Magdalen Academy, St Germans Academy and Wimbotsham and Stow Academy EYFS Policy 2026/2027

POLICY	**EYFS Policy 2026/27**
STATUS/DATE OF THIS VERSION	**September 2026**
APPROVED BY	**Standards Committee of the Trust Board**
RATIFIED BY	**Standards Committee of the Trust Board**
REVIEW	**September 2027**

This policy is operated by schools in Unity Education Trust (as listed below).
There may be sections that are specific to one school and these will be added by the school either as an annex or in place of yellow highlighted sections below.

Any queries about the policy should be directed, in the first instance, to the Headteacher/Head of School:

- **Beeston Primary School**
- **Garvestone Primary School**
- **Grove House Infant and Nursery School**
- **King's Park Infant School**
- **Churchill Park Academy**
- **Greyfriars Academy**
- **Highgate Infant School**
- **King's Oak Infant School**
- **Wimbotsham and Stow Academy**
- **Magdalen Academy**
- **St German's Academy**

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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 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), effective from 1 September 2025.

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

3. Structure of the EYFS

- No session to be longer than 10 hours
- Not before 6.00am or after 8.00pm
- A maximum of 2 sites in a single day

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning Session				
8.55 – 11.55	8.55 – 11.55	8.55 – 11.55	8.55 – 11.55	8.55 – 11.55
All Day				
8.55am – 3.15pm	8.55am – 3.15pm	8.55am – 3.15pm	8.55am – 3.15pm	8.55am – 3.15pm

We will work with parents to ensure that as far as possible the hours/sessions that can be taken as free provision are convenient for parents' working hours.

Early Education is offered to families 38 weeks of the year. The funded hours can be claimed (to the maximum available)

Childcare charges

- Childcare provision is available for six hours per day.
- Parents are not obliged to purchase additional hours in order to secure free provision.
- No charge can be made for the Early Years Foundation Stage funded education place of 15 hours per week or the 30 hours for eligible parents/carers, but parents/carers can purchase additional childcare provision where available.

Pricing Structure

- Payment is required on invoice for any hours from parent/carers **not entitled**.
- The entitlement is offered free. Parents will not be charged a "top-up" fee to recoup the difference between the amount received from the Local Authority and the current hourly rate

Session fee - £17.50 per morning or afternoon session and £35.00 per day session.

Additional Hours

The 15 hours additional are only available to eligible parents. In order for parents to access this funding they are required to prove their eligibility themselves by applying using the DfE website (Digital Childcare Service). They will then bring this code, beginning with 5000, into Nursery along with both parents' national insurance numbers and the child's birth certificate to enable to school to confirm eligibility and use the code to access the funding.

You may be entitled to 30 hours free childcare. Click here for more information

Eligibility will be checked by the academy 6 times per year and if a child is no longer eligible for the additional funding the notice period as per the DfE guidance will be applied.

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

EYFS at Magdalen Academy, St Germans Academy and Wimbotsham & Stow Academy

- **Intent:** At our Academies we offer a curriculum rich in wonder and memorable experiences. We work hard to provide a stimulating environment that provides exciting opportunities, promotes challenge, exploration, adventure and a real love of learning.
  It is our intent that all children develop physically, verbally, cognitively and emotionally in an

environment which values all cultures, communities and people. We aim for our children to be confident and independent, to believe in themselves and interact positively with others.
We understand that play is an integral part of learning and this is at the heart of our early years curriculum. We believe that the correct mix of adult-directed and uninterrupted child-initiated play ensures the best outcomes for pupils.
Warm and positive relationships between staff and children, consistent routines and strong relationships with parents are key.
We recognise the crucial role that early year's education has to play in providing firm foundations upon which the rest of a child's education is successfully based.

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- **Implementation:** At our Academies we prioritise creating a 'language rich' environment through the use of songs, nursery rhymes, stories and providing time for quality interactions between adults and between peers. All staff ensure that interactions are positive and progressive, allowing children to flourish
- and become confident communicators. The children are supported to learn to work together, manage their feelings and ask questions through skilled adult facilitated play.
- Children are encouraged to become early readers through enjoyment of books and the systematic teaching of phonics. The children learn through direct teaching and exploration and can apply what they have learnt to real life experiences. Our learning environment is adaptable in order to reflect children's interests and progression both within the classroom and outdoors.
- The curriculum is taught through themes which are enriched with classroom enhancements, trips and visitors. These are supported by quality key texts chosen carefully to encourage children's speech, language and communication development. All planning is flexible and responsive to children's needs so plans can be changed and adapted dependent on children's interests.
We understand the importance of parental engagement and believe that our parents have a crucial role to play in their children's education. We work hard to create strong partnerships between home and school. Parents receive curriculum overviews each half term to inform them of what their child is learning and to explain how they can support this at home. Parents are encouraged to engage in their child's learning and share experiences from home.
Ongoing assessments are used to inform planning and next steps in teaching and learning for all children throughout the year.

- **Impact:** Our curriculum and its delivery ensure that children, from their own starting points make good progress. Children develop their characteristics of learning and are able to apply their knowledge to a range of situations making links and explaining their ideas and understanding. Children are confident to take risks and discuss their learning with peers and adults, drawing on their experiences to improve or adjust what they are doing, enabling them to develop a sense of themselves ready for their next stage of learning.

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.
Staff 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, 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 include these in their practice.

Our staff are ambitious for all children, and plan activities and experiences for the children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests and development of each child in their care, and consider whether the child needs any addition support. They use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience.

Where a child may have a special educational need or disability (SEND), staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

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. Staff 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, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1. We use challenges where the children are taught how to be independent learners and take responsibility for their own learning.
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5. Assessment

At Magdalen, St Germans and Wimbotsham ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their progress, development and interests. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers and keep them up to date with the child's progress and development. Staff will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals.

When a child is **aged between 3 and 4**, staff 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. It also focuses on any areas of possible concern, which may indicate a disability, special educational need or developmental delay. The progress check will describe the activities and strategies that the school intends to adopt to address any issues or concerns, involving parents and/or carers and other professionals as appropriate.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the reception baseline assessment (RBA). [The requirements for the RBA are set out in Annex B of EYFS statutory framework]

In the final term of the academic year in which the child reaches age 5, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child (before 30 June in that term). Each child is assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

We share the EYFS profile the child's year 1 teacher. This helps to inform a discussion between reception and year 1 teachers about the child's stage of development and learning needs, and helps with planning activities in year 1.

The school shares the results of each child's 'progress check' and EYFS profile (but not the reception baseline assessment) with their parents and/or carers.

In exceptional circumstances, after discussion and only in agreement with parents and/or carers, a child might stay in EYFS provision beyond the end of the academic year in which they turn 5. In these exceptional cases, we will continue to assess the child throughout their time in EYFS provision and complete their profile at the end of the year before they move into year 1.

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. We submit EYFS profile data to the local authority on request.

6. Working with parents and carers

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there's a strong partnership between our staff and each child's parents and/or carers.

We keep parents and/or carers up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile help 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 make sure 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 also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

We ask parents/carers to provide more than 2 emergency contact numbers for their child (where possible).

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 on the UET Policy Section of the UET website.
- 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 our safeguarding policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures on the UET Policy Section of the UET website

7.3 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 . If the concern is about the headteacher or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the CEO.

See our whistleblowing policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures and more detail on our procedures for handling whistleblowing on the UET Policy Section of the UET website

7.3.1 Malicious or vexatious allegations

If an allegation is made in good faith, but investigation finds no wrongdoing, there will be no disciplinary action against the member of staff who raised the concern.

If, however, an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, we will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the person making the allegation.

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.

See our child protection and safeguarding policy on the UET Policy Section of the UET website for more information.

8.1 Responding to allegations or concerns

If we have concerns about children's safety or welfare, we will immediately notify our local authority children's social care team, in line with local reporting procedures. In emergencies, we will also inform the police.

If any allegation is made of serious harm or abuse by anyone living, working or looking after children at the premises or elsewhere, e.g. on a visit, we will inform within 14 days of the allegation being made. We will also inform them of any action we have taken in response to the allegation(s).

8.1.1 Investigating the concern

When a concern is received by the headteacher – referred to from here as the 'recipient' – they will:

- Meet with the person raising the concern within a reasonable time. The person raising the concern may be joined by a trade union or professional association representative or other accompanying person
- Get as much detail as possible about the concern at this meeting, and record the information
- Establish whether there is sufficient cause for concern to warrant further investigation. If there **is**, then:
    - Arrange a further investigation into the matter, involving the UET Central Team, CEO, and/or chair of trustees, if appropriate. In some cases, the recipient may need to bring in an external, independent body to investigate. In others, they may need to report the matter to the police
    - Inform the person who raised the concern about how the matter is being investigated and give an estimated timeframe for when they will be informed of the next steps

8.1.2 Outcome of the investigation

Once the investigation – whether this was just the initial investigation of the concern, or whether further investigation was needed – is complete, the investigating person(s) will prepare a report detailing the findings and confirming whether or not any wrongdoing has occurred.

The report will include any recommendations and details on how the matter can be rectified and whether or not a referral is required to an external organisation, such as the local authority in line with local reporting procedure, or police.

They will inform the person who raised the concern of the outcome of the investigation, though certain details may need to be restricted due to confidentiality.

Beyond the immediate actions, the headteacher, governors and other staff, if necessary, will review the relevant policies and procedures to prevent future occurrences of the same wrongdoing.

While we cannot always guarantee the outcome sought, we will try to deal with concerns fairly and in an appropriate way.

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 under 2, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 3 children.
- For children aged 2, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 5 children
- 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
        - For all other classes, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children
        - At least 1 other member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification, or has received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status
    - Where a person with the above qualifications is not working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 8 children
        - At least 1 member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification, or has received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status
        - At least half of all other staff hold an approved level 2 qualification
        - We have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children
        - At least 1 member of staff is a school teacher as defined by section 122 of the Education Act 2002
        - At least 1 other member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification, or has received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status
        - We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils

We run mixed aged preschool and Reception classes. Sometimes we also mix with Year pupils (currently at Magdalen) 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 our attendance policy on the UET Policy Section of the UET website for more on this, including our expectations of parents/carers to report child absences.

8.6 Oral health and tooth brushing

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

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

8.7 Safer eating

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 Annex A of the latest EYFS framework). All children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating, and seated safely in an appropriate chair or highchair and, where possible, in a designated eating space.

Before a child joins our setting, we will get information on their:

- Dietary requirements and preferences
- Food allergies and intolerances
- Health requirements

We will share this information with all staff involved in food preparation and handling. At each mealtime and snack time it will be clear which staff member is responsible for checking that the food meets all the requirements for each child.

We will make sure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis; the differences between allergies and intolerances; and that children can develop allergies at any time, especially during the introduction of solid foods.

We will consult with parents/carers to:

- Create allergy action plans for their child – with the help of health professionals, where appropriate
    - We will also keep this information up to date and share it with all staff
- Discuss their child's progress with solid foods
- Work with them to move on to the next stage at a pace that's right for their child

We will prepare food in a way that:

- Prevents choking
- Meets each child's individual developmental needs
- Is in line with the DfE's Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance

In the event of a choking incident that requires intervention, we will record details of the incident and make the child's parents/carers aware. We will periodically review the records to identify whether we can change anything in our practice to make eating safer, and then take action as appropriate.

8.8 Accident or injury

We keep a first aid box (which contains appropriate items for children) always accessible.

We keep a written record of accident or injuries and any first aid treatment.

We will inform parents or carers the same day as, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, of any:

- Accident or injury sustained by the child
- First aid treatment given

We will notify the relevant authority of any serious accident, illness, or injury to, or death of any child while in our care and inform them of the action taken, as soon as reasonably practicable.

8.9 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 fire safety and hygiene requirements.

8.10 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.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the headteacher annually or in responses to any changes in DfE guidance.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the Trust Board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

This isn't an exhaustive list of policies and only includes policies specific to the EYFS. For a full list of our policies, see the UET Policy Section of the UET website

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
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/carer 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