The Park Federation Academy Trust
James Elliman Academy

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy
2026-2027

Approval

Signed by CEO and Federation Principal on behalf of the Board of Directors	Mrs Helen Abell
Date of approval	September 2026
Date of review	September 2027

Version	Date	Status and Purpose	Changes overview
1	August 2026	Update	Updated to align with EYFS Statutory Framework (Sept 2026) and KCSIE 2026 requirements.

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Contents

	Introduction	3
Section 1	The Learning and Development Requirements The areas of learning and development Overarching Principles Progress through the Areas of Development English as an Additional Language Provision Characteristics of Effective Learning Children's screening time	4
Section 2	Assessment Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) Assessment at the end of the EYFS: The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) Information to be provided to the Local Authority Parents as Partners Transition – Home visits Screen Use and Digital Technology	12
Section 3	Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements DBS Checks Staff Qualifications, Training, Support, and Skills Staff: Child Ratios Teacher/Key Person Health Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment, and Equipment Risk assessment Information and Records Complaints	14
Section 4	Monitoring and review	24
	Appendix 1	17

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INTRODUCTION

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At James Elliman Academy, children will begin the Foundation Stage in Nursery at the age of 3 years. They will then continue their education by joining Reception the September following their 4th Birthday.

The EYFS abides by the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, (effective 1st September 2026). In abiding by the framework, we will:

- Ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.
- Promote teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and give children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- Quality and consistency so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- A secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

We will also:

- Shape activities and experiences for children according to the areas of learning and development.
- Support children to work towards the Early Learning Goals (knowledge, skills and understanding that a child should have at the end of the EYFS).
- Assess, measure progress and report to parents and/or carers.
- Ensure that safeguarding and welfare requirements are followed to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

Overarching Principles

Four guiding principles shape practice in the Early Years. These are:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them build their learning over time and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- All children **develop and learn** in different ways and at different rates.

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SECTION 1: LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that children will have talents in a variety of areas. We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise, encouragement, and rewards to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

The EYFS learning and development requirements comprise:

- The seven areas of learning and development and the educational programmes.
- The Early Learning Goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the Reception year.
- The assessment requirements (when and how practitioners must assess children's achievements, and when and how they should discuss children's progress with parents and/or carers).

Areas of Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape a child's education in the early years. These areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These 3 prime areas are:

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

There are 4 specific areas through which the 3 prime areas are strengthened and applied. These specific areas are:

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

The level of progress children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the early learning goals set out below:

Communication and Language

ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions.

- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

ELG: Speaking

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate.
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Physical Development

ELG: Gross Motor Skills

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others.
- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing.
- Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

ELG: Fine Motor Skills

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases.
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery.
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Personal, Social, and Emotional Development

ELG: Self-Regulation

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate.
- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

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ELG: Managing Self

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge.
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

ELG: Building Relationships

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others.
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers.
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Literacy

ELG: Word Reading

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs.
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending.
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

ELG: Comprehension

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.
- Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories.
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

ELG: Writing

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

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Mathematics

ELG: Number

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Have a deep understanding of numbers to 10, including the composition of each number.
- Subsidise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5.
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

ELG: Numerical Patterns

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system.
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity.
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Understanding the World

ELG: Past and Present

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society.
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

ELG: People, Culture and Communities

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps.
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.

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ELG: The Natural World

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants.
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Expressive Arts and Design

ELG: Creating with Materials

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used.
- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher.
- Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs.
- Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music.

Progress through the Areas of Development

Early Years staff will consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and will use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences for each child in all areas of learning and development. Nursery staff will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas.

The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children progress through the Nursery and Reception years, and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

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Acting on Concerns

If a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. Staff will consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support, and will liaise with the SENCo. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the academy's Inclusion policy for SEND. We work closely with outside agencies to provide children with tailored and targeted support.

English as an Additional Language

For children whose home language is not English, we will take steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. We will also ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language.

When assessing Communication, Language, and Literacy skills, we must assess children's skills in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, we will explore the child's skills in the home language with parents and/or carers, to establish whether there is a cause for concern regarding language delay.

Provision

Each area of learning and development will be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Such activities will be balanced throughout the Nursery and Reception years.

Staff will respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning in Key Stage 1.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. The 3 characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **Playing and exploring:** children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- **Active learning:** children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
- **Creating and thinking critically:** children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Screen Use and Digital Technology

Children's screen use in early years settings should be purposeful**;** Screen time and IT use for children should be minimal, active, and social (e.g., listening to audiobooks, exploring simple programmable floor robots like Bee-Bots, or viewing photos of real-world objects).

Digital tools must never replace tactile, physical exploration, sensory play, or outdoor learning.

The Development Matters and Birth to Five Matters (both non-statutory guidance documents) are used to support and guide practitioners to meet the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information for parents and carers

- We make the following information available to parents and/or carers:
- How the EYFS is being delivered in the setting, and how parents and/or carers can access more information.
- The range and type of activities and experiences provided for children, the daily routines of the setting, and how parents and carers can share learning at home.
- How the setting supports children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Food and drinks provided for children
- Details of the provider's policies and procedures including the procedure to be followed in the event of a parent and/or carer failing to collect a child at the appointed time, or in the event of a child going missing at, or away from, the setting.
- Staffing in the setting; the name of their child's teacher/key person and their role; and a telephone number for parents and/or carers to contact in an emergency.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. In addition, we recognise the vital role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our academy.
- At James Elliman Academy, all parents will be offered a home visit prior to their start in Nursery.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts in Reception and a chance to tour new classes with their child and meet the staff.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress throughout the Foundation Stage.
- Encouraging parents to talk to a member of staff if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher/key worker and the parent discussing the child's progress in private. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each academic year.
- Engaging with parents, valuing their input, to gain a holistic picture of the child when completing initial baseline assessments and encourage them to share their knowledge of their child's abilities.
- Parents can contribute to Learning Journeys throughout the year.

- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, academy, and parents: Assemblies, Sports Day, open days, special events, stay and play etc.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

Transition

From Nursery to Reception

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express which will ensure a smooth transition is made.
Time will be allocated for professional dialogue between Nursery and Reception staff for those children transferring into the Reception classes. Children spend a significant amount of time exploring the wider school environment and visiting their new classrooms in preparation for the following year. Those children who join us from other settings will be visited by a member of the Reception Team in those settings or at their home, where they will meet the child and have a discussion with their new teacher.
Children from JEA nursery will be invited to attend a stay and play transition session before their entry into Reception.

From Reception to Key Stage One

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Complaints

All complaints must be made according to our Complaints Policy.

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SECTION 2: ASSESSMENT

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing formative assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves staff observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests, and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. In their interactions with children, staff will respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share. Parents and/or carers will also be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development via parents evening meetings and informal meetings.

Assessment at the Start of the Reception Year – the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is an assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. We will administer the assessment in accordance with administration guidance and assessment and reporting arrangements published annually. The RBA is a short, interactive assessment and takes about 20 minutes to administer. The assessment will be carried out by a teacher, teaching assistant, early years practitioner or any other trained educational professional who will be familiar with the child taking the assessment.

Assessment at the End of the EYFS: The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, an EYFS Profile will be completed for all the children. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1.

The EYFSP will reflect: ongoing observation; all relevant records held by the setting; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development will be assessed against the early learning goals, including those with special educational needs or disabilities. Reasonable adjustments to the assessment process for children with special educational needs and disabilities will be made as appropriate. Practitioners must note whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels (emerging).

Assessment Rating	EYFS Judgement
1	Indicates a child who is at the 'emerging' level at the end of the EYFS (not yet reaching expected levels of development)
2	Indicates a child who is at the 'expected' level at the end of the EYFS (meeting expected levels of development)
A	Indicates a child who has not been assessed due to long periods of absence, such as a prolonged illness; has attended the provision for an insufficient amount of time for the teacher to make an adequate assessment before the profile submission deadline; or has an exemption

Information to be provided to the Local Authority

We will report EYFS Profile results to Slough LA, upon request. Local authorities are under a duty to return this data to the relevant Government department.

SECTION 3: SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE REQUIREMENTS

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. Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are designed to create high quality environments which are welcoming, safe, and stimulating, and where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence. Our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies cover the whole school including the Early Years.

Safeguarding

In line with EYFS welfare requirements, we maintain a robust culture of vigilance to keep children safe and healthy. All staff are trained to take personal responsibility for child protection and know how to promptly escalate any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Child Absences

We check all child absences promptly to keep children safe and supported.
Unexplained or Long-term Absences: If a child is absent without notice, or stays away for an extended period, we will contact parents/carers. If we cannot reach you, we will reach out to your listed emergency contacts.
Monitoring Attendance: Staff monitor absence patterns, taking into account the family's circumstances and child's needs to decide when an absence becomes a concern.
Safeguarding: If we cannot confirm a child's safety or have serious welfare concerns, we will contact local children's social care services or request a police welfare check.
Policy Sharing: Our attendance expectations are shared with all parents and carers. This includes how to report your child's absence and the steps we take such as contacting emergency contacts or following safeguarding procedures if a child is absent without notice.

Staff Qualifications, Training, Support, and Skills

The daily experience of children in Early Years settings and the overall quality of provision depends on all practitioners having appropriate qualifications, training, skills and knowledge and a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. JEA ensures that all staff are suitably qualified to undertake their role. They also receive induction training to help them understand their roles and responsibilities. Induction training must include information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection, and health and safety issues. We also support staff to undertake appropriate training and professional development opportunities to ensure they offer quality learning and development experiences for children that continually improves.

All classes have a qualified EY teacher, with other staff holding at least a full and relevant level 3 qualification and at least half of all other staff holding at least a full and relevant level 2 qualification. The Early Years Vice Principal has at least two years' experience of working in an EY setting.

Teacher/Key Person

Each child must be assigned a teacher/key person. Parents and/or carers will be informed of the name of the teacher/key person, with the role being explained, when a child starts attending our EY. The teacher/key person will ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. They will engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home, and will help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

Staff: Child Ratios

Staffing arrangements must meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. We ensure that children are adequately supervised, including whilst eating, and decide how to deploy staff to ensure children's needs are met. Children, including whilst eating, must be within sight and hearing of a staff member. Only permanent staff are included in ratios.

Nursery

For children aged three and over, where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status, is working directly with the children:

- There must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children.
- At least one other member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.

For children aged three and over, when a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is **not** working directly with the children:

- There must be at least one member of staff for every eight children.
- At least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
- At least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

Reception

Reception classes in maintained schools and academies are subject to infant class size legislation. The School Admissions limit the size of infant classes to 30 pupils per school teacher (subject to permitted exceptions) while an ordinary teaching session is conducted. 'School teachers' do not include teaching assistants, higher level teaching assistants or other support staff. Consequently, in an ordinary teaching session, a school must employ sufficient school teachers to enable it to teach its infant classes in groups of no more than 30 per school teacher.

Health

Medicines

JEA promotes the good health of children attending the Early Years. If a child is unwell, we will follow our Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy. Medicine (only prescription) must only be administered by the senior welfare officer to a child where written permission for that medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer. Forms are available on request from the main office. We will keep a written record each time a medicine is administered to a child, as instructed by the parent/carer.

Food and Drink

When we provide snacks and drinks, they will be healthy, balanced, and nutritious. Before a child is admitted to the setting we will obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances that the child has, and any special health requirements. This information is shared with all staff involved in the preparing and handling of food. Fresh drinking water will be available and accessible at all times. We must record and act on information from

parents and carers about a child's dietary needs. Children must always be within the sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating.

Oral Health and Hygiene

Children in Nursery and Reception take part in brushing their teeth on a daily basis. (See Healthy Eating and Tooth Brushing Policy – Appendix 1)

Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment

Accident or Injury

A first aid box accessible at all times with appropriate content for use with children. We will keep a written record of accidents or injuries and first aid treatment. We will also inform parents and/or carers of any head injuries sustained by the child on the same day as, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, and of any first aid treatment given. All staff are first aid trained.

Safety of Premises

We will ensure that our premises, including overall floor space and outdoor spaces, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children cared for and the activities provided on the premises. We comply with requirements of health and safety legislation (including fire safety and hygiene requirements). We take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, staff, and others on the premises in the case of fire or any other emergency, and have a clear emergency evacuation procedure. We also have appropriate fire detection and control equipment (for example, fire alarms, smoke detectors, fire blankets and/or fire extinguishers) which is in working order and tested regularly. Fire exits are clearly identifiable, and fire doors are free of obstruction and easily opened from the inside.

Indoor Space Requirements

The premises and equipment must be organised in a way that meets the needs of children. We provide access to an outdoor play area daily, where some outdoor activities are planned. Adequate numbers of toilets and hand basins are available for children to use. There is an area where staff may talk to parents and/or carers confidentially. We only release children into the care of individuals who have been notified to us by the parent, and never release children unsupervised.

APPENDIX 1 **James Elliman Academy**

Healthy Eating and Tooth brushing Policy for EYFS

1. Policy Statement

James Elliman Academy recognises that we have a responsibility to promote the benefits of oral health and healthy eating. We are committed to supporting children's health and wellbeing by providing a safe, nurturing environment where healthy eating habits and good oral hygiene are promoted and modelled. This policy aligns with the EYFS Statutory Framework (September 2026) and safeguarding requirements set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 as part of the Early Years Policy.

2. Aims and Objectives

Our aims are to:

- Reduce dental decay, obesity and other health problems associated with a poor oral hygiene routine and a high sugar, high fat diet tooth brushing policy - to write
- Raise awareness of the benefits of oral health and healthy eating tooth brushing policy
- Role model and promote healthy eating practices within this setting tooth brushing policy
- Support parents to access free NHS dental services for their children tooth brushing policy
- Support parents in providing a healthy, balanced diet to themselves, their children and their families tooth brushing policy
- Ensure all staff provide a consistent message regarding oral health and healthy eating tooth brushing policy
- Meet our statutory duties under the EYFS framework to safeguard and promote children's health and wellbeing

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Early Years Vice Principal

- Overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate training and induction
- Monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the policy
- Liaising with parents and external health professionals

EYFS Practitioners

- Implementing daily healthy eating and tooth brushing routines
- Supervising children during mealtimes and tooth brushing sessions
- Modelling healthy eating behaviours
- Communicating with parents about their child's dietary needs and preferences
- Maintaining hygiene standards and infection control procedures
- Staff who frequently supervise mealtimes or tooth brushing must have appropriate DBS checks completed in line with KCSIE 2026 requirements

Parents and Carers

- Providing accurate information about allergies, dietary requirements and health conditions.
- Working in partnership with staff to develop allergy action plans where needed
- Providing consent for participation in the tooth brushing programme.
- Engaging in ongoing discussions about their child's eating habits and introducing solid foods.

4. Healthy Eating Procedures

Mealtimes and Snack Times

Meal/snack times are used as an opportunity for positive social interaction in which children, their caregivers, and staff participate.

During snack/mealtimes we will:

- Ensure snack times are appropriately supervised and children and adults do not walk around with food.
- Encourage children to develop good eating skills and table manners and are given plenty of time to eat.
- Help children to understand why some foods are healthy and others are not
- Never leave children unsupervised during eating to minimise choking risks

Food and Drink Provision

Healthy options:

- Water and milk (unflavoured) are the safest drinks for teeth. Water and milk only will be offered as drinks.
- Children are instructed to bring a labelled water bottle to school every day and take home for washing and refilling for the next day.
- Fresh drinking water is constantly available for the children and we inform children and adults about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for it at any time during the session/day.
- No confectionary such as chocolate, chocolate coated biscuits, sweets, crisps etc. are provided as snack options.

Special occasions:

- Exceptions may occasionally be made, but usually foods and drinks offered at snack time will be snacks that are kinder to teeth. Where exceptions have been made these are only provided for special occasions such as religious holidays/cultural festivals, provided during snack/meal times and in these circumstances healthier alternatives are considered where possible, and portions offered are smaller than those of healthier foods.
- Snacks containing sugar, or birthday treats are not encouraged. Alternative ideas that put the emphasis on making the child feel special and keep them healthy include wearing badges, stickers or hats, and singing songs.

Important principles:

- Food is not used as reward and the withholding of food is not used
- Children will be helped and encouraged to drink from an open cup or water bottle

Cultural Awareness and Learning

- We celebrate that food is an important part of culture and tradition. We offer opportunities for children to enjoy food from different cultures and to investigate unfamiliar foods.
- Explanations are given to children about where food comes from, how it changes, is cooked, different tastes and textures.

Allergy Management and Special Dietary Requirements

In line with EYFS statutory requirements (September 2026), we will:

Information gathering:

- Obtain detailed information about children's allergies and dietary requirements during the admission process
- Maintain up-to-date records of all dietary requirements, allergies and intolerances
- Request medical documentation where appropriate

Allergy action plans:

- Develop individualised allergy action plans in partnership with parents/carers and health professionals (where appropriate)
- Ensure all staff are aware of children with allergies and the specific actions required
- Display visual allergy alerts in food preparation and eating areas (with parental consent)
- Store emergency medication (e.g., EpiPens) safely and accessibly, with clear instructions for administration

Ongoing communication:

- Have regular discussions with parents/carers about introducing solid foods, particularly for younger EYFS children
- Update allergy action plans as needed based on changing circumstances
- Inform parents immediately of any allergic reactions or concerns

Safety measures:

- In order to protect children with allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another
- Used cups are also encouraged to be put into the sink ready to be washed after each use, to stop children sharing cups
- Accommodate cultural, religious and medical dietary requirements
- Consult with families on food provision and healthy eating, seeking guidance from professionals where necessary

Staff training:

- All staff involved in food preparation and supervision will receive training on:

    - Recognising signs of allergic reactions
    - Emergency procedures and medication administration
    - Safe food handling and allergen awareness
    - Choking prevention and first aid
    -

5. Tooth brushing Programme

Implementation: The daily tooth brushing programme at James Elliman Academy in the Early Years (Nursery/Reception) operates as follows:

When: Daily tooth brushing sessions take place after lunch in Reception and during the sessions in Nursery.

Who: All pupils that have consent to take part will be given a toothbrush and class toothpaste with records updated as necessary

What we use:

- A pea sized blob of fluoride toothpaste (Toothpaste containing 1,350 – 1,500 ppm (parts per million fluoride) is used in the programme and dispenses off a paper towel or plate
- All pupils should have their own identifiable toothbrush

Effective Practice

During tooth brushing sessions:

- All pupils should be supervised/helped during brushing
- Attempt to brush all surfaces of the teeth
- Encourage children not to swallow toothpaste during and after brushing but spit if needed, don't rinse!
- Wipe excess toothpaste away with a paper towel

Maintenance: Toothbrush will be replaced once a term or when necessary if bristles become splayed

Infection Control and Hygiene

Staff hygiene: Staff members should wash their hands before and after tooth brushing session and use disposable glove and sanitising gel as necessary

Toothpaste dispensing: Toothpaste should be dispensed off a plate not directly onto the child's brush

Storage: Toothbrushes are stored in an upright position in a suitable place to avoid touching each other and cover. Brush containers and toothbrush covers should be washed weekly in water and stored out of reach or in a suitable cupboard.

Cleaning: Basins/sinks should be washed and wiped down after tooth brushing session.

Supervision and Safeguarding

- Children are never left unsupervised during tooth brushing
- Appropriate staff-to-child ratios are maintained
- Staff who frequently supervise tooth brushing have enhanced DBS checks with barred list information
- Any concerns about a child's welfare or hygiene are reported through our safeguarding procedures

Parental Consent

- Written consent is obtained from parents/carers before children participate in the tooth brushing programme
- Parents are informed about the programme during admission and through regular communications
- Parents can withdraw consent at any time
- We respect parents' decisions if they choose not to participate

6. Partnership with Parents

Communication

We will:

- Provide information to Parents/carers with regard to oral health, accessing dental services and healthy eating, in a variety of accessible and relevant forms
- Display information about dental health
- Share information about children's eating habits and preferences during daily handovers and parent consultations
- Provide guidance on healthy lunchbox contents and snack ideas
- Offer workshops and information sessions on healthy eating and oral health

Parental Involvement

We encourage parents to:

- Inform us immediately of any changes to dietary requirements, allergies or health conditions
- Engage in discussions about introducing solid foods and their child's eating development
- Reinforce healthy eating messages at home
- Keep snacks sugar free
- Ensure plain water and milk are the only drinks completely safe for teeth
- Register their child with an NHS dentist and attend regular check-ups

7. Staff Training

Induction Training

All new staff and volunteers will receive induction training covering:

- This healthy eating and tooth brushing policy
- Allergy awareness and emergency procedures
- Infection control and hygiene standards

- Safeguarding responsibilities related to children's health and wellbeing
- The importance of modelling healthy behaviours

Ongoing Training

Staff will receive regular training updates on:

- Food allergy management and anaphylaxis (refresher training annually)
- Paediatric first aid including choking procedures
- Changes to EYFS statutory requirements
- Best practice in promoting healthy eating and oral health
- Safeguarding updates as required by KCSIE

8. Monitoring and Review

Monitoring Arrangements

The Early Years Vice Principal will monitor the implementation of this policy through:

- Regular observations of mealtimes and tooth brushing sessions
- Feedback from staff, parents and children
- Liaison with school health professionals

Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Administering Medicines Policy
- EYFS Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy