



Early Years Foundation Stage ('EYFS') - Frequently Asked Questions

What is EYFS?

EYFS, is how the Government, and early years' professionals, describe the time in your child's life between birth and age 5. This is a very important stage in your child's development as it helps your child get ready for school as well as preparing them for their future learning and successes. From when your child is born, up until the age of 5, the child's early years' experience should be happy, active, exciting, fun and secure; and support his/her development, care and learning needs. Nurseries, preschools, reception classes and childminders registered to deliver the EYFS must follow a legal document called the EYFS Framework.

It sets out:

- The legal welfare requirements that everyone registered to look after children must follow to keep your child safe and promote their welfare
- The '7 areas of learning and development' which guide professionals' engagement with your child's play and activities as they learn new skills and knowledge
- Assessments that will tell you about your child's progress through the EYFS
- Expected levels that your child should reach at age 5, usually the end of the reception year; these expectations are called the "Early Learning Goals (ELGs)"

There is also guidance for the professionals supporting your child on planning the learning activities, and observing and assessing what and how your child is learning and developing.

How will my child be learning?

The EYFS Framework explains how and what your child will be learning to support their healthy development. Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through 7 areas of learning and development.

Children should mostly develop the 3 prime areas first. These are:

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

These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, there are a further four prime areas of learning, these will help them to develop skills in 4 specific areas. These are:

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

These 7 areas of learning are used to plan your child's learning and activities.

At the end of the Reception year, pupils are benchmarked against the Early Learning Goals for each area. Attainment is described as either: emerging (working below the expected level) or expected (working at the expected level) and these are reported to parents in the end-of-year written report.

As a parent/ main carer, how can I help my child learn?

All the fun activities that you do with your child at home are important in supporting their learning and development, and have a really long lasting effect on your child's learning as they progress through school.

Even when your child is very young and is not yet able to talk, talking to them helps them to learn and understand new words and ideas. If you make the time every day to do some of the following things with your child it will make a real difference to your child's confidence as a young learner:

- Sing nursery rhymes
- Talk about the numbers, colours, words and letters you see when you are out and about
- Help your child to cut out pictures from magazines; ask your child what they can see in the pictures
- Cook and bake together
- Use the weather – shadows, rain puddles, snow, wind, mist and sun – to extend your child's vocabulary
- Explore the park at different times of the year; talk about the changes they can see
- **Read to them often**; point to each word as you read
- On a trip to the supermarket, talk about all the different shapes and colours of the packaging
- Talk to your child at every opportunity; tell them what you are doing
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School Organisation Questions

Do children in EYFS have formal lessons?

Even though your child will be starting 'big school', they are in fact entering their last year in EYFS and it is therefore a natural progression of their experiences from pre-school.

Children will spend much of their time in self-chosen learning in a wide variety of different areas within the open plan areas. This includes both indoor and outdoor areas. Children will also take part in short lessons covering phonics, maths and writing.

What is the ration of staff to children ?

The legal minimum ratio of staff to children in our Foundation Stage is 1:15. At Carr Lane we employ 2 full time equivalent teachers, 1 nursery nurse and 2 teaching assistants which gives a ratio of 1:12. On top of this, we usually have additional teaching assistant staff to bring the ratio down further.

How are children allocated to classes in their first year?

Children are allocated based on a range of factors including gender, age, pre-existing friendships and individual needs. We cannot guarantee that they will be with a certain friend but will make sure that they have at least one friend in their class wherever possible.

Are twins placed in the same class or in separate classes?

Twins are allocated to separate classes. This allows them their own emotional space to grow and develop as individuals. At the same time, they have 1 ¼ hours at lunch time and a 15-minute break in the afternoon to play together if they wish. Moreover, in EYFS, a large amount of time is also spent in the open plan continuous provision area - so, again, they have many opportunities throughout the day to see each other.

Do children stay with the same class as they progress through school?

Yes. Classes remain together through school. If children have friends in another class, then they have plenty of opportunity to play with them at break time.

Do classes always progress through school on a predetermined path from one teacher to another?

No. The pathway through school is varied. Teachers themselves move year groups as part of their own professional development.

I think my child may have special needs, how can you support them?

We have a full-time SENDCo who will work with parents, following the SEND Code of Practice, where there are concerns that a child is not making sufficient progress.

Do children have a staggered start at the beginning of the year?

On the first day of term in September, children are allocated to attend either for the morning or the afternoon session. This allows staff to give them extra high levels of attention. From the second day onwards, all children stay for the full day.

What are the times of the school day in EYFS?

8.40-8.50am	Class doors open for staggered arrival
8.50am	Doors closed and children must arrive via front office and will be marked as late
11.55-12.10pm	Lunch time
3.30pm	End of school day

Who can pick up my child from school?

Only parents themselves or other adults for whom you have given us permission may collect your child from school.

No-one under 16 is permitted to collect children from EYFS, Year 1 or Year 2.

Want to find out more?

If you are thinking of joining our school, then please call the school office who will be happy to answer any further questions you may have.

We also arrange a meeting at the end of the Autumn term for parents and carers considering applying for a place at our school the following September.