



STRIVE - THRIVE - ACHIEVE

EYFS (Blended Curriculum)

Approved by:	Management Committee	Date: June 2026
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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
- 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 \(EYFS\)](#) for 2024.

3. Curriculum

We follow the **Cherry Garden curriculum**, a developmental framework that supports children working outside age-related expectations. Each child has their own learning journal on **Tapestry**, where we record progress, celebrate achievements, and plan next steps.

We assess and plan across **six key areas of learning**:

- **Communication, Language and Literacy**
- **Physical Development**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

Our teaching is also guided by the SCERTS framework (Social Communication, Emotional Regulation and Transactional Support). SCERTS helps us understand how each child communicates, how they regulate their emotions, and what supports they need to feel calm, connected and ready to learn. This approach is woven into everything we do—from how we plan our classroom, to the way we interact and respond to children moment by moment.

Learning in Robin Class is play-based, purposeful, and led by each child's interests. We offer open-ended, accessible resources both indoors and outdoors, encouraging exploration, creativity and independence. Children are free to move, combine and experiment with materials in their own way, supported by adults who model language, scaffold learning and extend play when appropriate.

Play is central to our curriculum—it helps children build relationships, express themselves, and understand the world around them. We run carefully planned interventions throughout the day to support communication and interaction, build engagement, and foster emotional wellbeing in ways that feel natural, fun and meaningful.

At the heart of our provision is the belief that **every child deserves to feel safe, heard and valued**. By combining the Cherry Garden and SCERTS frameworks, we create a nurturing environment where children can flourish, grow in confidence, and develop the skills they need for life.

3.1 Planning

Curriculum planning is closely aligned with each child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). EHCP outcomes are broken down into short-term targets that are embedded within daily routines, play opportunities, and adult-led sessions. Rather than being taught in isolation, these outcomes are integrated into the child's everyday experiences in ways that are meaningful, motivating, and developmentally appropriate.

Planning is further informed by advice and strategies from a range of professionals, including Speech and Language Therapists (SALT), Occupational Therapists (OT), and CAMHS practitioners. Staff implement these recommendations consistently—for example, using alternative communication systems, sensory regulation supports, or structured interaction approaches. This ensures that our provision is highly individualised and therapeutic, supporting each child's progress across all areas of learning and development.

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We use a blended curriculum which allows our pupils to access the national curriculum in areas they are able to do so. We also use the Cherry Garden framework to inform planning for the **six key areas of learning** and use this in the areas that pupils are working below Year 1.

Our planning is dynamic and adaptable, tailored to the interests and needs of the pupils while also ensuring that it is effectively sequenced and allows them to develop key skills.

At Danesgate, our Early Years learners often arrive with high levels of anxiety, disrupted early experiences, and significant barriers to engagement. Many present with demand avoidant profiles, trauma histories, or attachment difficulties. Our EYFS provision is designed to be low-demand, responsive, and rooted in co-regulation. We embed SCERTS goals into our environment and interactions, with a strong focus on emotional safety and relational connection. Planning and assessment are shaped by each child's EHCP and multidisciplinary input, with learning pathways that are highly individualised, flexible, and therapeutic in nature.

3.2 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 the children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help the children prepare for more formal learning, ready to access more elements of the National Curriculum.

4. Assessment

At Danesgate, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

In our EYFS provision, many children are not able to demonstrate their skills consistently or on demand. As such, our assessment approach places a strong emphasis on **qualitative tracking**—including detailed observations of engagement, co-regulation, and spontaneous communication. Staff capture progress through careful, moment-by-moment observation, noting how children apply their skills in real-life contexts over time.

We use both the **Cherry Garden “branch mapping” tool** and the **SCERTS framework** diagnostically, helping us to understand where each child is developmentally and what kind of support will help them move forward. For example, we track shifts in a child’s ability to co-regulate with an adult or initiate interaction using their preferred communication method.

All observations are recorded on **Tapestry**, where they form each child’s individual learning journal. This platform allows us to celebrate achievements, share progress with families, and inform future planning. Tapestry entries provide a rich picture of each child’s learning journey and include not only academic milestones but also the small, significant steps that show development in communication, regulation, and engagement.

At the end of each term, pupils are assessed against the 6 key areas of learning, according to the Cherry Garden curriculum.

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The school shares the results of each child’s assessment with their parents and/or carers.

5. Working with parents and carers

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there’s a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. Therefore, we maintain strong relationships with families and share information frequently. We provide parents and/or carers with access to tapestry, an app which allows adults to keep up to date with their child’s progress, including pictures and messages. This is how we keep parents up to date with their child’s progress and development. This 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 also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

6. 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 are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

When recruiting staff, we will follow the procedures set out in the framework guidance on checking the suitability of new recruits (these procedures are also set out in our safeguarding policy) and recording information about staff qualifications and identity checks, vetting processes and references.

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.

We also have a designated lead practitioner who is responsible for safeguarding children. They are also responsible for:

- Liaising with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSP (local safeguarding partners)
- Providing support, advice and guidance to any other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required
- Attending a child protection training course that enables them to identify, understand and respond appropriately to signs of possible abuse and neglect

All practitioners are alert to any issues of concern in children's life at home or elsewhere.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by iDominic Horsley, Assistant Headteacher, every year.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.