

# Early Years Foundation Stage (EFYS)

## Review

<b>Approved by:</b>	Board of Directors	<b>Date:</b>	April 2024
<b>Last Review Date:</b>	April 2024	<b>Next Review Date:</b>	April 2025

## Responsibilities

<b>School Senior Staff</b>	Implementation at school level
<b>Governors</b>	Check school compliance with policy and report breaches or concerns to Directors
<b>Directors</b>	Review and approve the processes/procedures

## Material Changes Since the Last Review

<b>Section: Throughout</b>	Name change from Kennet School Academies Trust to Equinox Learning Trust
<b>Section: Throughout</b>	This policy has been rewritten with the advent of the advent of the Equinox EYFS curriculum work.

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*“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and then to reach 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, 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 (EYFS) is the framework that provides that assurance.*

## Introduction

Learning for young children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the foundation stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

## Equinox Early Years Vision

Early Years staff in Equinox have worked together to formulate a vision for the Early Years.

We work to ensure pupils experience a rich and varied topic-based curriculum which effectively prepares children for the learning they will do in Key Stage 1. Our curriculum offer is centred around learning to read with accuracy and fluency. As a result, our curriculum is driven by a selection of books which are used to inspire learning across all areas of the curriculum. Our ambition is for at least 90% of pupils to achieve a Good Level of Development as this enables them to transition into the National Curriculum successfully.

## Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

In the EYFS, we aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- ❶
- ❶ Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates - physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially, and emotionally
- ❶ Providing a safe, secure, and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued
- ❶ Fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem
- ❶ Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways
- ❶ Encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes
- ❶ Developing children's social skills and values, and the codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously
- ❶ Supporting children to develop care, respect, and appreciation for others
- ❶ Understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development
- ❶ Providing learning experiences which develop their natural desire, interest, excitement, and motivation to learn
- ❶ Providing experiences which build on children's knowledge and understanding to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development
- ❶ Providing effective learning opportunities both inside and outside.

## The EYFS Framework

Teaching in the EYFS is delivered in accordance with the Government's statutory document, '[Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#), (January 2024). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, and learning and development requirements.

The Foundation Stage curriculum underpins all future learning. The three prime areas are:

1. Personal, social and emotional development
2. Physical development
3. Communication and language

The four specific areas are:

- ❶ Literacy
- ❷ Mathematics
- ❸ Understanding the world
- ❹ Expressive arts and design

## Learning in the EYFS

We organise the day to provide a balance between the following:

- ❶ Child Initiated Activities: Children make choices from within the learning environment to meet his/her outcome for learning
- ❷ Adult Initiated Activities: Practitioners provide the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning
- ❸ Adult Directed Activities: Children engage in planned activities to meet specific learning outcomes.

In our primary schools, we recognise that young children learn best when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas, and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be a mixture of both child and adult led activities as we prepare children for the National Curriculum in Year 1.

We also recognise the importance of children's play as an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

We understand the central position of play within the EYFS framework. The provision of play opportunities underpins curriculum delivery. We also understand the importance of teaching learning behaviours so that children are ready to access the National Curriculum. As children develop, we provide increasing opportunities for children to work in teacher directed ways.

## Assessment & Record Keeping

The main EYFS assessment method is through interactions with children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child-initiated play. Interactions take place daily. All members of staff make time to carry out planned interactions.

Observations are used to support the adult's developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children's abilities, needs, interests, play schemas and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified, and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress.

Baseline assessment is carried out using the Government's Reception Baseline Assessment during the children's first six weeks upon entering the school. Judgments made on children's development in the Profile are based on evidence of children's behaviour observed independently and consistently in their self-initiated activities across all Areas of Learning and Development.

Tapestry is used as a communication tool between parents and school, sharing photos of the children's learning each week, updates on what they are learning in school and messages can also be sent between home and school.

Parents receive an annual report that shares the results of the Early Years profile and offers comments on each child's progress in Communication, Literacy, Maths, and the Characteristics of Effective Learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June each year.

## Planning

The EYFS framework provides a long-term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year.

Medium term planning is created and considers an individual child's learning and developmental needs and where possible is based on the children's interests. All areas of learning and development are planned for and available to access within the classrooms and outdoor area. A weekly plan provides learning opportunities which include a range of adult focused and child-initiated activities.

## Parents as Partners

We recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents and understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. All Early Years members of staff encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents.

We value the role of parents as children's primary educators. We encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the school through online systems, letters, pupil's planners, and informal chatting at the end of the day. Teachers give suggestions of how parents can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been covered in the school. Whole school newsletters are also sent home on a regular basis.

Parents are invited to attend parents' evenings during the academic year. The first of these takes place during the autumn term to allow teachers and parents to discuss how children have settled into school. Subsequent Parent's evenings will focus feedback on children's learning and development progress. There are other opportunities for teachers to share children's learning, development, and well-being with parents informally at any point in the term.

Parents are also invited to get involved with school life. There are opportunities to help with activities such as educational visits and reading as well as offering their skills (e.g. cooking, art, music) to support children's learning. Parents may be invited into the school on other occasions when the children will share their work.

All primary schools in the Trust have a friendly, open-doors ethos and the Early Years members of staff are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day. Parents are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have.

## Admissions & Induction

We provide full-time Early Years education for children in the Reception Year. This is for children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old.

In the summer term preceding entry, there are several activities that take place for both children and parents, to smooth transition into primary school and to ensure that staff have the best knowledge about the children joining in September:

- ❶ All children are offered a series of stay and play sessions during the summer term. The purpose of these initial visits is for the children to meet their new teachers and learning support assistants and start to become familiar with the classroom environment
- ❷ Parents are invited into school to meet the staff. At this meeting information regarding the induction process and what goes on in the school is shared. Information packs will be distributed, detailing school routines and expectations.

### **Safety, including Safeguarding**

All necessary steps are taken to keep EYFS children safe and well and practice in the EYFS is in line with the Trust policies and procedures that are in place to safeguard children, ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children, promote good health, manage behaviour, maintain records, promote equality of opportunity and deal with complaints.

### **Monitoring & Review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This Governor will discuss EYFS practice with the Early Years staff regularly and provide feedback to the Local Governing Body, raising any issues that require discussion. The Headteacher ensures ongoing monitoring of the EYFS is part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

The Trust undertakes an annual review of EYFS provision in each school. The review is collaborative and identifies strengths and areas for development.