



Scarborough College

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

This policy applies to EYFS.

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.”

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a framework produced by the DFE (2025) It sets the standards for learning and development of children from birth to five. At Scarborough College, our children join us in the Little Owls Nursery during the term after they turn 3. The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, by encouraging the development of the skills and attitudes children need to become active and independent learners throughout school. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage. Our Early Years vision prepares children at Scarborough College to be lifelong learners and grow into emotionally confident and independent learners who are skilled at expressing themselves.

The new EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The Nursery and Reception teachers plan activities within the Nursery and Reception classrooms with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child’s attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics are:

- Playing and Exploring –Children will play and explore their environment showing engagement by:
 - ◆ Finding out and exploring
 - ◆ Play with what they know
 - ◆ Be willing to ‘have a go’
- Active Learning – Children will be active learners, showing motivation by:
 - ◆ being involved and concentrating
 - ◆ keeping on trying
 - ◆ enjoying achieving what they set out to do.
- Creating and Thinking Critically – Children will be creators and think critically by:
 - ◆ having their own ideas
 - ◆ making links
 - ◆ choosing ways to do things

A Unique Child

At Scarborough College we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals. All children at Scarborough College are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Children with special educational needs are identified and supported in liaison with Mrs Alex Haworth and Mrs Hayley Briggs (SENCO and Head of Learning Support) the Special needs co-ordinators or appropriate outside agencies where relevant.

We aim to meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries and 'golden rules' to enable them to make appropriate choices. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

Welfare

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them." The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

At Scarborough College Prep School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2025.

We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill. We promote good oral health in the early years by talking to children about:
 - Ensure children are provided healthy, balanced meals and drinks that support children's growth and development in accordance with the new EYFS nutrition guidance 2025.
 - The importance of brushing your teeth
 - Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

At Scarborough College Prep School we recognise that children learn to be strong, independent and form secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We acknowledge that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating their children.

We do this through:

- We invite all parents to an open afternoon / induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Little owls are invited to join for taster sessions as part of their settling in process. , during which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private. Little Owls Pre-school parent consultations are also offered regularly and in addition to this there are opportunities at the beginning and end of each session for informal feedback.
- Parents receive a written report on their child's attainment at the end of the year. In the Little Owls Pre-school report summaries and Key worker comments are written in the Evidence Me app. Parents will receive a focus week observation when they start their journey with us, and a written report when they leave from their key worker. We regularly share Wow observations to celebrate children's achievements and to support a strong home setting partnership
- We arrange a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents e.g. Family fun days, School fairs.
- We encourage parents to share their love for learning and encourage visits to share about their jobs, faiths and experiences to support the children's development.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At Scarborough College we run a Key Person system within the EYFS. This ensures that every child has the opportunity to develop a special bond with an individual member of staff. This is beneficial in lots of ways; providing children with a sense of security from which they can then explore and also the opportunity for parents and carers to develop strong positive professional relationships with a particular member of staff. This network of communication ensures that children's needs can be met efficiently and well.

We have developed effective links with Infant schools in the Scarborough area, and visits are made by the Reception class teachers during the Summer Term if children are making the transition into local state schools.

Enabling Environments

At Scarborough College Prep School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Planning within the EYFS follows our Long Term Curriculum Plan. Medium Term Plans are based around termly themes, topics or children's interests. The Pre School children also follow termly themes, which cover a wide variety of subjects and planning is adapted in the moment to meet the interest and needs of all children

Our EYFS curriculum is designed in line with the **Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2025)** and informed by **Development Matters (2021)**. It aims to provide every child with a secure foundation for future learning by:

- Building on their individual **needs, interests, and developmental stage**.
- Ensuring all children, including those with SEND and EAL, have equitable access to high-quality learning.
- Embedding the **Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning** – playing and exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically.
- Promoting curiosity, independence, resilience, and a love of learning across all seven areas of development.

Implementation

Practitioners use regular observation, professional knowledge of child development, and continuous assessment to inform planning. This includes:

- **In-the-moment planning** to capture spontaneous opportunities for progress.
- A balance of **child-initiated play, adult-guided experiences, and planned, purposeful play**.
- Environments (indoors and outdoors) that are enabling, safe, and stimulating, supporting exploration and challenge.
- Partnership with parents through ongoing dialogue, shared assessments (including the two-year check and EYFS Profile), and home learning links.

Our teaching ensures that learning is interconnected, meaningful, and responsive. Staff use their professional judgement, supported by **Development Matters progress pathways**, to identify next steps, adapt provision, and ensure that all children make progress.

Impact

Through this approach:

- Children make strong progress from their individual starting points and achieve well across the **Early Learning Goals**.
- Practitioners are confident in making **on-track / not on-track** judgements, identifying early interventions where required.
- Children develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to learning that prepare them for the next stage of education.
- Our children leave the EYFS as confident, resilient, and enthusiastic learners, ready to thrive in Key Stage 1 and beyond.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observations carried out by all the EYFS practitioners.

All EYFS key-workers in Little Owls track progress using the Evidence Me software. The reception class children are assessed against the EYFS exemplifications at the end of the year and are tracked using Evidence me. PiRA and PuMA assessments are taken at the end of reception to provide a baseline for KS1 inline with Prep school progress tracking.. Termly phonics assessments take place following our synthetic phonics programme ELS (Essential Letters and Sounds).

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active or be quiet and rest. The classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. All classrooms have their own outdoor area. The outdoor areas have a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help them to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At Scarborough College we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter-connected.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout the EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school

Play

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests. In their play, children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.” (DCSF 2007)

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well

as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

“Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.” (DCSF 2007)

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

Children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources. They discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adults at Scarborough College Prep School support in this process and enhance their ability to think critically and ask questions.

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Pupils have free access to a range of resources both inside and out during child initiated and focused activities.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Moving On/Transitions

We work hard to make transitions to and from our foundation stage classrooms as smooth as possible. We welcome teachers from primary schools to watch their future pupils in their own environment. We share Learning Journeys, celebrate achievements and talk over issues or concerns. We encourage our children to visit their future schools and accompany them whenever possible. Children moving to Reception class at the Prep School are invited to the Reception classroom for five mornings during the summer term so they are comfortable with the transition. Children joining Little Owls are invited to spend taster sessions prior to joining. Each week the Reception teacher and Head of Nursery meet to ensure that their ethos and practice are consistent in order to help school starters feel at home.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy.

John Rowlands is the named governor responsible for the Prep School. This governor has opportunities to observe EYFS practice and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. The Head Teacher will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Policy Prepared by:

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Head of Nursery

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Person Responsible for Updates	Date Last Reviewed	Next Review Due
Chris Barker	May 2026	November 2029
Jackie Hunter	May 2026	November 2029
Rachael Hutchinson	May 2026	November 2029