

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

2026-27

*Nothing is beyond our reach!
Care and challenge engage and motivate us!
Praise reassures and supports us!
Successes are celebrated and built on!*

Approved by	Governing Board
Policy owner	Dawn Joy
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Review date	Autumn 2027

This policy reflects the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers dated 13 July 2026 and effective from 1 September 2026.

1. Aims

At Norton Community Primary School we want every child in the EYFS to be safe, happy, included, curious and increasingly independent. We provide high-quality early education and care that builds secure foundations for learning and development.

- Provide a broad, ambitious and balanced curriculum that gives children the knowledge, skills, vocabulary and experiences they need for future learning and life.
- Ensure quality and consistency in teaching, learning and care so that every child makes progress from their individual starting points.
- Develop warm, responsive relationships and a strong partnership with parents and carers.
- Promote equality of opportunity, inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice, making reasonable adjustments and securing additional support where required.
- Meet all statutory EYFS learning and development, assessment, safeguarding and welfare requirements.

2. Statutory framework

The school follows the Department for Education Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, effective from 1 September 2026. The EYFS requirements comprise learning and development requirements, assessment requirements, and safeguarding and welfare requirements.

The school will have regard to relevant statutory guidance including Keeping Children Safe in Education, Working Together to Safeguard Children, the Prevent duty guidance, the SEND Code of Practice and the Department for Education guidance on children's screen use in early years settings. Development Matters may be used as non-statutory curriculum guidance; it is not an assessment checklist or a statutory requirement.

3. Structure of the EYFS at Norton

Norton Community Primary School's Early Years provision includes Nursery (FS1) for three- and four-year-olds and three Reception classes (FS2), each with capacity for 30 children. At the time of this policy, Nursery provides up to 39 morning places and 26 afternoon places.

Nursery is open during term time between 8.50am and 3.10pm. Reception classes operate between 8.45am and 3.15pm. Extended provision is available through the school Breakfast and After School Club, subject to the arrangements and eligibility of that provision.

Nursery has a large indoor learning space and access to outdoor provision shared appropriately with Reception. Each Reception class has its own classroom and access to the EYFS outdoor playground and garden. Children are provided with daily access to outdoor learning, unless circumstances make this inappropriate, for example unsafe weather conditions.

The school promotes effective transition and links with feeder settings. Children and families are offered appropriate opportunities to visit, including Stay and Play/induction sessions, so that routines, needs and essential information can be shared before entry.

4. Overarching principles

Our practice reflects the four EYFS principles: every child is a unique child; children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships; children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults; and children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

We recognise the characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically. Our curriculum and environment enable children to develop these characteristics through meaningful experiences and responsive adult interaction.

5. Curriculum

The EYFS has seven interconnected areas of learning and development. The three prime areas are Communication and Language; Physical Development; and Personal, Social and Emotional Development. These are strengthened and applied through the four specific areas: Literacy; Mathematics; Understanding the World; and Expressive Arts and Design.

Our curriculum is designed for Norton children and the community in which they live. It provides rich experiences, talk, stories, rhymes, practical exploration, physical activity, creativity and opportunities to encounter people, places and ideas beyond children's immediate experience. The Early Learning Goals do not constitute the curriculum and will not be used to narrow the range of experiences offered.

Staff use termly themes and our Big Picture goals to provide coherence while remaining responsive to children's needs and interests. Topics are flexible vehicles for building clearly identified knowledge and skills rather than an end in themselves.

In Reception, systematic synthetic phonics is taught through Read Write Inc. In Nursery, Read Write Inc Nursery provision is used as appropriate within a language-rich curriculum, including the planned summer-term programme. Staff support early language and literacy throughout continuous provision, stories, rhymes, conversation and play.

6. Planning and teaching

Staff plan purposeful play, adult-guided and adult-led experiences, and a rich environment. For younger children, particular attention is given to the three prime areas. Planning takes account of children's starting points, interests, development, SEND and prior experiences, and ensures appropriate challenge.

Teaching includes direct instruction where appropriate, modelling, sustained shared thinking, sensitive questioning, vocabulary development, demonstration, guided practice and carefully timed interaction in children's play. As children develop, the balance gradually includes more adult-led learning while continuing to recognise the central importance of play and active learning.

Reception children take part in daily phonics and appropriate mathematics and literacy teaching, alongside a broad curriculum and continuous/enhanced provision. Nursery experiences may be delivered through whole groups, small groups, individual interaction and provision-based teaching.

Staff identify barriers promptly and work with the SENCO, parents and relevant professionals where specialist support, reasonable adjustments or additional assessment may be needed.

7. Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and helps practitioners and parents understand children's progress, needs and next learning. Assessment will not create long breaks from interaction with children or unnecessary paperwork. Practitioners draw primarily on their knowledge of each child and expert professional judgement; recorded, written or photographic evidence is not required to prove judgements.

At Norton, practitioners observe and interact with children as part of everyday practice. Significant moments may be recorded as Spotlight observations where useful. Tapestry may be used to share learning with families, but the school does not require practitioners to collect large quantities of photographic evidence or observations for assessment purposes.

Communication and Language is a curriculum priority. The school uses appropriate entry screening and professional observation to identify pupils who may be at risk of speech, language and communication delay and provides targeted support, involving families and specialist services where needed. Reception phonics is assessed regularly using Read Write Inc assessment processes to ensure teaching is matched to pupils' needs.

7.1 Reception Baseline Assessment

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is administered to Reception pupils within the first six weeks in which each child starts Reception. The school follows the statutory requirements in Annex B of the EYFS framework together with the current annual assessment and reporting arrangements and administration guidance.

7.2 Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

In the final term of the academic year in which a child reaches age five, the EYFS Profile (EYFSP) will be completed for each child as required, no later than 30 June. Each child is assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals as either meeting the expected level of development or not yet reaching it (emerging).

Judgements are holistic and based on practitioners' professional knowledge of the child. The Profile is completed for children with SEND with reasonable adjustments to the assessment process where appropriate. Results are shared with parents and carers and reported to the local authority as required. Year 1 teachers receive a copy of the Profile report and use it as part of professional transition dialogue.

The school undertakes appropriate internal quality assurance of assessment judgements. This supports consistency while respecting that professional knowledge of children is sufficient evidence and avoiding unnecessary evidence collection.

8. Key person and partnership with parents and carers

Each child is assigned a key person (this is the class teacher). The key person helps ensure that care is tailored to the child's individual needs, supports the child to become familiar with the setting, provides a settled relationship, develops a relationship with parents and carers, and helps families access specialist support where appropriate.

Parents and carers are valued as children's first educators. Norton maintains a regular two-way flow of information and encourages families to share children's interests, experiences, development, needs and achievements (for example, WOW moments).

- welcoming and listening to parents and carers and respecting their knowledge of their child
- flexible settling and transition arrangements
- regular progress discussions and parent evenings
- open sessions and Reception Inspire workshops
- Tapestry, where used, to support purposeful sharing between home and school
- sharing information about the EYFS curriculum, daily routines, SEND support, food and drink, staffing organisation, the child's key person and relevant policies and procedures.

9. SEND, equality and inclusion

Norton is committed to inclusion and equality of opportunity. The school meets duties under the Equality Act 2010 and has regard to the SEND Code of Practice. Staff identify and respond to emerging needs, make reasonable adjustments and work with the SENCO, parents, the local authority, health professionals and other agencies as appropriate.

All children, including those with SEND, will have access to the full educational programme. Assessment and curriculum decisions will take account of children's individual development without placing artificial limits on what they can achieve.

10. Safeguarding and welfare

The safeguarding and welfare of children is paramount. This policy should be read alongside the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Whistleblowing Policy, Safer Recruitment procedures, Online Safety Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, Attendance Policy and relevant site procedures.

The school has and implements policies and procedures to keep children safe. EYFS safeguarding arrangements include action where there are concerns about a child, allegations against adults, use of mobile phones/cameras and other devices with imaging and sharing capabilities, safer recruitment and suitability checks, safeguarding training, whistleblowing and information sharing.

10.1 Safeguarding training

All EYFS practitioners will receive safeguarding training consistent with Annex C of the 2026 EYFS statutory framework and will be supported to implement safeguarding procedures confidently in practice. The Designated Safeguarding Lead provides ongoing support, advice and guidance. Required EYFS safeguarding training is renewed at least every two years, with refresher training considered where needed between formal renewals.

10.2 Suitable people, DBS and recruitment

The school will ensure that staff, volunteers and other relevant persons are suitable and that all required checks are completed. Enhanced criminal records and barred list checks will be obtained for persons to whom the EYFS requirements apply, including relevant volunteers. New employees and volunteers will not begin working or volunteering in the EYFS until the required enhanced criminal records and barred list check has been received. No person whose suitability has not been appropriately checked will have unsupervised contact with children.

Staff and prospective staff will be told that they must disclose information that may affect their suitability to work with children, including relevant arrests, charges, convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings, whether arising before or during employment. The school will act on any relevant information in accordance with safeguarding and employment procedures.

10.3 Allegations, concerns and whistleblowing

Safeguarding concerns about children will be acted upon immediately through local safeguarding procedures. Registered provision will notify Ofsted where required of allegations of harm or abuse by anyone living, working or looking after children on the premises, including allegations relating to incidents elsewhere, and of action taken, as soon as reasonably practicable and within the statutory 14-day period.

The school maintains whistleblowing procedures which apply to staff, students and volunteers and ensure that adults know how to report poor or unsafe practice, including routes outside the school where concerns cannot be raised internally or are not addressed.

10.4 Attendance and child absence

The school follows up EYFS absence in a timely way. Unexplained or prolonged absence triggers contact with parents and carers and, where needed, alternative emergency contacts. Staff consider patterns of absence, the child's and family's vulnerabilities and home circumstances and refer safeguarding concerns to children's social care and/or request a police welfare check where appropriate to the risk.

The school's Attendance Policy is shared with parents and sets out expectations for reporting absence and the action the school takes where a child is absent without notification or for a prolonged period.

10.5 Paediatric first aid

At least one person with a current full paediatric first aid certificate is on the premises and available at all times when EYFS children are present and accompanies children on outings. Paediatric first aid qualifications are renewed every three years. Staffing and the layout of the premises are considered so that emergency response can be prompt. A member of staff holding the required full paediatric first aid qualification is present in the room while children are eating.

10.6 Food, allergies and safer eating

Before admission, the school obtains information about special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies, intolerances and relevant health requirements and shares necessary information with staff preparing, handling or serving food. Allergy action plans are developed with parents/carers and health professionals where appropriate and kept up to date. Children are supervised appropriately while eating and food and drink are provided safely.

10.7 Sleeping arrangements

Norton's main EYFS provision is for children aged three and above and routine infant sleep provision is not normally required. Where a child needs to sleep, safe sleeping arrangements and appropriate supervision will be provided. If the school ever provides EYFS care for a child under two, it will apply the detailed safer sleep requirements in paragraph 3.86 of the statutory framework, including safe sleep position and space, bedding, temperature, supervision and frequent checks.

10.8 Premises, banned dog breeds and risk management

The premises, environment and equipment will be organised to meet children's needs and provide appropriate security, hygiene, fire safety, confidential discussion space and daily outdoor access. The school will take reasonable steps to manage risks and will record risk assessments where this is helpful or legally required.

Banned dog breeds to which section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 applies, including the XL Bully type, must not be kept or present on premises from which registered childcare is being provided, even where an exemption certificate exists. Norton will ensure any EYFS activities, visits or childcare arrangements comply with this requirement.

10.9 Children's screen use

The school has regard to the Department for Education guidance on children's screen use in early years settings. Screens and digital technology will be used intentionally where they add educational value, support inclusion or enable appropriate communication, rather than displacing high-quality adult interaction, physical activity, play, sleep, outdoor experiences or hands-on learning. Staff will consider the age, needs, purpose, content and duration of screen use and model safe, balanced digital habits.

11. Staffing, ratios and supervision

Staffing arrangements meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. Children are adequately supervised, especially when eating, and are usually within sight and hearing of staff and always within sight or hearing. The

school follows the applicable statutory staff:child ratios and qualification requirements for Nursery and Reception, including the specific school-based provisions in the EYFS framework.

Staff receive induction, appropriate training and support. Regular supervision provides opportunities to discuss children's development and wellbeing, including safeguarding concerns, identify solutions and receive coaching to improve practice.

12. Transition into Year 1

Norton treats transition as a process rather than a single event. Reception and Year 1 teachers maintain an ongoing professional dialogue about each child's learning, development and needs. Year 1 teachers receive the statutory EYFS Profile report and other proportionate information needed to support continuity.

Children visit their new classroom and teacher before transition. Year 1 practice builds sensitively from EYFS pedagogy, using practical, active and play-based approaches where these best support learning, while progressively developing the routines and teaching appropriate to Key Stage 1.

13. Monitoring and review

The EYFS Lead and Headteacher monitor the quality of curriculum, teaching, assessment, safeguarding and welfare practice through appropriate professional review, including learning walks, discussion with children and families, review of provision and outcomes, supervision and safeguarding audits. The governing board receives appropriate assurance that statutory EYFS requirements are met.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where the EYFS statutory framework, safeguarding guidance or school provision changes.

Appendix 1. Statutory policies and procedures relevant to the EYFS

Requirement	Where addressed
Safeguarding policy and procedures	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Whistleblowing procedures	Whistleblowing Policy
Attendance and child absence procedures	Attendance Policy
Responding to illness	Health and Safety / illness procedures
Administering medicines	Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
Emergency evacuation	Health and Safety / Fire Procedures
Identity of visitors and site security	Child Protection and Safeguarding / Visitor Procedures
Uncollected child and missing child procedures	Child Protection and Safeguarding / EYFS procedures
Concerns and complaints	Complaints Policy
Mobile phones, cameras and imaging devices	Safeguarding / Online Safety / Staff Code of Conduct
Safer recruitment and suitability	Safer Recruitment / Child Protection and Safeguarding
Food, allergies and safer eating	School food/allergy and medical procedures
Risk assessment and outings	Health and Safety / Educational Visits procedures

Appendix 2. Key 2026 EYFS compliance changes reflected in this policy

- Framework effective 1 September 2026.
- Explicit safer sleep requirements incorporated into the statutory framework.
- Requirement to have regard to Department for Education guidance on children's screen use.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred list checks for relevant volunteers and requirement that new employees/volunteers do not begin before the required check is received.

- Ofsted notification requirement refers to allegations of harm or abuse, with notification as soon as reasonably practicable and within 14 days where applicable.
- Banned dog breeds, including XL Bully type, must not be kept or present on premises from which registered childcare is provided.
- Safeguarding training for all practitioners must meet the statutory Annex C criteria and be renewed every two years.