



## **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy (Discovery Special Academy)**

**Tees Valley Education Trust**

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## 1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Early Education and Childcare statutory guidance, April 2025.
- Childcare Act 2006 and 2016
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- This policy has due regard to statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:
  - DfE (2025) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
  - DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education'
  - DfE (2023) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
  - DfE (2023) 'The Prevent duty'

1.2. This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following academy policies:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Administering Medication Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1. The Trust Board has the overall responsibility for ensuring there is a policy in place to safeguard children that includes an explanation of the action to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child, the use of mobile phones and cameras, and staff safeguarding training requirements. These issues are addressed in part in this policy and in further detail in the academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- 2.2. The Trust Board has the overall responsibility for ensuring there is a policy in place in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (including supply staff) or a volunteer. These issues are addressed in the academy's Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.
- 2.3. The Trust Board has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- 2.4. The Trust Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 2.5. The Trust Board has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the academy's Complaints Procedures Policy.



- 2.6. The EYFS lead, in conjunction with the Headteacher / Head of Academy, has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.
- 2.7. Staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers, are responsible for familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy.
- 2.8. Staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers, are responsible for remaining alert to any issues of concern in children.

### **3. Aims**

- 3.1. Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:
- 3.2. Give each child a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.
- 3.3. Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- 3.4. Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
- 3.5. Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- 3.6. Work alongside parents to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.
- 3.7. Four guiding principles shape our practice:
- 3.8. Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- 3.9. Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- 3.10. Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between the academy and parents.
- 3.11. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.
- 3.12. To put these principles into practice, the academy:
- 3.13. Provides a balanced curriculum which takes children's different stages of development into account.
- 3.14. Promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- 3.15. Works in partnership with parents.
- 3.16. Plans challenging learning experiences, based on individual needs, which are informed by observation and assessment.
- 3.17. Implements a key person approach to develop close relationships with children.
- 3.18. Provides a safe and secure learning environment.

### **4. Early Years Offer and Entitlement**

- 4.1. Tees Valley Education Trust is proud to offer a comprehensive early years childcare provision across its academies, supporting families through a range of funded entitlements. This includes the:
  - Free universal entitlement of 15 hours of nursery education for all three- and four-year-olds

### **5. How to claim**

- 5.1. To access the free universal entitlement of 15 hours for 3 and 4 year olds, you contact the academy directly

- 5.2. To access the extended offer of 30 hours, this must be done via your '[Government Gateway](#)' user ID before starting an application.
- 5.3. To access free early education for 2 year olds, must contact the local council (this is who you pay your council tax too) to apply for the 15 hours scheme. The Trust's academies are based in Middlesbrough or Redcar and Cleveland Council areas. Children are eligible from the term after they turn 2 or 3 and the support continues until they start in reception class

## **6. Learning and development**

- 6.1. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum for Reception, Nursery and Two-Year-Old is based on the Early Years Framework, Development Matters and Birth to Five Years.
- 6.2. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum is based on an observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development.
- 6.3. In partnership with parents, the academy promotes the learning and development of pupils to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education.
- 6.4. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape education programmes in EYFS settings. These are split into two sections – prime and specific; however, all the sections are interconnected and important.
- 6.5. The 'prime' areas of learning and development are:

Communication and language

Listening, attention and understanding

Speaking

Physical development

Gross motor skills

Fine motor skills

Personal, social and emotional development

Self-regulation

Managing self

Building relationships

The 'specific' areas of learning and development are:

Literacy

Comprehension

Word reading

Writing

Mathematics

Number

Numerical patterns

Understanding the world

Past and Present

The natural world

People, culture and communities

Expressive arts and design

Creating with materials

### Being imaginative and expressive

- Direct teaching and activities are planned to reflect children's interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience.
- The academy takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children with English as an additional language (EAL) to use their home language in play and learning whilst also ensuring that these children have sufficient opportunities to reach a good standard of English. During assessment, if a child is found to not have a strong grasp on English, the EYFS lead will contact the child's parents to establish their home language skills to assess if there is cause for concern about a language delay.
- Each area of learning and development will be implemented through a mix of adult-led and pupil-initiated activity.
- The academy will respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through friendly and positive interaction.
- Activities are planned with regard to three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS:
  - Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things.
  - Active learning – children concentrate, keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
  - Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

## 7. Inclusion

- 7.1. All children are valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender.
- 7.2. The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.
- 7.3. The Equal Opportunities Policy ensures that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have.
- 7.4. Special education needs and disabilities (SEND) in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the academy's Deputy Head of Academy
- 7.5. The learning environment and outdoor spaces
- 7.6. The classroom is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment.
- 7.7. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area, and daily outdoor activities are planned, unless circumstances, such as the weather, would make outdoor activity inappropriate and unsafe.
- 7.8. The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.
- 7.9. The Equal Opportunities Policy ensures that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have.
- 7.10. Special education needs and disabilities (SEND) in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the academy's Deputy Head of Academy
- 7.11. The learning environment and outdoor spaces

- 7.12. The classroom is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment.
- 7.13. The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.
- 7.14. The Equal Opportunities Policy ensures that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have.
- 7.15. Special education needs and disabilities (SEND) in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the academy's special education needs coordinator (SENCO).
- 7.16. The learning environment and outdoor spaces
- 7.17. The classroom is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment.
- 7.18. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area, and daily outdoor activities are planned, unless circumstances, such as the weather, would make outdoor activity inappropriate and unsafe.

## **8. Assessment**

- 8.1. Assessment plays an important part in helping the academy to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support.
- 8.2. Parents will be kept up to date with their child's progress and development, and the class teacher will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents.
- 8.3. The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception although we try to complete the assessment as soon as the child is settled (If appropriate)
- 8.4. Formative assessments are used to assess the learning and development of children in the EYFS. Staff members will observe children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. This information will then be used to shape learning experiences for each child.
- 8.5. Summative assessments in the final term of the year in which a child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS profile will be completed by the child's class teacher based on a holistic view about what the child can demonstrate against each of the early learning goals (ELGs).

## **9. Safeguarding and welfare**

- 9.1. All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well. Safer recruitment procedures are followed to obtain references and ensure only suitable individuals are recruited.
- 9.2. Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.
- 9.3. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the Trust is Louise Stogdale. Each individual academy has a named DSL.
- 9.4. The academy DSL is responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate.
- 9.5. The deputy DSL will undertake the duties of the DSL in their absence, but overall responsibility for safeguarding will remain with the DSL.



- 9.6. The DSL and deputy DSL will undertake child protection training as required.
- 9.7. Staff will receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect

## **10. Mobile phones and devices**

- 10.1. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'mobile phone' refers to any electronic device that can be used to take images or record videos, including tablets.
- 10.2. Photography policies and procedures are addressed in full in our Digital Imagery Policy.
- 10.2.1. Use of mobile phones by staff members
- 10.2.1.1. Staff members must not use personal mobile phones or cameras when children are present.
- 10.2.1.2. Staff may use mobile phones on academy premises outside of working hours when no children are present.
- 10.2.1.3. Staff may use mobile phones in the staffroom during breaks and noncontact time.
- 10.2.1.4. Mobile phones should be safely stored and in silent mode whilst children are present.
- 10.2.1.5. Staff must use only work-provided devices for taking photographs or videos of children. Any personal devices should not be used for this purpose unless explicitly permitted and in line with safeguarding protocols.
- 10.2.1.6. Staff may take mobile phones on trips, but they must only be used in emergencies and should not be used when children are present. Personal mobile phones must not be used to take images or videos at any time during trips.
- 10.2.1.7. Staff may use their professional judgement in emergency situations.
- 10.2.1.8. Staff must report any concerns about another staff member's use of mobile phones to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.
- 10.2.1.9. Use of mobile phones by parents, visitors and contractors
- 10.2.1.10. Posters are used around the academy to indicate that it's a mobile free zone.
- 10.2.1.11. Parents, visitors and contractors are not permitted to take photographs or record videos without prior permission. Parents may take photographs and videos only containing their own child during school events.
- 10.2.1.12. Parents may take group photographs at school events but only with the informed consent of the parents of the children involved.
- 10.2.1.13. The academy strongly advises against the publication of any photographs or videos taken at the academy or academy events on social media
- 10.2.1.14. Staff must report all concerns about parents, visitors and contractors

to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Use of the academy's mobile phones and cameras

10.2.1.15. Staff are provided with an academy device to ensure that only academy devices are used to take photographs and videos.

10.2.1.16. Academy devices must have passcode protection.

10.2.1.17. Academy devices must only be used for work related matters.

10.2.1.18. Academy devices must only be used to take photographs with the consent of the child's parent.

10.2.1.19. Staff must not take photographs of bruising or injuries for child protection reasons. Instead, recording concerns Are recorded on CPOMS. 10.22 Where staff members have concerns over material on an academy device, they must report all concerns to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **11. Health and safety**

11.1. A first-aid box is located in the classrooms and in the main office.

11.2. Only medicine prescribed to a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist will be administered.

11.3. The academy's Administering Medication Policy outlines the procedures for administering medicines.

11.4. The class teacher will report any accident or injury involving a child to their parents on the day it occurs, and any first-aid treatment administered to a child will also be reported to their parents.

11.5. Accidents and injuries will be recorded in an accident book, located in the academy office.

11.6. The Headteacher / Head of Academy will report any serious accident, illness, injury, or death of a child whilst in the academy's care to Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the incident occurring. Local child protection agencies will also be notified.

11.7. The academy has a Fire Evacuation Plan in place or those with SEND a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP).

11.8. The Headteacher / Head of Academy will notify Ofsted of any incidents of food poisoning affecting two or more children within 14 days of the incident.

11.9. Information about any dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and any special health requirements a child has will be recorded and shared with appropriate staff.

11.10. Fresh drinking water is available at all times.

11.11. Smoking/vaping is not permitted on the academy premises.

11.12. The Health and Safety Policy outlines the full health and safety policies and procedures.

11.13. Good oral health and hygiene is promoted

11.14. Staff taking medication or other substances

11.15. The academy implements a zero-tolerance approach to drugs and alcohol misuse, as outlined in the Drug and Alcohol Policy.

- 11.16. The use of alcohol or any other substance that may affect the ability to care for children by a member of staff will not be tolerated. If there is a reason to believe a member of staff is under the influence of alcohol or any other substance, they will not be allowed to work directly with children and further action will be taken. Any member of staff taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children will seek medical advice. Staff will only be allowed to work directly with the children if it is confirmed that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children properly.
- 11.17. Any medication used by staff is securely stored in the academy office.
- 11.18. Any member of staff taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children will seek medical advice. Staff will only be allowed to work directly with the children if it is confirmed that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children properly.
- 11.19. Any medication used by staff is securely stored in the academy office.

## **12. Staffing**

- 12.1. *A robust Recruitment Policy is in place, which aims to ensure that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable following Safer Recruitment procedures.*
- 12.2. *Upon employment, all EYFS staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection and health and safety.*
- 12.3. *Staff will be supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience.*
- 12.4. *All members of staff who have contact with children and families will be supervised by the EYFS lead. The supervision will provide opportunities for staff to:*
- 12.5. *Discuss any issues, particularly concerning the development or wellbeing of children, including any child protection concerns.*
- 12.6. *Identify solutions to address issues.*
- 12.7. *Receive coaching to improve their effectiveness.*
- 12.8. *There will be at least one member of staff on the academy premises at all times and on trips who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate. There will be a member of staff with each nursery and reception class at all times whilst pupils are eating in the lunch hall.*
- 12.9. *Any member of staff who has sole responsibility for looking after a group of children will also hold a PFA certificate. Early years students/trainees will hold a valid PFA for them to be included in ratios.*
- 12.10. *All newly qualified staff with a level 2 or 3 qualification will be PFA trained within 3 months of starting.*
- 12.11. *The list of staff who hold PFA certificates can be found in the academy.*

- 12.12. *The academy provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.*
- 12.13. *Only members of staff with level 2 English and maths qualifications will count towards the staffing ratios at level 3.*
- 12.14. *The academy provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.*
- 12.15. *Only members of staff with level 2 English and maths qualifications will count towards the staffing ratios at level 3.*

### **13. From guidance document**

13.1. *For children aged three and over:*

13.2. *Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, there is one member of staff for every 13 children, and at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.*

13.3. *Where a member of staff does not hold QTS, early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification, there is one member of staff for every eight children. At least one staff member holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification, and at least half of all other staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.*

13.4. *For classes where the majority of children will reach the age of five or older within the school year, there must be one teacher for every 30 children.*

13.5. *Some schools may choose to mix their reception classes with groups of younger children, for example, nursery pupils. In such cases they must determine ratios within mixed groups, guided by all relevant ratio requirements and by the needs of individual children within the group. In exercising this*

*discretion, the school must comply with the statutory requirements relating to the education of children of compulsory school age and infant class sizes.*

13.6. *Only under exceptional circumstances, and where the 13.13 quality of care and safety of children is maintained, will changes be made to the ratios.*

13.7. *Parents will be informed about staffing arrangements and, when relevant and practical, will be involved in staffing arrangement decisions.*

13.8. *Each child is assigned a key person whose role it is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs.*

13.9. *The EYFS lead will inform parents of whom their child's key person is and will explain the role of the key person when their child begins attending the academy.*

13.10. *Ensuring safer eating: supervision during meals/snacks; staff must be present, facing children, able to respond to choking/allergies*

#### **14. Information and records**

*14.1. Information is stored in line with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, and with regard to the Trust's Data Protection Policy.*

*14.2. The following information is recorded for each child:*

- The child's name and date of birth*

*14.3. The name and address of every parent or carer who is known to the academy, and which parent or carer the child normally lives with*

*14.4. The emergency contact details of the child's parent or carer*

#### **15. The following information about the academy is recorded:**

*15.1. The academy's name, address and telephone number*

*15.2. The academy's certificate of registration*

*15.3. The name, address and telephone number of anyone who will regularly be in unsupervised contact with the children*

*15.4. A daily record of the names of the children being cared for in the academy, their hours of attendance, and the names of each child's key person*

#### **16. The following information is made available to parents:**

*16.1. The academy's privacy notice for parents and pupils*

*16.2. How the academy delivers the EYFS and how parents can access more information*

*16.3. The daily routine and the activities offered in the academy's EYFS and how parents can assist their child's learning at home*

*16.4. How the academy's EYFS supports children with SEND*

*16.5. Details of the food and drink provided to the children*

*16.6. Information about the policies and procedures in place in the academy's EYFS*

#### **17. Ofsted will be notified if there are any changes to the following:**

*17.1. The address of the academy*

*17.2. The academy's contact details*

*17.3. The hours during which care is provided*

*17.4. Any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of the academy or any person who cares for, or is in regular contact with, children to look after children.*

*17.5. Attendance procedures are followed in conjunction with the Trust graduated response for attendance.*

## **18 . Parental involvement**

- 18 .1. We firmly believe that the EYFS cannot function without the enduring support of parents.*
- 18 .2. Parents are invited to termly parents' evenings; however, the academy has an open-door policy and parents are welcome to talk to teachers at the start and end of the school day.*
- 18 .3. The Headteacher / Head of Academy's office will be utilised for confidential discussions between staff and parents.*
- 18 .4. Parents are asked to complete permission slips for any visits out of school, use of photographs of their child and using the internet at school.*
- 18 .5. Parents are asked to complete admission forms, a medical form and to write a brief synopsis about their child to help the academy to understand their character and personality.*

## **19. Transition periods**

- 19.2. Reception and Year 1 teachers are given time to discuss and expand on the information given in the EYFS profile.*

## **20. Monitoring and review**

- 20.1. This policy is reviewed annually by the Trust Board and the Headteacher / Head of Academy.*
- 20.2. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.*
- 20.3. All members of staff directly involved with the EYFS are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction.*
- 20.4. The next scheduled review date for this policy is August 2026.*