



GREAT BALLARD

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Policy Information	
Date of last review	Spring 2026
Date of next review	Spring 2027
Review Cycle	Annual
Policy Manager	Head of EYFS

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1. Vision and Ethos

At Great Ballard School, we believe childhood should be joyful, active and rich in discovery. Our Early Years provision offers a nurturing and inspiring start to school life, where every child is known, valued and supported to flourish.

Our practice is underpinned by the school's distinctive **4 H's**:

- **Head:** curiosity, thinking skills and strong foundations for learning
- **Heart:** kindness, empathy, confidence and positive relationships
- **Hand:** creativity, independence, practical skills and learning by doing
- **Health:** physical wellbeing, emotional resilience and outdoor learning

From the age of two, children are supported to become confident, capable and compassionate learners, developing a lifelong love of learning within our close-knit community and exceptional natural surroundings.

2. Aims

Our Early Years provision aims to:

- Provide a safe, happy and stimulating environment
- Foster independence, resilience and self-belief
- Develop strong communication and language skills
- Encourage curiosity, creativity and critical thinking
- Promote physical and emotional wellbeing
- Enable every child to make excellent progress from their starting points
- Build strong partnerships with families
- Lay secure foundations for future learning and life

3. Age Range and Provision

The EYFS at Great Ballard School provides education and care for:

- **Nursery:** 2–4 years
- **Reception**

Provision is carefully tailored to each developmental stage, ensuring continuity, progression and consistency of care across the phase.

4. Curriculum

We follow the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage**, delivering a broad, balanced and play-based curriculum through meaningful first-hand experiences.

4.1. Areas of Learning

Prime Areas

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

Specific Areas

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

4.2. Great Ballard Curriculum Approach

Learning to Learn

Children develop key learning dispositions, including curiosity, perseverance, independence, collaboration and reflection, supporting confident and motivated learners from the outset.

MAP Curriculum – Meaningful, Active, Purposeful Learning

Learning is:

- Hands-on and experiential
- Rooted in real-life contexts
- Carefully connected across areas of learning

Together, these approaches reflect the 4 H's and ensure learning is purposeful, engaging and memorable and through carefully sequenced learning experiences from Nursery to Reception, children make strong progress from their starting points and are well prepared for the transition to Year 1, both academically and socially.

5. Teaching and Learning

Children learn best through play, exploration and positive relationships.

Adults:

- Observe carefully and respond to children's interests
- Model rich language and thinking
- Scaffold and extend learning
- Provide appropriate challenge
- Encourage independence and resilience

A balance of child-initiated and adult-guided experiences ensures both enjoyment and progress. The learning environment acts as the “third teacher,” offering well-organised indoor and outdoor spaces that promote curiosity and independence.

Observations and assessment information are used to inform next steps in learning and weekly planning, ensuring provision remains responsive to children’s interests and developmental needs.

6. Outdoor Learning and Health

Outdoor learning is central to life at Great Ballard and supports children’s physical and emotional wellbeing.

Children have daily access to:

- Woodland and natural spaces
- Nature exploration
- Physical challenge and climbing
- Gardening and seasonal learning
- Open-ended play opportunities

Time outdoors builds confidence, resilience, teamwork and a strong connection with the natural world, supporting the **Health** strand of the 4 H’s.

7. Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We celebrate every child as unique and are committed to inclusive practice.

We:

- Provide equal access to learning
- Adapt provision to meet individual needs
- Support children with SEND
- Work closely with families and external professionals
- Provide appropriate challenge for all learners

Diversity, respect and belonging are actively promoted across our community. Progress for children with SEND and additional needs is closely monitored, with provision reviewed regularly to ensure effective support and positive outcomes.

8. Assessment and Reporting

Assessment is ongoing, formative and purposeful, informing planning and next steps.

We use:

- Observations
- Professional dialogue
- Children’s work

- Photographs
- Child voice

Learning is recorded and shared through **Tapestry**, our secure online learning journal, enabling families to engage with and contribute to their child's learning journey.

We also complete:

- Baseline assessments on entry
- Ongoing progress reviews
- EYFS Profile at the end of Reception

9. Partnerships with Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are children's first educators and valued partners.

We maintain strong communication through:

- Daily contact
- Tapestry updates
- Parent consultations
- Written reports
- Workshops and school events

Working together ensures children feel secure, confident and supported.

10. Behaviour and Wellbeing

We promote kindness, respect and empathy, supporting children to develop emotional literacy and self-regulation.

Positive behaviour is encouraged through clear expectations, consistent routines, praise and restorative approaches.

Further guidance can be found in the [Behaviour Policy](#).

11. Safeguarding and Child Protection

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is our highest priority.

All staff follow clear safeguarding procedures as set down in the schools [Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy](#) and receive regular training in line with:

- The EYFS Framework
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

11.1. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL:

- Has lead responsibility for safeguarding
- Provides ongoing support, advice and guidance to staff
- Liaises with local safeguarding partners and children's services
- Undertake training in line with Annex C of the EYFS framework

Further details are available in the [Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy](#).

12. Staff

12.1. Staff Training

We will:

- Train all staff in safeguarding procedures in line with Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance
- Support all staff to feel supported and confident in implementing our safeguarding policy and procedures
- Renew training every 2 years, or more often when it's needed to help maintain skills; keep up to date with any changes to our safeguarding procedures; or because of any safeguarding concerns
- Outline how training is delivered, and how staff are supported to put it in place, in our **child protection and safeguarding policy**.

Our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will:

- Provide ongoing support, advice and guidance to all staff
- Attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework
- Liaise as needed with local statutory children's services agencies and our local safeguarding partners

12.2. Safer Recruitment

When recruiting staff, we will follow the procedures set out in the latest EYFS framework guidance on checking the suitability of new recruits, including:

- Obtaining a reference for any member of staff (including students and volunteers) before they are recruited
- Recording information about staff qualifications and identity checks, vetting processes and references
- See our **safeguarding policy** for details of our safer recruitment procedures.

12.3. Whistleblowing

Staff are encouraged to raise concerns about unsafe or poor practice. Concerns are taken seriously and handled in line with the **Whistleblowing Policy**.

Malicious allegations are addressed appropriately and fairly.

13. Staffing Ratios

At all times, staffing ratios will meet or exceed the requirements set out in the EYFS Statutory Framework.

- Children aged 2 years:
There will be at least one member of staff for every five children, and at least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant Level 3 qualification.
- Children aged 3 years and over:
There will be at least one member of staff for every eight children.
This ratio may be increased to 1:13 where a Qualified Teacher (QTS), Early Years Teacher (EYT) or Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) holder is working directly with the children.
- Reception class ratios are below the infant size legislation which is limited to 30 pupils per school teacher.

14. Paediatric First Aid

At least one person with a current Paediatric First Aid certificate is on site at all times when children are present, including outings. Certificates are renewed every three years.

A registered school nurse is available on site between 930am and 330pm.

15. Oral Health

We promote healthy lifestyles, including safe eating and good oral health.

- Dietary requirements and allergies are recorded and shared with staff
- Allergy action plans are in place where required
- Food is prepared safely and in line with EYFS nutrition guidance
- Staff are trained to recognise and respond to allergies and choking

We promote good oral health through age-appropriate discussions and routines.

16. Safer eating and nutrition

While children are eating, there will always be at least 1 member of staff in the room with a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate (from a course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the latest EYFS framework). All children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating, and seated safely in an appropriate chair and, where possible, in a designated eating space.

Before a child joins our setting, we will get information on their

- Dietary requirements and preferences
- Food allergies and intolerances
- Health requirements

We will share this information with all staff involved in food preparation and handling. At each mealtime and snack time it will be clear which staff member is responsible for checking that the food meets all the requirements for each child.

We will make sure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis; the differences between allergies and intolerances; and that children can develop allergies at any time.

We will consult with parents/carers to:

Create allergy action plans for their child – with the help of health professionals, where appropriate

We will also keep this information up to date and share it with all staff

Work with them to move on to the next stage at a pace that's right for their child

We will prepare food in a way that:

Prevents choking

Meets each child's individual developmental needs

Is in line with the DfE's [Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance](#)

In the event of a choking incident that requires intervention, we will record details of the incident and make the child's parents/carers aware. We will periodically review the records to identify whether we can change anything in our practice to make eating safer, and then take action as appropriate.

17. Accidents, Injuries and First Aid

- First aid equipment is readily accessible
- All accidents and injuries are recorded
- Parents are informed promptly
- Serious incidents are reported to the relevant authority as required

Further guidance is available in the **First Aid Policy**.

18. Health and Safety

We ensure our premises and outdoor spaces are safe, secure and suitable for the age of children and activities provided.

This includes:

- Risk assessments
- Appropriate supervision and ratios
- First Aid training
- Secure premises
- Hygiene and fire safety procedures

Further guidance is available in the **Health & Safety Policy**.

19. Toileting and Privacy

We provide:

- Appropriate child-sized toilets and handbasins
- Hygienic nappy-changing facilities
- Adequate supplies and spare clothing

Children's privacy is respected while ensuring safeguarding and support needs are met.

20. Transitions

We support children carefully through transitions:

- Into Nursery and Reception
- Within the Early Years
- From Reception to Year 1

This is achieved through visits, information sharing and close collaboration with families and staff.

21. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Head of Early Years and Senior Leadership Team to ensure:

- Compliance with statutory requirements
- Alignment with school values and ethos
- Continued high-quality Early Years provision

Leaders regularly evaluate the quality of Early Years provision through observation, professional dialogue, assessment analysis and parent feedback. This informs ongoing development, staff training and curriculum refinement.