



# **Blackmoor Park Infant School and Kindergarten**

## **Early Years Policy 2025-26**

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**Date adopted: Spring 2024**

**Reviewed: September 2025**

**Review: September 2026**

***We are a rights respecting school. All our policies and procedures are written and reviewed to ensure that children's rights, as detailed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, are respected and promoted and this policy ensures:***

***Article 12:*** All children have a right to be able to give their opinion when adults are making a decision that will affect them, and adults should take it seriously.

***Article 19:*** All children should be protected from violence, abuse and neglect, and governments should protect them.

***Article 29:*** Education should help children use and develop their talent and abilities. It should also help children learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.

***Article 32:*** Children should not be allowed to do work that is dangerous or might make them ill or stop them going to school.

***Article 33:*** Children have a right to be protected from dangerous drugs, and from the business of making or selling them.

***Article 34:*** Nobody can do anything to your body that you do not want them to do, and grown-ups should protect you.

***Article 37:*** No child should be punished in a way that humiliates or hurts them.

For more information on the convention and the rights of each child visit: <http://www.unicef.org.uk/>.

## Vision:

Nurturing our children is at the centre of everything we do. We provide a safe and stimulating environment where children feel valued and are given the freedom to explore and to have fun. We empower children to become confident, resilient and independent learners ready for their next steps.

*"All children are entitled to the care and support they need to give them the best possible start in life. From birth to five years old, children grow and learn more rapidly than at any other stage, and their early experiences have a lasting impact on future opportunities. A childhood that is secure, safe, and happy matters, and high-quality early learning, together with positive relationships and strong support from parents, carers, and practitioners, provides the foundation every child needs to thrive and fulfil their potential."*

*In line with the EYFS Statutory Framework 2025, this commitment is underpinned by robust safeguarding and welfare requirements, including safer recruitment practices, clear whistleblowing procedures, and effective monitoring of child absences.*

*(Early Years Statutory Framework, 2025)*

The EYFS at The Three Saints Academy Trust seeks to provide:

- **Quality and consistency** so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned 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.

## Legislation:

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [Early Years Statutory Framework 2025](#)

## Additional reading:

- Development Matters – non-statutory curriculum guidance from the DfE - [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64e6002a20ae890014f26cbc/DfE\\_Development\\_Matters\\_Report\\_Sep2023.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64e6002a20ae890014f26cbc/DfE_Development_Matters_Report_Sep2023.pdf)
- Birth to 5 Matters - non-statutory curriculum guidance devised from the Early Years Coalition - <https://birthto5matters.org.uk/download-or-buy-a-copy/>
- EEF (Education Endowment Foundation) – Communication & Language - <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years-evidence-store/communication-and-language>

- EEF (Education Endowment Foundation) – Personal Social and Emotional Development - <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years-evidence-store/personal-social-and-emotional-development>
- EEF (Education Endowment Foundation) – Early Literacy - <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years-evidence-store/early-literacy>
- EEF (Education Endowment Foundation) – Early Mathematics - <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years-evidence-store/early-mathematics>

## Structure of the EYFS

We are a unique setting with the privilege of supporting our very youngest children to thrive and flourish in our care. We offer EYFS provision from birth to 5 years old.

**Day Nursery:** We have 9 FTE spaces daily, staffed by 2 Extended Services Leads and Early Years Practitioners.

**Day Nursery (2-3years):** We have 24 FTE spaces daily, staffed by Early Years Practitioners at a ratio of 1:4 – offering 2 year funded and 3 year funded places. Practice is overseen by the 2 Extended Services Leads.

**Nursery:** We currently offer 56 full time places. This is split into a mixture of 30 hour places for working parents, and part time 15 hour places delivered either AM or PM for all 3 year olds, led by a Nursery Lead, and a team of Early Years Practitioners.

**Reception:** We have a 90 place Reception, which is split into 3 classes of 30 children. Each class has a teacher and the classes are supported with 3 experienced Learning Support Assistants. Reception operates as a whole unit organised into areas of continuous provision, with key person class bases.

All staff are Paediatric /First Aid Trained.

All practice is overseen in the Day Nursery by Extended Services Lead and in Nursery and Reception by the Assistant Head Teacher with EYFS Quality and Curriculum Lead responsibility.

## Early Years Curriculum:

The Three Saints Academy Trust follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2025 statutory framework of the EYFS. Our overarching principles mirror the guided principles listed in the Statutory Framework.

We recognise:

- 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 to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. (The characteristics of effective teaching and learning) The EYFS Statutory framework covers the education and care of all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

## Characteristics of Effective Learning

These highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

### The Three Characteristics are:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically

The seven areas of learning and development that shape educational programmes in our trust are:

### Three Prime Areas:

- Communication and Language (*Listening, Attention & Understanding, Speaking*)
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (*Self-Regulation, Managing Self, Building Relationships*)
- Physical Development (*Gross Motor Skills, Fine Motor Skills*)

### Four Specific Areas:

- Literacy (*Comprehension, Word Reading, Writing*)
- Mathematics (*Number, Numerical Patterns*)
- Understanding the World (*Past & Present, People Culture and Communities, The Natural World*)
- Expressive Arts and Design (*Creating with Materials, Being Imaginative and Expressive*)

All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.

We recognise that Prime areas are time sensitive. If not securely in place between 3 and 5 years of age, they will be more difficult to acquire, and their absence may hold a child back in other areas of learning. Specific areas are less time sensitive. They reflect cultural knowledge and accumulated understanding. It is possible to acquire these bodies of knowledge at various stages through life. Specific areas of learning are dependent on learning in the prime areas-the specific learning cannot easily take place without the prime.

## Early Years' Practitioners

*"Each child must be assigned a key person. In childminding settings, the key person is the childminder, or can be an assistant where appropriate. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is securely tailored to meet their individual needs; to help the child become familiar with the setting; offer a settled, reliable relationship; build strong communication and partnership with their parents and/or carers; and, where relevant, to engage with specialist support (for example for Special Educational Needs or Disabilities) in a timely way."*

*(EYFS Statutory Framework 2025)*

Every child is assigned a Key Person and a 'Buddy' to support in their Key Persons absence. Whenever possible the children choose their Key Person for themselves.

The role of the Key Person is to 'tune in' to children as unique individuals. This involves:

- knowing about how children develop
- observing children closely
- listening actively, attentively and with respect to all children and parents
- support the child to become familiar with the setting.
- understanding that physical, and mental health and well-being, are closely related.

Within these positive relationships and interactions children learn to be confident, self-assured, happy people who can understand others, make friends and open their minds and bodies to exploring and learning about the world.

Essential to this role is developing positive relationships with families and parents, sharing progress and next steps, and ensuring home and setting work together to support learning and development.

### **Planning:**

The class teacher will plan activities and experiences that enable children to develop and learn effectively. We encourage the children in our care to become active and creative learners, providing a balance of both adult-led and child-initiated activities.

The class teacher will also take into account 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, we follow the graduated approach, working in partnership with relevant services from external agencies.

Children have opportunities to learn both indoors and outdoors with continuous provision on offer between the two areas. The outdoor environment is developed to encourage and support physical play experiences alongside the provision of resources and activities that will encourage development in all areas.

### **Teaching:**

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mixture of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to children's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

*"Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play and learning that is guided by adults."*

*(Early Years Statutory Framework 2025)*

Learning through play is an important part of our school. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Reflecting on children's starting points, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They can practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Adults take an active role in play as a playful companion they observe, model, and extend play.

A vital aspect in the development of essential knowledge and skills is the use of continuous provision. This means that practitioners support children as they are using and developing certain skills throughout the year on a regular basis. This supports children to develop key life skills such as independence; innovation; creativity; enquiry; analysis; problem solving.

The balance between child-initiated play, and adult led activities develops across the whole EYFS, as children grow older, and as their development allows. The balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities as adult interactions are essential to skills teaching, in turn leading the children to independently demonstrate they mastered the Early Years Curriculum

### **Language for Learning:**

Language for Learning is explicit across the Early Years such as "*I remembered*", "*I tried out*", "*We found out*", "*We know*", "*We thought*", and "*We solved the problem*" are modelled by adults and used by the children when able. These are supported from adults with phrases such as "*I really like the way...*", "*What jumped out was...*", "*My favourite part is...*", "*My eye was drawn to...*" in order for feedback to be specific helpful and kind. Questioning is used to promote learners who are insatiably curious and the independent creative thinkers of tomorrow- "*Could you...*", "*Why don't you try...*", "*Have you thought of...*", "*What if...*".

### **Reading:**

Promoting a love of reading is a key feature for the curriculum at Three Saints Academy Trust. According to current research:

- there is a clear link between reading enjoyment and reading frequency for children
- children who read widely and often have a better general knowledge
- children who read or are read to every day, have greater access to higher level vocabulary
- children who enjoy reading benefit emotionally and socially

In acknowledgement of this we have several layers of approach to nurture a love reading. (please see our Teaching and Learning Policy)

## **Vocabulary Rich Projects (VRP):**

Curriculum projects have a key 'book as a hook' at their centre. Books are carefully selected to ensure a range vocabulary exposure as well as the development of key knowledge and skills identified in our curriculum progression document. The approach develops as children move through our provision and the projects flow in the following way:

***Immersion:*** the discovery and exploration of key concepts in books. ***(Baby Room onwards)***

***Imitation:*** children playing with purpose and using planned vocabulary in context. ***(Toddlers onwards)***

***Innovation:*** children using their story knowledge to make their own story narrative. ***(Nursery onwards)***

***Application:*** children applying their knowledge to story map and write purposefully in a range of contexts. ***(Reception)***

## **Favourite 5:**

With our youngest children Key Persons will read and re read favourite stories daily, also singing and acting out nursery rhymes, including nonfiction, rhymes and poems.

As children develop and it becomes more age appropriate, Key persons select their 'Favourite 5' story books each half term to read during a dedicated daily story time. This will be mixture of fiction, non-fiction, rhyme, and children's classics. These books are read and re read to children, developing familiarity with story language, exploring and developing key vocabulary, rhythm, and rhyme, understanding of emotions and developing empathy.

## **SHINE – “Are You Really Reading?”**

This is a whole trust approach to teaching explicit comprehension skills to children. Practitioners use this approach within their VRP when developmentally appropriate for their key children. It consists of 5 strands:

1. The Timeline
2. The Hash Tag
3. The Emoji
4. The Impression and Evidence
5. The 3 Most Important Things

## **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."*

(Early Years Statutory Framework 2025)

When a child is aged between 2 and 3, practitioners review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

During the first 6 weeks of Reception the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is completed. This is a short statutory assessment that assess each child in early mathematics, literacy, communication and language. The purpose of this is to form a starting point for cohort level school progress measures. Data from the RBA is compared to key stage 2 outcomes 7 years later to form an overall progress measure for school.

At the end of Reception, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are: meeting **expected** levels of development, or not yet reaching expected levels (**emerging**)

At Blackmoor Park Infant School and Kindergarten ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Practitioners 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 for each child in all of the areas of learning and development. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. In their interactions with children, practitioners should respond to their day-to-day observations about children's progress, and observations that parents and carers share to develop next steps in planning.

### **Nursery (Day Nursery and Nursery):**

During our induction and settling in sessions practitioners will spend 1-1 time with parents to discuss each child in depth and any concerns or priorities for families as their child settles into their space with a new key person/persons. We use all about me packs to help support settling in and share key information.

We use the Tapestry online learning journal to help strengthen our links with parents and children's learning at home. The journals enable us to build a record of the children's learning journey and experiences during their time with us at the nursery. The tool provides an easy to access platform that enables parents to see their child's learning and progress and contribute to the journal celebrating their child's key moments and development along the way.

Termly Parents meetings are held with key persons to discuss individual progress, and individual next steps for learning.

Termly stay and play sessions are also scheduled to enable parents to have the opportunity to spend some time with their child within the nursery environment engaging in play and activities, observing play and routines and communicating with key persons, practitioners and other parents.

### **Working with Parents:**

Before joining our school, a well-thought-out transition timetable is planned for to ensure that the opportunity to discuss each child in depth and any concerns or priorities for families as their child settles into their space with a new adult, is provided.

Autumn Term Curriculum events are held to share specific end of year expectations including EYFSP for Reception families.

As children mature and their social interactions continue to develop, practitioners move towards more group observations and collective learning. Photographs, Tweets and observations are used as a tool to capture observations, as practitioners collate information on children's development and achievements, and discuss these with colleagues, in order to inform future planning and assessment of children's achievement. The school website/social media platforms are used to celebrate key learning and activities each week as an additional way to update families with learning and experiences that children have taken part in.

Termly Parents meetings with teachers/Early Years Professionals are held to discuss individual progress, and individual next steps for learning.

End of year written reports celebrating each child's learning and progress over the academic year are sent home. This will also include the EYFS profile, helping to provide parents and /or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Stay and Play/Parent Insight opportunities are organised termly. Parents are invited into school to explore an aspect of their child's learning and engage in play with them.

### **Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures**

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

### **Mobile phones and cameras:**

School cameras, iPads and video cameras are used by staff and children for the purposes of teaching, learning and assessment. Only school owned devices are permitted to be used during school hours by staff. These devices are not removed from the school premises.

All staff have received guidance on appropriate use of the internet and email, including social networking sites and media.

### **Food and Drink:**

Children are offered a healthy daily snack each morning and are given a piece of fruit and milk. Fresh, cool water is always available. (See our additional Snack Policy/Food and Drink Policy)

### **Admissions:**

Blackmoor Park Infant School and Kindergarten maintains Liverpool City Council's admissions policy for admissions to Reception.

### **Paediatric First Aid**

All staff in the EYFS Department are Paediatric First Aid Trained. Paediatric First Aid training is revisited in the recommended timescales.

**Transition to Key Stage One:**

A transition policy to support the transition from Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage One is available.

**Monitoring Arrangements:**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Head Teacher and Director of Early Years every year. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Board of Trustees.

**List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS**

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according the EYFS statutory framework.

| Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS                                  | Where can it be found?                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Safeguarding policy and procedures                                          | See child protection and safeguarding policy / Keeping Children Safe in Education |
| Procedure for responding to illness                                         | See health and safety policy                                                      |
| Administering medicines policy                                              | See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy                              |
| Emergency evacuation procedure                                              | See health and safety policy                                                      |
| Procedure for checking the identity of visitors                             | See child protection and safeguarding policy                                      |
| Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children | See child protection and safeguarding policy                                      |
| Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints                          | See complaints policy                                                             |