we have a high-quality curriculum which is directly linked to the Nursery and Reception progression maps that are followed with the final goal of meeting the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. Our curriculum is planned around several high-quality texts and interesting topics which are rich in language.

The Trust aims to provide all children with relevant, engaging activities and experiences linked to the skills they are developing. In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice, including opportunities to develop the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, liaising with the school SENCO and linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

## **Delivery**

The Early Years curriculum is designed to be a combination of adult-led and child-initiated learning. There are directed teaching carpet times, which will increase in length as children progress through Early Years. The children also have sessions of child-led learning time during the day, where they can choose how to apply their learning and where their knowledge will be extended through independently exploring, questioning and adult interactions. Adults will support, scaffold, challenge and extend children's thinking at these times.

Our continuous provision, both indoors and outdoors, gives the children opportunities to independently explore and use resources in meaningful ways to enhance their learning. Children are encouraged to be independent, and we have many areas and activities where children can self-select materials and equipment. Through such child-initiated play the children can develop and enhance the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' and strategies for self-regulation in a supportive and safe environment. Observations made during free-flow time will also inform areas to develop in the future. During child-initiated learning time, teachers will sometimes direct children's learning in pre-planned activities linked to skills the children are working on.

# 7 **Assessment**

The EYFS framework sets the standards that all Early Years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life (Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (January 2024)).

Accurate assessment enables parents, carers and practitioners to identify children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Within the EYFS framework there are two types of assessment; summative and formative. The EYFS Framework requires all Early Years providers to report to parents, and sometimes to the local authority, at certain points throughout their time within the Early Years Foundation Stage, as indicated below.

### **Two-Year-Old Progress Check**

In accordance with statutory guidance, the progress check at age two must be undertaken between the child's second and third birthday. The Two-Year-Old Progress check will help Early Years practitioners to:

- review a child's development and progress in the 3 prime areas of learning and development in the EYFS framework;
- identify any areas of concern or additional development needs;
- work with parents and other professionals to put in place appropriate support and intervention.

**Please note:** It is crucial to ask parents for their informed consent before sharing any information. Informed consent means checking that the parent understands what information is being shared, why it is being shared, who it is being shared with, and what will happen to the information.

Reference: [DFE Guidance - Progress Check at Age Two](#)

### **Baseline**

During the first half term (Autumn 1) or the child's first 6 weeks in our provision we will undertake a baseline assessment. This is where staff observe children during child led learning and undertaking activities for all areas of the curriculum. In the Nursery, we focus on the Prime Areas only and in Reception we cover both Prime and Specific.

According to statutory guidance, children will complete the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) within the first 6 weeks of starting in Reception. The RBA will be an activity-based assessment on children's starting points in:

- language, communication and literacy
- mathematics

The RBA will be a short task-based assessment. Children will use practical resources to complete these tasks and teachers will record the results on a laptop, computer, or tablet. The assessment will not be used to label or track individual pupils and no numerical score will be shared; the data will only be used at the end of Year 6 to form the school-level progress measure. Teachers will, however, receive a series of short, narrative statements that tell them how their pupils performed in the assessment. These can be used to inform teaching within the first term.

### **End of Nursery**

At the end of their time in Nursery, parents will receive a written report against the Prime Areas of learning, characteristics, and next steps. This ensures that necessary information is passed onto the next setting to build on the child's knowledge and understanding. Those children with additional needs will have a report based around their characteristics of learning alongside their most recent individual support plan/targets. There will also be meetings and discussions with Reception class teachers, SENCOs and Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) at primary schools, as appropriate.

### **End of Reception**

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. We meet the family to discuss their child's progress, next steps and support when transitioning to Year 1. Children are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

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

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers and is shared with parents and/or carers for their child. It is also used as part of the transition conversations held with Year 1 teachers. The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools to ensure consistent assessment judgements.

EYFS profile data is submitted to the Local Authority.

Parents receive an annual report that offers comments on their child's progress in each area of learning and a short commentary on their child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

### **Focus child approach**

Each week a small number of children are chosen to be a focus child. During child-initiated learning time, adults will focus on these children to identify their progress/next steps and learning styles, to shape future planning. Each child is a focus child at least twice a year in Nursery and at least once a year in Reception. During each child's focus week, quality interactions and learning experiences are

reflected on and used to inform next steps. These next steps are also shared with parents via the setting's online communication platform.

## 8 Parents as Partners

Throughout the Kite Academy Trust we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the EYFS framework. Partnership with parents and families is vital in building a picture of the whole child. We fully respect that parents/carers are a child's first educators and parents play a significant role in the education of their child. Practitioners will encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into their child.

Parental involvement with the academy begins even before children start, with an invitation to visit the academy, meet their child's teacher or keyworker, and visit their classroom. Reception parents are invited to academies in the summer term prior to their child starting school, to provide them with essential information for the next academic year. Throughout the year we encourage families to contribute to their child's learning journey sharing any achievements or progress they have made. As a Trust, we operate an 'open door' policy and encourage parents/families to communicate any concerns or questions with their child's teacher/key worker. Parent's evenings and a report at the end of the summer term enable practitioners to share progress throughout the year.

## 9 Safeguarding

All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well. Safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with The Kite Academy Trust Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy; all members of staff are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.

## 10 Monitoring

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff and leader to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Academy Head and EYFS leader will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole academy monitoring schedule.

## 11 Equal Opportunities

All practitioners have a responsibility to maintain positive attitudes to diversity and difference, ensuring that inclusive practice is delivered in the EYFS setting. All children, irrespective of gender, ability, special educational need, ethnicity, culture or religion, and social circumstances have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development within the EYFS settings across the Trust.

## Document Management

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