

Statutory:

Policy provided centrally for adoption by schools with minimal amendment to the core text. Changes are allowed to the text where indicated

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)



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Contents

1. Aims.....	2
2. Legislation	3
3. Structure of the EYFS	3
4. Curriculum	3
4.1 Planning	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.2 Inclusion, Equality and Diversity.....	4
4.3 Teaching.....	4
5. Assessment.....	4
6. Working with parents and carers.....	5
7. Staff	6
7.1 Staff training.....	6
7.2 Safer recruitment	6
8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures	6
8.1 Whistleblowing.....	6
8.2 Staffing ratios	7
8.3 Paediatric first aid (PFA)	7
8.4 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	7
8.5 Absence.....	7
8.6 Oral health and tooth brushing.....	7
8.7 Safer eating, Nutrition, Food safety and Hygiene	7
8.9 Safe sleep	8
8.10 Screen use	8
8.11 Accident or injury.....	8
8.12 Safety of premises	8
8.13 Toileting and privacy	8
9. GDPR	9
10. Monitoring arrangements	9

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a secure foundation for learning, development and good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK](#), effective from 1 September 2025. This policy has regard to the Equality Act 2010.

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Structure of the EYFS

This policy describes how all ODST schools with children in the EYFS provision implement the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (Updated September 2025). It sets out ODST's approach to children's well-being, education and health to ensure that our youngest children have the best possible start to their time in school and can flourish.

The EYFS refers to children from birth to five years of age. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the full range of policies for ODST and statutory guidance on the EYFS.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest EYFS statutory framework.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that we must teach. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Three areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

We also support the children in 4 specific areas which help strengthen and develop the 3 prime areas, and ignite the children's curiosity and enthusiasm:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

4.1 Planning

At The Hendreds, staff provide a nurturing, inclusive and stimulating environment where children are encouraged to be curious, confident and independent learners. Through a balance of child-initiated play, continuous provision and purposeful adult-led learning, children experience the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically.

Planning is informed by regular observation and assessment of children's interests, strengths and next steps. Staff use this knowledge to create meaningful, challenging and enjoyable learning experiences that inspire curiosity, independence and a love of learning. Opportunities for child-initiated and adult-guided learning are carefully balanced to ensure all children make good progress.

The indoor and outdoor learning environments are used effectively to support learning across the curriculum. Staff adapt provision in response to children's needs and interests, ensuring that resources and experiences promote exploration, creativity, communication and problem-solving.

4.2 Inclusion, Equality and Diversity

Our Trust values the individuality of all children. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by considering the pupils' varied life experiences and needs. The achievements, attitudes and wellbeing of all our children matter. This policy helps to ensure that the school promotes the individuality of all our children, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background. Staff teaching in the EYFS consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and adapt the practice and provision to meet the needs of all children, striving to create an inclusive environment that offers all pupils, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

The school's SENCO and School Leaders work together closely with the Central Team to ensure that we meet the statutory requirements as laid out in the 'SEND Code of Practice' and relevant legislation. Our ODSST SEN Policy and School's SEN Information Report contains more detail on how we achieve this, in relation to pupils with Special Educational Needs.

4.3 Teaching

At The Hendreds, staff provide a nurturing, inclusive and stimulating environment where children are encouraged to be curious, confident and independent learners. Through a balance of child-initiated play, continuous provision and purposeful adult-led learning, children experience the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically.

Staff build positive relationships with children and respond sensitively to their individual needs, interests and stages of development. Through skilled interactions, questioning and modelling, adults extend children's thinking, language and learning opportunities throughout the day.

The indoor and outdoor learning environments are valued equally, providing rich opportunities for exploration, investigation, creativity and physical development. Children are encouraged to develop resilience, independence and a love of learning through meaningful hands-on experiences. Learning is underpinned by the school's core values of kindness, courage and respect, which are promoted through all aspects of school life and help children to flourish both personally and academically.

As children progress through Reception, the balance gradually shifts towards more focused teaching of essential knowledge and skills, particularly in early reading, writing and mathematics, whilst maintaining opportunities for learning through play. This ensures children are well prepared for a successful transition into Key Stage 1.

5. Assessment

At The Hendreds, assessment is an ongoing and integral part of teaching and learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff regularly observe children during both child-initiated and adult-led learning to identify their achievements, interests and next steps in development. These observations inform future planning, ensuring learning experiences are tailored to meet individual needs and support continued progress.

Assessment is carried out through a combination of observations, interactions, children's work and professional judgement. Staff monitor progress across all areas of learning and use this information to identify strengths, celebrate achievements and provide additional support where required. Parents and carers are recognised as partners in their child's learning and are encouraged to share achievements and significant experiences from

home. Staff maintain regular communication with families and work collaboratively with parents, carers and other professionals to support children's learning and development.

Within the first six weeks of starting Reception, children complete the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) in line with statutory requirements.

Throughout the year, staff use ongoing assessment to track children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Pupil progress is reviewed regularly and discussed within the EYFS team to ensure that all children are making good progress and that any barriers to learning are identified and addressed promptly.

In the final term of the academic year in which a child reaches the age of five, staff complete the EYFS Profile for each child before 1st July. Children are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals and are judged as either:

- Meeting the expected level of development
- Emerging and not yet reaching the expected level of development
- Not yet reaching the expected level of development

Assessment information is shared with parents and carers and used to celebrate children's achievements and support their transition to Year 1, in parent - teacher interviews twice a year. EYFS Profile outcomes are shared with Year 1 teachers to ensure a smooth transition and to inform planning that builds on each child's knowledge, skills and experiences.

In keeping with our school values of kindness, courage and respect, assessment is used to recognise and celebrate the unique strengths of every child while supporting them to grow in confidence, resilience and independence.

The EYFS Profile is moderated internally and, where appropriate, in partnership with local schools and the local authority to ensure assessment judgements are accurate, consistent and reliable. The school submits EYFS Profile data to the local authority in accordance with statutory requirements.

In exceptional circumstances and following discussion and agreement with parents and carers and relevant professionals, a child may remain in EYFS provision beyond the academic year in which they turn five. Where this occurs, assessment will continue throughout the child's EYFS year and the EYFS Profile will be completed before their transition to Year 1.

6. Working with parents and carers

At The Hendreds, we recognise that children learn and develop best when there is a strong, positive partnership between school and home. We value parents and carers as their child's first educators and believe that working together is essential in supporting every child to flourish both academically and personally.

We aim to build warm, trusting relationships with families from the moment children join our school. Information is shared regularly through informal conversations, school communication systems, parent consultations, reports and wider school events. Parents and carers are encouraged to share achievements, interests and significant experiences from home so that these can be celebrated and built upon in school.

Staff keep parents and carers informed about their child's progress, development and wellbeing throughout the year. Formal parent - teacher interviews, which are held twice a year, alongside an end-of-year written report. The EYFS Profile provides parents and carers with a comprehensive picture of their child's attainment and progress at the end of the Reception Year.

Where additional support is required, staff work closely with parents, carers, the SENDCo and external agencies to ensure children's needs are identified early and supported effectively. We believe that open communication and collaboration are key to helping every child reach their full potential.

Our school values of kindness, courage and respect underpin our relationships with families. We strive to create an inclusive school community where parents and carers feel welcomed, valued and supported as partners in their child's learning journey.

7. Staff

7.1 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 [insert details on where to find this 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

7.2 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 ODST Safer recruitment Policy.

8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We recognise that 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. We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

All practitioners are alert to any issues of concern in children's lives at home or elsewhere.

8.1 Whistleblowing

We make sure that all staff are aware of our whistleblowing procedures; feel able to raise concerns about any poor or unsafe practice; and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

In the event that a member of staff feels that they need to blow the whistle on misconduct, they should report their concern to the [headteacher/other member of staff]. If the concern is about the [headteacher/other member of staff], or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to [Will Luttrell-Hunt at chairofgovernors@hendreds.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:Will.Luttrell-Hunt@chairofgovernors@hendreds.oxon.sch.uk).

See ODST Whistleblowing Policy

8.2 Staffing ratios

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff:child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

- For children aged 3 and over:
 - Where there is a person with qualified teacher status, early years professional status, or early years teacher status, an instructor or another suitably-qualified, overseas-trained teacher:
 - For classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5 or older within the school year, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 30 children
 - We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils
 - For mixed classes we determine ratios guided by all relevant ratio requirements and by the needs of the children within the group

8.3 Paediatric first aid (PFA)

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

8.4 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

We also have a DSL who has lead responsibility for safeguarding children. They are also responsible for:

- Liaising with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSPs (local safeguarding partners)
- Providing support, advice and guidance to all other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required
- Attending a safeguarding training course that complies with the criteria set out in annex C of the latest EYFS framework

8.5 Absence

We're required to promptly follow up on absences.

If a child is absent for a prolonged time or if their parents/carers haven't told us about the absence, we will attempt to contact the parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts.

See the ODSST Attendance Policy for more information.

8.6 Oral health and tooth brushing

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by insert your approach here, for example by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's child protection and safeguarding policy, which can be found on our school website.

8.7 Safer eating, Nutrition, Food safety and Hygiene

The school is committed to promoting safe eating practices in line with EYFS requirements to safeguard children and minimise the risk of choking, allergic reactions, and other harm during food consumption. We recognise that mealtimes present potential risks, particularly for younger children. We therefore implement robust procedures to ensure that all food provided and consumed within the setting is appropriate, supervised, and managed safely.

The school is committed to promoting children's health, wellbeing and development through the provision of healthy, balanced and nutritious food and drink in a safe and supportive environment.

The school comply with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, which requires that: "Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious."

We also have regard to the EYFS Nutrition Guidance (2025)

See the ODSST Safer Eating Policy and ODSST Pupil Allergy Policy for more information.

8.9 Safe sleep

All staff must read NHS advice on [Sudden infant death syndrome \(SIDS\) - NHS](#)

Where the school provides care for children who sleep as part of the EYFS provision, it ensures that safe sleep practices are in place and followed consistently by all staff to reduce the risk of harm.

The school will:

- follow current national safer sleep guidance, including that babies are always placed on their backs to sleep, unless otherwise advised in writing by a medical professional;
- ensure that children sleep in a clear, safe sleep space with no pillows, duvets, cot bumpers, soft toys, or loose bedding;
- use appropriate bedding and sleep equipment that meets safety standards;
- maintain a comfortable room temperature and monitor children appropriately while sleeping;
- ensure sleeping children are checked regularly and that these checks are recorded where required;
- never leave sleeping children unsupervised;
- work in partnership with parents/carers to understand and, where appropriate, follow a child's established sleep routines, while ensuring these routines are consistent with safe sleep guidance;
- complete individual risk assessments where a child has specific medical or developmental needs affecting sleep;
- ensure all staff working with babies and young children are trained in safer sleep practices and understand their safeguarding responsibilities in this area.

Any concerns about a child's safety during sleep will be treated as a safeguarding matter and responded to in line with this policy.

See the ODSST Safer Sleep Policy for more information.

8.10 Screen use

The school will follow the [DfE guidance "Help for early years providers: Screen use](#), July 2026 that under-2s should have no screen time 'other than in exceptional circumstances such as a video call with parents and carers'; and 2 - 5s should have a maximum of one hour, preferably less.

8.11 Accident or injury

All accidents, injuries, and existing marks are recorded promptly and accurately and shared with parents/carers as appropriate. The school ensures that an appropriate number of staff with current paediatric first aid training are on site at all times in line with EYFS requirements. Any concerns about a child's injury are reported and managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

8.12 Safety of premises

We make sure that our premises, including overall floor space and outdoor space, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children we care for and the activities provided on the premises.

We comply with requirements of health and safety legislation, including risk assessment, fire safety and hygiene requirements.

8.13 Toileting and privacy

We make sure that there are:

- Enough toilets and hand basins available for the children

- Suitable and hygienic nappy changing facilities
- An adequate supply of necessary items such as clean bedding, towels and spare clothes
- Separate toilet facilities for adults

During nappy changes and toileting, we will balance children's privacy with their safeguarding and support needs.

See ODST Intimate Care Policy

9. GDPR

We are committed to protecting your personal data and complying with the standards set by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). See school website for details and privacy notices.

See ODST Data Protection Policy and Data Retention Schedule and school website for Privacy Notices

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Trustees annually and adopted by the LGB.