Maiden Erlegh Trust

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

MAIDEN ERLEGH TRUST

Including local arrangements in annexes for:

JOHN RANKIN SCHOOLS

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for 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
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with 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 2026 Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework

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

3. Structure of the EYFS

Maiden Erlegh Trust provides Nursery (Foundation Stage 1) and Reception (Foundation Stage 2) at Birch Hill Primary School and Nursery, Great Hollands Primary School and John Rankin Infant School.

Nursery provision is for children from the age of 2 years upwards. Children can join the Nursery class the term after their 2nd birthday. We offer a 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. all day session, or alternatively a morning session 9 –12, or afternoon session 12 - 3pm.

Foundation Stage 2 (FS2) provision comprises of 2 Reception classes, which operate fluidly across the EYFS unit to maximise learning opportunities. There is one September entry point for all pupils who turn 5 in that academic year. FS2 offers full-time education to all pupils from in line with the start and finish times published on the school website.

All EYFS provision is based on a key worker system - where children are allocated a 'key' adult who spends significant amounts of time with each child to build strong relationships and develop a thorough understanding of each individual child.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2026 statutory framework of the EYFS and the non-statutory Development Matters.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. Three areas are, however, known as the prime areas and are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and 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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

The EYFS department has a relentless focus on the development of early reading and oracy which is implemented from day one (Annex 2).

More details can be found on the school website with yearly and termly curriculum plans published.

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas. We also strongly believe that to succeed, our pupils need to be able to read confidently and we start our successful reading & writing programme on entry to Reception. Nursery pupils undertake activities to support this learning, during the Summer Term.

Staff also 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, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. We consider the guidance provided regarding EYFS screen use in our planning.

4.2 Teaching

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

Each school provides structured teacher-led activities from the beginning. A typical day would look like this:

- Self-registration on entry

- Daily morning tasks linked to fine-motor skills activities (leading onto more writing-focused activities throughout the year) and maths skills.
- Teacher-led Phonics sessions, following the named systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) programme (Annex 2)
- Snack a Story in classes to develop speaking and listening skills.
- Child-initiated 'Discovery Time' linked to our continuous provision and curriculum enhancements both inside and outside
- Teacher-led mathematical input (Annex 2)
- Child-initiated 'Discovery Time' linked to mathematical concepts across the curriculum both inside and outside
- Oracy sessions and use of talk partners to build communication and language
- Storytime and Drawing Club
- Lunchtime – eating skills supported by teaching team
- Child-initiated 'Discovery Time'
- Story and singing time
- Teacher-led handwriting development activities
- Curriculum themed input followed by Child-initiated 'Discovery Time' linked to continuous provision across the curriculum both inside and outside. Individual or small group focus activity is provided throughout the sessions where needed.
- Circle time with PSHE focus
- Storytime to build up a strong knowledge of a range of well-known high-quality stories.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, we gradually shift our focus towards preparing our pupils to be fully ready for the Year 1 curriculum.

5. Assessment

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff work with pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning habits. These observations are used to shape future planning and 'wow' moments are recorded on Tapestry, an online learning journal specific to each child. Practitioners also consider observations shared by parents and/or carers.

At the end of the EYFS, 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

- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through formal parent consultation meetings twice per year alongside informal daily updates from EYFS staff at arrival and collection. Formal written reports at the end of the EYFS are provided.

Children, aged 2, receive a 2-year progress check after being in the setting for a term.

In addition, parents receive frequent updates which enables them to monitor their child's progress (Annex 2).

Regular learning newsletters, highlighting learning undertaken during the week and outlining the planned learning for the following week, including sections on 'how you can help your child' provide clear support to allow parents to play an active part in the learning process.

The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person and/or class teacher help families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

All families are offered a home visit as part of the transition process to support the settling-in process and the building of strong relationships.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

The safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our Child Protection Policy and on the Safeguarding and Child Protection page of our website. Relevant certificates are displayed in the main school.

Staffing arrangements are such that the needs of all children are met and that we can ensure their safety. Minimum staffing ratios as set out in the 2026 Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework are:

- Nursery (2 year-olds): 1:5
- Nursery (3 - 4 year-olds) 1:13 with a Qualified Teacher present.
- Reception: at least one member of staff for every 30 children (Annex 2)

Health and Nutrition

'Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious' **EYFS Nutrition Guidance, May 2025**

Providing healthy, balanced and nutritious food ensures that all children get the right amount of nutrients and energy they need while they are growing rapidly, which is especially important for children who might not have access to healthy food at home. This can help prevent children from becoming overweight or obese.

Developing positive eating habits early on is important. Children's early experiences with food can shape their future eating habits. This can impact children's long-term health including maintaining a healthy weight, and good oral health.

At JRS, we only provide healthy snacks (fruit and vegetables, and a selection of dried snacks such as rice cakes and crackers, and healthy spreads). Drinks are limited to water and milk.

We encourage children to try new foods but never pressure them. Meal and snack times are inclusive, relaxed and an opportunity to develop social and independence skills. Food is never used a reward or a punishment. Staff act as positive role models by modelling good eating habits.

High-risk choking hazard foods, such as grapes and cherry tomatoes, are always cut into quarters and this recommendation is shared with parents when providing children with a packed lunch.

While children are eating, there will always be at least 1 member of staff in the room with a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate (from a course consistent with the criteria set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework Annex A). All children eating will be seated safely in an appropriate chair and within sight and hearing of a member of staff.

Wecelebrate birthdays in fun, inclusive ways such as singing and games. To support healthy-eating, we ask families not to send in cakes or sweets for children's birthdays. Families are welcome to contribute non- edible items such as stickers or bubbles if they wish. Cultural and religious food traditions will be respected and included, where safe and appropriate.

Safer Sleep Requirements

In FS1, we recognise that young children need sufficient rest and sleep to support their health/ development, well-being and learning. We aim to provide a safe, calm and comfortable environment where children can sleep/rest, according to their individual needs.

Parents/carers will be asked about their child's usual sleep routine/preferred sleeping times and comforters. Staff will work with parents to maintain a consistent routine where possible.

Children will never be forced to sleep. Children who do not wish to sleep will be offered a quiet rest activity. FS1 will follow current safe sleep guidance for young children and will meet the EYFS Safer Sleep Requirements

Staff will ensure sleeping children are appropriately supervised. Regular checks will be recorded and will include observing the child's position, breathing colour and general well-being. Any concerns identified during a sleep check will be acted upon immediately and recorded where appropriate.

Staff will receive appropriate training and guidance and follow the setting's risk assessments and safeguarding procedures.

8. Monitoring arrangements

Quality assurance of the EYFS provision is undertaken on a daily, weekly and half-termly basis.

The provision and progress of the pupils is also monitored at senior leader and Trust level through the School Improvement Plan reviews (termly) and School Evaluation process (half-termly).

ANNEX 1: List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found? All related documents can be found on the school website: John Rankin Schools specifically, the Key Policies page: John Rankin Schools Policies
Child Protection Policy and Procedures	See Child Protection Policy and school website pages Procedures for Dealing with Allegations against Employees and Adults working or Volunteering in Schools Staff Acceptable Use of IT (Staff)
Procedure for responding to illness	See Health & Safety and First Aid Policies
Administering medicines policy	See Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Health & Safety Policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See Child Protection Policy and Visitor Protocols
Special Educational Needs	See SEND Information Report
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Protocol for Collecting Children and Walking Home Alone
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See Complaints Policy

ANNEX 2: JOHN RANKIN SCHOOLS

Oversight of EYFS phases	Katherine Adams/Charlotte Sturdivant
SSP programme	Read, Write, Inc.
Mathematics programme	White Rose Maths - FS1 NCETM Mastering Number - FS2
Curriculum Plans	https://johnrankinschools.com/learning/our-curriculum/
Parent communication method	Tapestry
Staffing ratio: Nursery (FS1)	2 year-olds: 1:5 3 - 4 year-olds 1:13 with a Qualified Teacher present.
Staffing ratio: Reception (FS2)	2:15 or 1:30 with a Qualified Teacher present.
Number of Reception classes	2
Number of Level 2/3 qualified staff	Nursery-1 x Level 2: 2 days per week 2 x Level 3 1 x qualified teacher
Number of staff with up to date paediatric first aid certificate	Nursery – 7 staff members FS2 - 5 staff members (teachers and support staff)