Policy Name	Early Years Policy				
Effective Date	February 2021	**Date of last revision**	September 2026	**Version No.**	2.2
Author	Head of School				

Version History				
Version	**Approved by**	**Revision Date**	**Details of Changes**	**Author**
1.1		**19/9/23**	**Update to references and statutory documents (2023)**	**JK**
1.2		**16/1/24**	**Update of guidance on mobile phones to include all electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities**	**JK**
2.1		**23/09/24**	**Updated to "ICS London" throughout policy**	**SJ**
		23/09/24	**Page 3** **Update to KCSIE 2024** **Working together to safeguard children Feb 2024** **Prevent Duty Guidance 2023**	**SJ**
		29/09/24	**Page 6** **Toddle now used for student portfolios**	**SJ**
		23/09/24	**Page 7** **Outdoor Learning Location changed**	**SJ**
		23/09/24	**Page 8**	**SJ**

			DSL is "Primary Principal"	
		29/09/24	**Page 10** **Parents send in a second set of uniform in case of accidents**	
2.2		**16/09/25**	**Page 3** **Updated EYFS Profile Handbook to 2025 guidance** **Updated Reception Baseline Assessment to 2025 Guidance**	
			Page 5+6 **Update to include use of Toddle for communication of classroom activities / student portfolios** **Remove SeeSaw use**	
		Sep 2025	**Page 7** **Removed reference to 17 Early Learning Goals (ICS London is exempt from this)** **Added Toddle Portfolio to tracking.**	
			Page 8 **Remove reference to use of Paddington St Gardens and Seymour Centre Gym** **Remove "Stay + Play" events**	
			Page 9 **Add section about taking photos and sending through "ChatPro"**	
			Page 12	

			Updated Reference pages to include 2025 guidance	

Policy Statement

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at ICS London applies to all students in Nursery / Reception class. At ICS London, students are admitted to Nursery following their third birthday. Teaching and learning within the EYFS takes place within an International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP) framework. This means that we use the areas of learning and development from the EYFS to frame learning within an inquiry - based programme.

At ICS London we recognise the importance of early childhood in laying the foundations for the rest of each child's life.

Scope

At ICS London the set of beliefs that underpin early childhood and the Early Years Foundation Stage are based around the overriding guiding principles set out in the EYFS framework (update 2026):

- A Unique Child - ICS London aims to develop each child's independence within a positive, secure and friendly atmosphere. We work to ensure that children understand their achievements in order to develop the confidence to achieve their next goals.
- Positive Relationships - ICS London supports children in building relationships through the development of social skills, such as working together and sharing, and promoting positive attitudes.
- Enabling Environments - ICS London provides learners with new and exciting experiences to provoke learning and allow students to reach their potential.
- Learning and Development - ICS London sets high expectations for learners socially, physically, intellectually, emotionally. Learning is structured to provide opportunities for growth and to support each student in taking their next steps.

At ICS London, the mandatory EYFS framework (amended for September 2026) applies to Nursery and Reception. The safeguarding and welfare requirements are

given legal force by Regulations made under Section 39(1)(b) of the Childcare Act 2006.

Whilst ICS London is exempted from the learning and development aspects of the 2026 EYFS they are used as a guide by the school to help ensure that children learn and develop as well as possible. The safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS still apply. We aim to give a broad range of knowledge and skills to provide the right foundation for children's future progress through school and life.

All ICS London policies provide for, where relevant, our EYFS children. Where appropriate, this is specifically mentioned within those policies

As an IB World School, we aim to provide an inclusive learning environment fostering intercultural and international mindedness, multilingualism, inclusivity and global engagement.

The following policies should be read in conjunction with this document:

- Whole School Policy for Safeguarding including Child Protection
- Primary Language Policy
- Primary Assessment Policy

Statutory Guidance

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (2026)
Early Years Foundation Stage Profile 2025 Handbook (2025)
Reception baseline assessment: assessment and reporting arrangements (2025)
Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (September 2026)
Working together to Safeguard Children (February 2024)
Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2023)
Young Person's Safety Act (1995)
Management of Health and Safety Regulations (2006)
Health and Safety Advice for Schools, DfE (2018)

Key People

ICS London has one Nursery / Reception classroom. Each child in the Nursery / Reception class is under the care of their key people, who are jointly the Class Teacher(s) and the Learning Support Assistant (LSA) or Teaching Assistant (TA).

The two full time members of staff share information and work together to monitor the children's progress in the Nursery Reception classroom. The class teacher makes the final judgments about each child's learning and is responsible for all planning and procedures in the classroom. The classroom teacher and LSA/TA work in collaboration with the school's PYP Coordinator to ensure

compliance of EYFS regulations and teaching and learning is conducted in-line with the PYP, EYFS, and current, evidence-based best practices. The key people:

- help ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet his/her individual needs and help the child become familiar with the school setting
- seek to engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home
- help families to engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

All adults within the Early Years actively seek to form positive, respectful relationships with the children in their care and are responsive to their needs. The formation of healthy relationships between adults and children is essential in supporting the child's wellbeing. On the rare occasions when key people are absent from the class, the aim is to be consistent in who covers these absences. We provide learning support and emotional support for children.

Staff Ratios

ICS London staff ratios are compliant with the EYFS framework (2026) for students in the Nursery Reception class. There is an early childhood teacher for every 13 children with qualified teacher status and another member of staff with a full and relevant level 3 qualification. Or in the case of a class where the majority of the students will reach the age of 5 in the academic year, there is at least one member of staff who is a fully qualified teacher for every 30 students.

Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Learning is arranged through units of inquiry (incorporating more than one subject discipline) and standalone subject learning. The prime and specific areas of learning are taken from the EYFS, preparing students for the early learning goals.

The prime areas of learning in the EYFS are:

- Communication and Language: Listening and Attention; Understanding and Speaking;
- Physical Development: Moving and Handling; Health and Self Care;
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Making relationships, Managing feelings and behaviour and Self-confidence and Self-awareness

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. The specific areas are:

- Literacy: Reading and Writing
- Mathematics: Numbers and Space, Shape and Measures

- Understanding the World: People and Communities, The World and Technology
- Expressive Arts and Design: Exploring and Using Media and Materials and Being Imaginative

Learning for the students is recorded in the Early Years Profile in the form of the school report. The profile records the pupil's attainment in relation to the 17 early learning goals (ELG) descriptors.

The profile is completed by the final term of the year in which a pupil reaches age 5 (EYFS Profile Handbook, 2025).

The Learner Profile and the 3Rs

A positive culture in early childhood sets a secure foundation for learners. At ICS London, students are encouraged to develop the IB Learner Profile attributes and to become thinkers, communicators, reflective, risk takers, balanced, caring, principled, knowledgeable, inquirers and open- minded individuals. These attributes are applied to all aspects of school life and help foster a culture of intercultural awareness, international mindedness and what it means to be a self-confident, empathic and effective learner.

The children are recognised for exhibiting these traits through acknowledgement of their respect for others, respect for themselves and respect for the environment. This forms the positive behaviour strategy that promotes wellbeing and development across the school – the 3Rs.

Sometimes children are prompted to reflect on their behaviour in accordance with the Primary Social, Emotional, Behaviour Policy. The reflection prompts are visual and engage children in a developmentally appropriate process of thinking about behaviour choices. They prompt learners to reflect on the choices made and the impact on others, themselves or the environment. They also prompt learners to take positive action based on what they have learned from the experience.

The Early Childhood Classroom

At ICS London, learning in early childhood takes into account the interests, needs and stage of development of each child. Play-based learning is planned and purposeful, and opportunities are given for students to select activities. There are opportunities for children who are emergent bilingual to use their home languages.

Activities provide a balance of child initiated and adult-led activities, with the balance adjusting as students prepare for entry into Year 1. Unit Overviews are

sent out to parents at the beginning of each unit of inquiry, and information regarding learning undertaken by students is communicated via our online platform, Toddle - including class activities and individual student portfolios.

Class teachers are responsible for writing lesson plans and units of inquiry using input from support staff, whenever possible.

The three characteristics of effective learning in Nursery Reception are:

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements;
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Assessment

Class teachers make regular observations to gauge the progress each child is making. They observe the child's interests and their approaches to learning. Assessment helps staff tailor learning engagements to the students' needs. Records of assessment are maintained.

Student portfolios are collections of work that indicate student achievement within all areas of the curriculum. They form an important basis for measuring progress matched to their developmental goals. Teachers use the Toddle application to record student portfolios and communicate learning with parents.

Data is collated from lesson observations and student assessments, and progress is tracked, using individual and class portfolios on the Toddle Platform. Moderation using exemplification materials, internal moderation across the Early Years team and PYP 1 teachers and moderation using work from other schools enables the teaching staff to make informed judgments of development and next steps. In the Early Years, the teaching staff maintains a moderation folder to ensure that standards are clear and assessments are accurate. Progress data is shared with the Primary Principal to ensure students are making adequate progress and that their needs are supported.

Visits and Visitors

At ICS London we recognise the importance of visits and visitors so that children are exposed to experiences that will engage and stimulate their imagination. Visits and visitors are linked to the learning goals and units of inquiry.

Visits and school visitors are managed according to our Trips and Visitors Policy and Procedures. Risk Assessments are completed to assess the specific risks for

our EYFS students. Reasonably proportionate control measures are put in place that include details about staff to student ratios, medical needs, SEN of students, safeguarding, dietary requirements, on-site hazards, travelling and other areas specific to the trip or visitor.

Outdoor Learning

Children spend time outside on a daily basis either in the park or courtyard. Parents provide clothes for wet days and cold days so that children can go outside and experience outdoor learning and physical activity.

Every Friday children take part in an afternoon of outdoor learning activities led by teachers at one of the many local parks around London (including Hampstead Heath, Paddington Recreation Ground or Regents Park).

Classroom Environment

Early Years classrooms at ICS London are designed to provide learning across the seven areas of the EYFS Framework and that children experience a balance of activities across the school day. The environment includes an annexed space, role-play area and areas for small world/ construction, creativity, a carpeted area, a book corner and area for mathematics.

Resources are labelled and spaces are designed to reflect the needs of the activity and curriculum areas. For example, a book corner is in a quieter area.

Early Years classrooms recognise the need to develop children's self-esteem and independence. To this end, each child has a peg where they hang their coat and bag.

Partnerships with Parents and Carers

At ICS London, we believe that parents are partners in the child's learning journey. We encourage parents and carers to speak to staff about their child regularly. We welcome parents into the classroom at the start of each school day to drop off their child.

We provide parents with information at the start of the school year to explain aspects of the curriculum such as assessment, literacy and play based learning. We host student-led conferences where parents come into the class and the children participate in various activities and show products they have made and demonstrate their learning.

Many parents prefer for their child to stay for half a day in the first few weeks of school while they get more used to their surroundings and the new people in their life. We host a settling-in conference early in the first term where parents can discuss with the teacher how their child is settling into school and share any information about their child that may be deemed useful to the child's learning.
ICS London welcomes parents into the classroom to read books and share aspects of their culture across the year.

Safeguarding including Health and Safety

The active promotion of the welfare of all students and their protection from harm is a priority for all staff, as children in early childhood are vulnerable. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the EYFS Statutory Framework (2026) and our school Safeguarding Policy and Health and Safety Policy is applied to early childhood.

We recognise the need to ensure a safe environment and a culture of vigilance at all times. Students in early childhood follow whole school procedures for child protection (see Whole School Safeguarding Policy). The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the Primary Principal and all concerns are discussed with them.

School staff and volunteers are vetted and trained in safeguarding enabling them to recognise the signs of abuse and their responsibilities in school systems for swift reporting, whenever there is a concern. This includes the procedures for reporting a colleague.

Staff are trained and mentored in assessing risks and reinforcing a culture of emotional security and wellbeing. Students are taught who to talk to if there is a problem.

Children in the EYFS are subject to the following policies affecting the promotion of their wellbeing and their protection from harm: Online Safety Policy; First Aid Policy; Primary Behaviour Policy; Attendance Policy; Safer Recruitment Policy; Intimate Care Policy; Whole School Safeguarding policy.

Facilities

The facilities used by children are regularly checked to ensure they are safe and there are systems in place for reporting maintenance problems swiftly. All outdoor equipment is checked daily and fire alarms checks are held regularly in line with whole school policy.

Electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities of Staff and Visitors

It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones or electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets, unless sending directly through "ChatPro", which does not store images onto a device once sent. All electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities must be locked with a password.

Staff may use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children's portfolios, in class displays and on the school website.

All parents are asked to state whether they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

Visitors (volunteers, parents, carers, contractors) may not use electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities in the EYFS setting. If parents have children in the setting they may take pictures of their child(ren) and/or their work only. Any photographs or images that include other children must be deleted.

Other than in a medical emergency, staff, students and visitors are not permitted to use mobile phones or any electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities in areas where students are changing.

The safety and privacy of children is paramount. The use of mobile phones and other personal electronic devices with imaging, recording or sharing capabilities must be carefully managed within the Early Years setting.

Staff must **not use personal mobile phones or other personal electronic devices with imaging, recording or sharing capabilities in areas where children are present**. Personal devices must not be used to take, store, transmit or share photographs, videos or other recordings of children. Staff must not use personal devices to access or share images of children, except where specifically authorised by the school in accordance with its safeguarding and data protection procedures.

Where communication with colleagues is required, staff should use the school's approved communication systems, such as **ChatPro**, in accordance with school procedures. Personal devices must be kept securely away from children and must be password protected.

School-owned devices, such as school iPads, may be used by authorised staff to take photographs or recordings for legitimate educational purposes, including supporting the observation and assessment cycle in the EYFS. Any use of images must be proportionate, appropriate and in accordance with the school's

safeguarding, data protection and image-use procedures. Images must only be stored, accessed and shared using school-approved systems and must not be transferred to personal devices or personal accounts.

Photographs and other images may be used for appropriate educational purposes, including children's learning portfolios, displays and, where specific parental/carer consent has been provided, the school website or other approved school communications. Parents/carers are informed about the school's use of children's images as part of the admissions process and are given the opportunity to provide or withhold consent where required.

Visitors, including volunteers, parents, carers and contractors, must not use personal mobile phones, cameras or other electronic devices with imaging, recording or sharing capabilities within the EYFS setting. Where a parent/carer is attending an event where photography is specifically permitted by the school, they may only photograph their own child and must follow the instructions provided by the school. They must not photograph or record other children, staff or visitors without appropriate permission. Any image inadvertently captured that includes another child must not be shared and must be deleted immediately.

The school may restrict or prohibit photography and recording at particular events or activities where this is necessary to safeguard children's privacy and wellbeing.

Mobile phones and other personal electronic devices must **not be used in areas where children may be changing, toileting or otherwise requiring privacy**. This applies to staff, students, volunteers and visitors. The only exception is where use is necessary to respond to a genuine emergency and this can be done safely and appropriately.

Any concern regarding the inappropriate use of a mobile phone, camera or other electronic device must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or another member of the school's safeguarding team.

Healthy Diet

We are a healthy school and our children receive healthy snacks to share; these might be breadsticks or rice cakes and we also ask parents to provide other snacks such as grapes or a pineapple. Our staff model good eating habits when eating alongside the children.

Accidents and Incidents

ICS London has a trained Paediatric First Aid staff on the premises at all times during the day and on school trips. We take all accidents seriously and always log and phone home immediately if a child bumps their head.

We acknowledge that young children often have 'accidents' (i.e. wet themselves) and have stocks of spare clothes - we also ask parents to send in 1-2 sets of uniform with their child. When appropriate, we will change a child using the procedures stated in our Intimate Care Policy. We ask parents to help keep our stocks of clothes high by returning anything their child has borrowed. Whenever a staff member helps change a child another adult should be present, an incident form filled out, and parents notified.

Administration of Medication

The school's First Aid Policy outlines the procedures for administering medicines. It includes systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medicines and for keeping this information up-to-date. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge.

Medicine (both prescription and non-prescription) is only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer. A written record is kept of each time a medicine is administered to a child and the child's parents and/or carers are informed on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Prescription medicines are only administered if they have been prescribed for a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist (medicines containing aspirin are only given if prescribed by a doctor).

Prevent Duty

Staff working with young children understand their duty for due regard to preventing children being drawn into terrorism. We recognise the unique position that early childhood practitioners are in, given the frequent interaction with parents and we are trained to recognise the signs that a child may be vulnerable to extremist positions and the process for reporting any concerns swiftly .

We actively uphold and promote the values of democracy, mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs, individual liberty and the rule of law in developmentally appropriate ways through play and exploration, active learning and creative and critical thinking. Students get to make decisions, vote and learn about the beliefs and values of different people in a culture of inclusion and respect.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of those working in Nursery and Reception to adhere to the principles of this policy. The Primary Principal leads the monitoring of learning and safeguarding in early childhood as part of the whole school Professional Growth Plan and Whole School Monitoring System.

Transition

At the end of Reception, we recognise that there can be another significant jump as students move into PYP 1. Transition procedures at this time include building familiarisation across the school and the sharing of important information.

Work throughout the year and at the end of the EYFS prepares students for PYP 1 with students experiencing more formalised instruction and increasing teacher-led activities.

- Children attend Learning Celebration Assemblies with PYP 1- 3, regularly.
- Joint playtimes enable students from NR to play with those from PYP 1 and PYP 2.
- Continuation of play-based learning, role play, child initiated play, as part of PYP 1.
- The transition of the EYFS Profile and the NR trackers are passed onto the PYP 1 teacher in the summer term. Literacy and Mathematics data are also shared.
- Opportunities to engage in activities with PYP 1 students, such as literacy and mathematics lessons through the year during collaboration time.

References

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (2026)
Early Years Foundation Stage Profile 2025 Handbook (2025)

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (September 2026)

Framework for the inspection of association independent schools, including residential (boarding) schools and registered early years settings (2023)

Reception baseline assessment: assessment and reporting arrangements (2023)