



## **AYSGARTH SCHOOL**

### **EYFS Policy**

**Reviewed: September 2026**  
**Member of Staff responsible for this policy: Anna Brown**  
**To be reviewed September 2027**

## Introduction

*‘All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.’*

*(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage: For Group and School-Based Providers, Department for Education, effective from 1 September 2026. para. 1 )*

## Overarching Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- Every child is **a unique child** who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

## Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates.

At Aysgarth, we recognise the critical role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in establishing a robust foundation for children’s future learning and holistic development. The provision is carefully designed to foster a lifelong love of learning, nurture curiosity, and cultivate strong interpersonal skills, alongside promoting physical well-being and emotional resilience.

## Our Aims and Values

At Aysgarth, we are committed to ensuring that every pupil has the right to grow up in a safe and nurturing environment where they can thrive, enjoy and achieve, develop confidence and resilience, and become respectful, courageous and independent learners who are prepared to flourish throughout their lives.

## Our Aims

At Aysgarth, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is designed to provide a safe, stimulating, and nurturing environment where every pupil is valued as an individual. Our provision is responsive to the unique needs of each child, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, ensuring that all children are included and supported to thrive.

We deliver a high-quality EYFS curriculum that lays firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 (Pre-Prep) and beyond. By recognising and building on each pupil’s strengths, we assess individual needs and provide tailored support to promote progression, achievement, and a lifelong love of learning. Our approach encourages choice, decision-making, independence, and self-confidence, enabling children to develop as capable, curious, and resilient learners.

Partnership with parents and carers is central to our ethos, and we value their contributions to ensure every pupil is supported, respected, and included, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender, or ability. Pupils are offered a broad and balanced programme of learning and development that is both challenging and enjoyable, fostering holistic growth and enabling them to experience success in a variety of ways.

In summary, our mission is to nurture each child’s potential and build the skills, attitudes, and values that underpin confident, compassionate, and well-rounded young children. Aysgarth is a safe, engaging, and supportive environment where pupils learn that learning is exciting, behaviour matters, and respect and responsibility are essential within a community. We aim to instil self-esteem, ambition, and resilience so that every pupil transitions fully prepared to embrace the next stage of their education with confidence, enthusiasm, and purpose.

## Our School Values

At Aysgarth, the Core Values of Respect, Courage and Endeavour guide the way pupils learn, interact, and grow. Through the EYFS, pupils are supported to embody these values in their daily experiences, developing empathy, resilience, independent thinking, and a spirit of exploration that shapes them as confident, considerate, and capable learners.

## **Our Early Years Setting**

Aysgarth caters for children aged 3 to 13, and all children entering the Early Years setting, whether in Nursery or Reception, are fully part of the school community. The Early Years setting is recognised as an integral element of the school's provision, enabling children to benefit from whole-school resources, including the dining room, sports hall, swimming pool, and Chapel and to be taught by specialist staff in PE, swimming, ballet, music, and French. Each of these areas is considered of equal importance and interdependent in fostering the development of a well-rounded child. Preparation and development across all areas of learning are delivered through planned, purposeful activities, with a carefully balanced combination of adult-led and child-initiated experiences.

## **Admission to our EYFS**

Our Early Years setting consists of one Early Years class for Nursery (Pre-School) and Reception children. Children can start in Early Years when they have reached the age of three. Children enter Reception when they have reached the age of four by the start of the academic year. Every pupil applying to join the school must meet the Headmaster before we offer them a place. Admission to Aysgarth is at the discretion of the Headmaster.

Nursery provides an early years programme designed to prepare children for a smooth transition to Reception. Attendance is expected in line with the minimum sessions outlined for each child, ensuring continuity of learning and engagement with the curriculum. Additional sessions may be offered and are welcomed where parents wish to increase their child's attendance.

The School's Admissions Policy is published on the website and provides detailed guidance for parents. Registration for consideration in Nursery and Reception classes is completed via a registration form, accompanied by a non-refundable fee for Reception applicants and supporting documentation, including a copy of the child's birth certificate and passport. Following registration, children are invited to a Pre-Start meeting with the Head of Early Years and then a Stay and Play session, and parents are invited to meet with the Headmaster to discuss their child and the School's provision.

The School obtains and maintains up-to-date contact information for parents/carers and, where possible, holds more than two emergency contact numbers for each EYFS pupil.

## **The Entry Procedure for Pre-Prep**

The usual entry point into the Pre-Prep School is Nursery, the term after they turn 3 years old. We admit pupils into any year group where spaces are available.

## **Registration**

Following an enquiry to the school (email, telephone or through the completion of the online form), parents are sent a registration pack. On receipt of the completed form and non-refundable registration fee of £100, the child is registered. Children entering Nursery or Reception are not assessed academically before entry, but we will ask for reports or learning journeys from previous schools and settings. We may also telephone the previous setting if we feel further details are necessary. We may take references from previous schools or settings.

## **Open Morning or Visit**

We believe that attending an Open Morning is invaluable and enables parents to get a 'flavour' of the school. We have three per year (one every term) and encourage all families to attend. Our Open events include a tour of the Prep School, and you will be given the opportunity to meet the Headmaster, Jonathon Anderson, his wife, Hester and other key members of staff.

Open events or subsequent visits are also part of the Admissions/Enrolment process. A meeting with the Headmaster is mandatory.

## **Consideration for EYFS allocation**

Whilst we will make every effort to meet your requirements, it may not always be possible to do so, due to the limited number of places and sessions. There are a limited number of places which are eligible for Early Years Funding. Where places are limited, consideration is given to the following:-

Children who:-

- are moving up into Reception and continuing through the Pre-Prep at Aysgarth (nursery only)
- have a sibling already attending the school
- are registered to attend the Prep School
- are in the older nursery cohort (nursery only)
- are attending for full days, rather than single sessions (nursery only)
- are attending for a greater number of sessions (nursery only)

## **Formal Offer**

Following a successful visit and the completion of the registration paperwork, the Headmaster will make a formal offer. Parents will be asked to complete the Acceptance Form and pay a deposit of £1,000 to secure the place. This deposit is held against the final term's fees. The Acceptance Form must be signed by all individuals with parental responsibility and requires them to read and agree to the School's Terms & Conditions.

Places are allocated in order of registration, and admission to the school is at the Headmaster's discretion.

We reserve the right to refuse a place where references are unfavourable or there is an outstanding debt with another provider.

Once a place is offered, EYFS and Nursery starters will have a pre-start meeting with the Head of Early Years and see their classroom after hours when it is quiet. They will then follow a settling-in process with stay-and-play sessions and gradually build up their hours.

During any discussion from early enquiry to enrolment, we would encourage parents to choose a minimum of 4 sessions spread throughout the week to build a routine and establish familiarity. We encourage parents to build up sessions in preparation for the step up to full-time education in reception.

## **Learning and Development**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework identifies seven areas of learning and development, all of which are interconnected and equally important. These areas provide a foundation for children's curiosity, enthusiasm for learning, social relationships, and overall well-being. Learning and development are organised into three Prime Areas and four Specific Areas:

### **Prime Areas of Learning**

#### **1. Communication and Language**

The development of spoken language underpins all areas of learning. Children's speaking and listening skills are fostered through rich, meaningful interactions with adults and peers, as well as exposure to a language-rich environment. This includes reading regularly, engaging with stories, rhymes, poems, and non-fiction, and providing opportunities to embed new vocabulary. Language development is further enhanced through role-play, storytelling, idea sharing, and modelling by teachers, enabling children to communicate confidently and articulately in a variety of contexts.

#### **2. Physical Development**

Physical development is vital for all-around growth. Children are provided with a range of activities to develop both gross and fine motor skills, indoors and outdoors. Opportunities include games, play-based learning, and structured activities that enhance core strength, balance, coordination, spatial awareness, agility, and hand-eye coordination.

#### **3. Personal, Social, and Emotional Development**

Children are supported to develop a positive sense of self and others, alongside the social skills needed to thrive in a community. Emotional well-being is prioritised, helping children to recognise their abilities, manage their feelings, and develop a positive disposition toward learning. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their bodies, understand healthy choices, and manage personal needs independently.

### **Specific Areas of Learning**

#### **4. Literacy**

Literacy encompasses word reading, comprehension, and writing. Children are supported in developing phonics skills, enabling them to decode words, read with understanding, and engage with texts. Writing development focuses on spelling, handwriting, and composition, with children encouraged to articulate ideas verbally before recording them in written form. Comprehension skills are enhanced through questioning, discussion, story retelling, and exploring new vocabulary.

#### **5. Mathematics**

Children develop a strong understanding of number, including counting, cardinality, subitising, composition and the relationships between numbers. They develop spatial reasoning, explore shape and pattern, and use mathematical knowledge to solve problems in meaningful contexts.

#### **6. Understanding the World**

Children are supported in developing knowledge, skills, and understanding of the world around them. Experiences include encounters with plants, animals, objects, and people in real-life contexts, practical experiments, and work with diverse materials. Children learn to appreciate cultural, social, technological, and ecological diversity while expanding their vocabulary and understanding of their environment.

## 7. Expressive Arts and Design

Creativity is nurtured through exploration and play. Children are encouraged to express their ideas, thoughts, and feelings through a wide range of media, including art, music, movement, imaginative and role-play activities, design and technology, and multimedia.

## Teaching and Learning

Effective teaching and learning are characterised by:

- **Playing and Exploring:** Children investigate, experiment, and ‘have a go’.
- **Active Learning:** Children concentrate, persevere through challenges, and celebrate achievements.
- **Creating and Thinking Critically:** Children generate ideas, make connections, and develop strategies for problem-solving.
- 

## The Unique Child

Every pupil is recognised as a competent learner, capable of resilience, confidence, and self-assurance. Praise and encouragement are central to fostering confidence and a love of learning. Early Years staff plan and guide learning in response to the individual development of each child, adapting provision to meet learning needs and developmental rates.

Further information about the EYFS Statutory Framework is available on the Department for Education website.

## Learning Through Play

*‘Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play and by taking part in play and learning that is guided by adults.’*

*Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education, (September 2026)*

In the Early Years setting, learning across all areas of the curriculum is supported through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-guided and child-initiated experiences. Play provides pupils with opportunities to explore, investigate and develop experiences that help them make sense of the world around them. Through play, children practise and develop ideas, learn to regulate their emotions and behaviour, and begin to understand the importance of boundaries and rules. They engage in creative thinking, both collaboratively and independently, communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems, and take part in a range of group and individual experiences. Learning takes place through active engagement with a wide range of resources, experiences and environments, fostering curiosity, resilience, independence and a love of learning.

## Enabling Environments

The learning environment plays a central role in supporting pupils’ development, wellbeing and learning. The Early Years provision is safe, secure and thoughtfully designed to provide children with rich and stimulating experiences, both indoors and outdoors. Learning spaces are carefully planned and regularly adapted to reflect children’s interests, developmental needs and emerging lines of enquiry. A wide range of accessible resources and open-ended experiences enables children to explore, investigate, create, problem-solve and extend their learning through play. The environment promotes curiosity, independence, collaboration and a sense of belonging, while providing opportunities for children to revisit, practise and deepen their learning.

## Children's Screen Use

The School has regard to the Department for Education's *Screen use guidance for early years settings*. Digital technology is used purposefully and appropriately to support children's learning, development and communication. Screen use is carefully considered and balanced with opportunities for active play, physical activity, social interaction, exploration and direct, hands-on experiences. Staff ensure that screen use is age-appropriate, purposeful and supports children’s wellbeing and development, in line with the DfE guidance.

## Key Person and Positive Relationships

Each child is assigned a designated Key Person. At Aysgarth, the class teacher acts as the Key Person for children in the EYFS class, supported by the Early Years team.

### The Key Person aims to:

- Ensure that each child's care is tailored to their individual needs.
- Support the child in becoming familiar and comfortable with the setting.
- Provide a consistent and settled relationship for the child.
- Builds strong partnerships with parents and carers.
- Facilitates access to specialist support for families when appropriate.

Nursery and Reception are overseen, led and run by the Head of EYFS and supported day-to-day by an HLTA and Early Years teaching assistant.

## Staff supervision

EYFS staff receive regular supervision which provides support, professional reflection, coaching and development, and promotes the best interests, safety and wellbeing of children. Formal supervision takes place at least termly, with additional supervision, support and guidance provided as required according to individual, team or setting needs.

Supervision promotes a culture that fosters a culture of mutual support, teamwork, professional curiosity and continuous improvement. It provides a confidential and appropriate opportunity for staff to reflect on their practice, discuss children's development, learning and wellbeing, and raise any concerns or issues relating to safeguarding, behaviour, inclusion or professional practice.

Staff are encouraged to seek guidance or raise concerns at any time between formal supervision meetings. Supervision does not replace the responsibility of all staff to report safeguarding concerns promptly in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

## Planning, Recording, Assessment and Reporting

### Planning

Effective planning is central to ensuring that pupils' learning is engaging, purposeful and progressive, building on their prior knowledge, experiences and individual development. Planning sets out how the curriculum is translated into practice and is informed by careful observation, assessment and meaningful interactions with children. It supports all areas of learning and development while taking account of children's individual interests, needs, strengths and stages of development.

Our curriculum is **responsive and flexible**, rather than organised around fixed topics or themes. Learning opportunities are developed from the **seasons, children's interests, significant events and the experiences of the children within the setting**. This approach enables children to make meaningful connections with their immediate environment and experiences, while allowing staff to follow children's curiosity and respond to emerging interests.

Seasonal change provides a natural rhythm to the curriculum and creates rich opportunities for children to explore, observe, investigate and develop their understanding of the world around them. Children's interests and fascinations are used to deepen learning and provide meaningful contexts through which key knowledge, skills and vocabulary can be developed.

Planning is **not intended to prescribe children's learning or limit their play**. Instead, it provides a framework for intentional teaching, purposeful provision and responsive interactions. Staff use their knowledge of the children and the curriculum to identify appropriate opportunities to introduce new experiences, develop vocabulary, revisit learning and extend children's thinking.

All Early Years staff contribute to the planning process, ensuring that learning is coherent and progressive across Nursery and Reception. Planning is reviewed regularly and adapted in response to children's learning, development and interests, ensuring that the curriculum remains relevant, ambitious and responsive.

## Recording

The Early Years team works collaboratively to record and monitor each pupil's progress and achievements. Evidence of learning is collated in an online learning journal using the ARC platform, which includes photographs, observations, and examples of the child's work.

The online learning journal serves as an ongoing record of attainment and development. Each pupil's individual journal is securely stored online and accessible to parents throughout the school year.

## Assessment

Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a continuous and integral process informing teaching, planning, and provision. It enables staff to understand each pupil's development, celebrate achievement, and identify next steps to ensure ongoing progress across all areas of learning.

## Assessment for Learning

Assessment for Learning underpins all practice in the Early Years. Staff continually reflect on what is known about each child's development and learning to make informed decisions about appropriate next steps. This process ensures that both developmental and learning needs are effectively met. All teaching staff involved with the child contribute to this process through ongoing observation, interaction, and professional discussion.

## Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is ongoing and embedded in daily practice. It draws upon a range of evidence, including pupils' work, interactions, and observations made by teachers and other adults. These observations are recorded in each pupil's online learning journal and are used to inform planning and shape individual next steps in learning.

## ARC

On entry to Early Years, pupils are assessed using the ARC Pathway platform to establish an initial profile of their development, strengths and areas for further development. The results are presented in arcs across all areas of learning, giving a clear picture of a child's developmental strengths and needs. Arc Pathway gives the prioritised and bespoke next steps that exactly match a child's developmental level, updating as a child progresses. This profile is carried out in six monthly milestones.

Throughout the year, staff use their professional knowledge of child development, observations, and information shared by parents and carers to make informed judgements about children's progress and to guide planning.

## Reception Assessment

By the end of Reception, teachers assess each child against the **Early Learning Goals (ELGs)**, which summarise the knowledge, skills, and understanding expected at the end of the EYFS. These assessments support teachers in making holistic, best-fit judgements regarding each child's development and readiness for transition into Form I.

## Reporting to Parents

Parents will receive an online ARC Profile report. Parents are invited to attend a profile meeting with the class teacher in line with their child's six-monthly milestones, to discuss progress and next steps. Parents will have ongoing access to their child's profile online.

Written reports are provided at the end of the Autumn and Summer Terms.

In Reception, the Summer Term report also includes the EYFS Profile, which indicates whether a child has met the expected level of development as defined by the Early Learning Goals:

**Emerging** – Not yet reached the expected level of development.

**Expected** – Has reached the expected level of development.

## **Support for Pupils with SEND and EAL**

Assessment and monitoring are closely aligned with the School's commitment to inclusive practice. Communication with parents is central to supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or English as an additional language (EAL). Individual support programmes are developed in partnership with parents and, where appropriate, with the involvement of the Learning Support team and external professionals such as educational psychologists, speech and language therapists or occupational therapists.

Staff work collaboratively to create a coordinated network of support, ensuring that recommended strategies and interventions are implemented consistently.

## **Transition to Reception**

There is a seamless transition from Nursery to Reception as it is one class. This ensures continuity of care, learning, and well-being, enabling each child to feel secure and confident as they begin the next stage of their education.

## **Transition to PP1**

The transition from Reception to FPP1 is designed to be smooth, supportive, and developmentally appropriate, preparing children for the more structured expectations of Pre-Prep while maintaining a nurturing approach.

### **The transition process includes:**

- Encouraging independence in managing personal belongings and routines such as changing for PE, swimming, and outdoor activities throughout the Reception year.
- Gradual introduction of more structured lessons during the Summer Term to promote increasing independence and confidence in learning.
- Visits from the PP1 teacher to Reception to read to the children and establish positive relationships.
- A 'Step Up' morning during the Summer Term for Reception children to familiarise themselves with their new teacher and classroom environment.
- Collaborative planning and communication between the Head of EYFS and PP1 teachers to ensure continuity in learning and care.
- Sharing of each child's EYFS Profile and Characteristics of Effective Learning with PP1 staff to support individual progress and ensure that any remaining Early Learning Goals are addressed prior to beginning the Key Stage 1 curriculum.

## **Moving**

If a child moves in the summer term, an agreement is made with the new school to decide who will complete the child's EYFS profile.

## **Home and School Links**

Strong partnerships between home and school are central to each child's happiness, progress, and well-being. Positive and open communication with parents and carers is built on mutual respect, shared responsibility, and a commitment to supporting each child's development.

### **Partnership is fostered through:**

- Regular communication via newsletters, teacher emails, and the School website, which also provides access to key policies and governance information.
- Annual information evenings for EYFS parents to outline the curriculum and ways to support learning at home.
- Parent-teacher meetings are held in line with the child's six-monthly milestones to discuss progress and next steps.
- Written reports are provided at the end of the Autumn and Summer Terms.
- Celebration events, including Celebration Assemblies, Nativity Play, Big Lunch, and Termly Prize Giving ceremonies.
- Workshops and support materials for parents to develop an understanding of Early Years teaching methods.
- Parents are invited into school to share experiences or participate as a 'Mystery Reader'.
- Ongoing sharing of children's achievements from home, contributing to each child's learning journal.
- An open-door approach, ensuring staff and parents can discuss progress or concerns promptly and constructively.

This partnership creates a consistent, supportive environment in which children see parents and teachers working together as a cohesive team, promoting confidence, engagement, and a seamless link between home and school life.

## **Equal Opportunities**

The School is committed to ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender, or ability, have equal access to all aspects of school life. Every pupil is recognised and valued as an individual, and provision is designed to promote full participation and achievement.

Staff act as positive role models, recognising the significant influence of adults in shaping children's attitudes and behaviours. They actively promote inclusion and challenge stereotyping or bias in all forms. Pupils are supported in developing respect and positive attitudes towards others, fostering understanding and appreciation of diversity in all its forms.

To be read in conjunction with the School's Equal Opportunities Policy.

## **Inclusion and SEND**

Provision within the Early Years is designed to meet the individual needs of all pupils, ensuring that each child is supported to reach their full potential. Every pupil is valued as a unique individual with specific strengths, needs, and interests. The School recognises and nurtures the development of the whole child, promoting intrinsic motivation, independence, and a lifelong love of learning.

Staff set realistic yet challenging expectations that reflect individual abilities and stages of development. Learning is planned to be purposeful, engaging, and differentiated, building on prior knowledge and fostering curiosity and enthusiasm. Teachers and teaching assistants act as positive role models in promoting inclusion and respect for diversity, ensuring that all children feel recognised and valued within the learning community.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are provided with support appropriate to their individual circumstances. This includes more able children and those with specific learning difficulties, in accordance with the School's Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy. Children with specific medical needs have Individual Healthcare Plans which outline the care and support required to ensure their safety and well-being.

This policy is aligned with the statutory requirements of Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, the SEND Code of Practice (2015), and the Equality Act 2010. The School places strong emphasis on early identification and timely intervention to enable all children to access and benefit from the curriculum fully.

Where additional support is required, a Personalised Learning Provision Plan (PLPP) outlines specific needs and personalised teaching strategies. This is shared with parents or carers, along with the child. Progress is monitored and reviewed each term. The Head of Learning Support provides advice and guidance to teachers and parents, coordinating internal and external interventions where appropriate. Parents of children with identified SEND are invited to meet with the Head of EYFS and the Head of Learning Support to discuss their child's needs and agree on suitable provision and next steps.

## **Safeguarding and Welfare**

### **EYFS Staff Training**

All Early Years Foundation Stage staff at Aysgarth are trained in accordance with the requirements set out in Annex C of the Statutory Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (2026). Training for all EYFS staff is renewed annually.

All EYFS staff receive regular safeguarding training and are supported to embed their learning through continuous supervision, mentoring, and reflective practice. This ensures that safeguarding knowledge is effectively translated into everyday practice and that staff remain confident in their ability to recognise and respond to concerns.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) undertakes training which fully meets the requirements outlined in Annex C of the Statutory Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (2026).

The DSL provides ongoing support, advice, and guidance to all EYFS practitioners in relation to safeguarding matters, both on a routine basis and in response to any specific safeguarding concern or incident as required.

### **Safeguarding Children**

Aysgarth has a Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, which can be found on the School website. A copy can also be requested from the School Office. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead for Aysgarth is Paul Barlow. Please refer to the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for further details. Anna Brown, Head of Early Years and Early Years teacher, is the named Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead with responsibility for the EYFS.

## **Attendance and Absence**

The School monitors the attendance and absence of all EYFS pupils in accordance with the School's Attendance and Registration Policy and safeguarding procedures. Unexplained or prolonged absences are followed up promptly, including contacting parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts where necessary. Patterns or concerns relating to absence are considered in the context of the child's individual circumstances and referred to the DSL and appropriate safeguarding agencies where required.

## **Safer Recruitment and Suitability of Staff**

Aysgarth has full regard to the statutory guidance, *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006* and ensures compliance with all associated requirements. The school will not knowingly employ or engage any individual in the management of, or to work within, its childcare provision who is disqualified under this legislation. This includes all staff and volunteers working in the EYFS and in the School's Later Years Provision for children under the age of eight.

All prospective staff members will be informed of the disqualification requirements prior to employment, and the school will maintain records of all disqualification checks on the Single Central Register (SCR).

The school will obtain a reference for any member of staff working in the Early Years Foundation Stage (including students and volunteers) before they are recruited. The school will not accept open references (to whom it may concern).

A reference will always be sought from the most recent employer where the applicant worked with children. If the applicant is not currently working with children, the school will seek a reference from the last employer where such work took place. If the applicant has never worked with children, a reference will be obtained from their current employer, training provider, or educational institution.

The school will establish and document the reason for leaving the applicant's current or most recent post and will ensure that any safeguarding or conduct concerns are fully explored and satisfactorily resolved before confirming an appointment.

## **Allegations of Harm**

Any safeguarding concern or allegation of harm or abuse involving a member of staff, supply staff member, trainee teacher, volunteer, contractor or other person working with children will be managed in accordance with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)*, including procedures for reporting and referral to the appropriate safeguarding agencies and regulatory bodies, where required.

## **Health and Safety**

Risk assessments for classrooms, communal areas, outdoor spaces, and all equipment and toys used by children in the EYFS are regularly reviewed and updated to identify and minimise potential hazards, ensuring a safe and secure environment for all pupils.

## **Premises**

Indoor space requirements meet the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage September 2026 requirements, of 2.3m<sup>2</sup> for Nursery and Reception pupils (aged 3-5).

## **Banned Dog Breeds**

Dogs prohibited under Section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, including the Pit Bull Terrier, Japanese Tosa, Dogo Argentino, Fila Brasileiro and XL Bully type, are not to be kept on or brought onto the premises under any circumstances. This prohibition applies regardless of whether the dog is covered by a valid Certificate of Exemption.

## **Smoking and Vaping**

Smoking or vaping, or the use of e-cigarettes is not allowed in or on the premises when children are present or about to be present.

## **Risk Assessments**

We ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure staff and pupils are not exposed to risks. Rigorous daily checks and enhanced cleaning procedures are in place. A battery of written risk assessments, informing staff practice and management of risk, is available on request.

## Staff: Child Ratios

The school maintains the statutory minimum staff ratios and qualification requirements set out in the **Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, effective from 1 September 2026**. Staffing levels are determined not only by the statutory ratios but also by the needs of the children, the nature of the provision and any additional support required to ensure children's safety, wellbeing and effective learning.

As Aysgarth operates a mixed Nursery and Reception class, staffing arrangements are determined in accordance with the statutory requirements applicable to independent schools, taking account of the ages and composition of the class, the qualifications of staff working directly with the children and the needs of individual pupils.

For children aged three and over in an independent school, the following requirements apply:

|                                                                                   | Nursery | Reception |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-----------|
| Level 6 – QTS, EYPS, EYTS                                                         | 1:13    | 1:30      |
| Full and relevant Level 3 to Level 5                                              | 1:8     | 1:13      |
| Full and relevant Level 2 in the presence of a full and relevant Level 3 or above | 1:8     | 1:8       |
| Student or apprentice in the presence of a full and relevant Level 3 or above     | 1:8     | 1:8       |
| Instructor                                                                        | 1:13    | 1:30      |

At least one other member of staff must have an approved Level 3 qualification.

## Additional staffing

The statutory ratios are the **minimum requirements**. The school will provide additional adults where this is necessary to meet the individual needs of children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, children requiring additional support with communication, behaviour, personal care or medical needs, or where a particular activity, environment or circumstance requires increased supervision.

Additional adults may also be deployed to support effective teaching and learning, enable children to access the full range of experiences and ensure that appropriate supervision is maintained across indoor and outdoor provision.

Staffing arrangements will be reviewed regularly by the Head of Early Years and adjusted where necessary to reflect the needs of the children and the provision.

*Source: Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, Department for Education, effective from 1 September 2026.*

## Home Time Collection Procedure

At the end of the school day, pupils will only be dismissed to a parent/carer or to an individual who has been authorised in advance.

Parents/carers are required to provide the school with a list of authorised individuals permitted to collect their child. This information is securely recorded and maintained on SchoolBase.

If a parent/carer is not present at the designated collection point at the end of the school day:

- The school will make immediate contact via telephone to establish their whereabouts.
- The child will remain supervised by a member of staff at all times.

- If the collection is significantly delayed, or the school is waiting for collection arrangements to be clarified, the child will be transferred to After School Care to ensure appropriate supervision ratios are maintained.
- Any applicable Extended Care charges may be applied.

If collection arrangements change, parents/carers must inform the school in advance. The school requires confirmation directly from the parent/carer and reserves the right to request photographic identification from any adult not known to staff.

Where the school has not received prior notification of a change, the child will not be dismissed until direct verbal confirmation (via telephone) or written confirmation (via email) has been obtained from the parent/carer.

This procedure ensures that no child is released into the care of an unauthorised adult. The school's procedures are designed to ensure the safety and safeguarding of all pupils at all times.

## **Educational Visits**

Educational visits are an integral part of the curriculum and are carefully planned to enhance learning and provide children with first-hand experiences that extend and enrich their understanding of the world. All visits are risk-assessed in advance to ensure the safety and well-being of the children.

Parents provide consent for visits via an online form, which covers all educational trips and excursions for the duration of the academic year. The School's Trips and Outings Policy outlines procedures, expectations, and safety protocols, and is available on the school website or on request from the School office.

## **Pastoral Care**

The School is committed to ensuring that pupils settle smoothly into the school environment and receive consistent support and guidance throughout their time in the Early Years. This is achieved through the implementation of the aims and objectives outlined in the Behaviour Management & Promoting Good Behaviour & sanctions for misbehaviour (section 1) and Pre-Prep (section 2) policy, which promotes positive behaviour, respect, manners and a supportive learning community.

The Head of EYFS is the designated lead responsible for behaviour management for children in the Early Years. The School has an Anti-Bullying Strategy, including cyberbullying, that applies across the whole school, and a Use of Restrictive Interventions Policy. There is an additional Restrictive Interventions Policy specifically tailored to the Early Years Foundation Stage, ensuring that all children are supported in a safe, respectful, and secure environment.

## **Health and Well-Being**

### **Intimate Care**

The school has an Intimate Care Policy specific to the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents are required to provide consent for intimate care procedures prior to their child joining the school.

### **Toileting accident procedures**

Children joining Early Years are generally expected to be toilet-trained. Where a child requires support with toileting or intimate care, the School will make appropriate arrangements in partnership with parents/carers and in accordance with the child's individual needs and the School's Intimate Care Policy. Procedures for managing toileting accidents are designed to ensure the dignity, safety, and well-being of each child.

Parents or carers are informed on the same day if their child requires assistance with intimate care, such as after a toileting accident. Staff undertake all intimate care responsibilities professionally and respectfully, recognising the importance of treating each child with dignity.

During intimate care, staff clearly explain each task to the child and its purpose, encouraging the child to participate as fully as possible. The adult carrying out the care informs another member of staff before commencing the procedure. Parents are asked to provide a change of clothing for their child in case of accidents.

Staff always wear a fresh pair of disposable gloves and any other suitable PPE required when attending to intimate care needs. Both staff and children wash and dry their hands thoroughly on disposable towels immediately after the task is completed.

## Medical Matters

The School has a designated sick bay and ensures that a qualified Paediatric First Aider is always on site during the school day.

A current full Paediatric First Aid certificate is held by the required members of staff, and at least one person with a current full Paediatric First Aid certificate is on the premises and available at all times when EYFS children are present.

First aid kits are readily available and accessible in classrooms, the EY Hall, Pre-Prep Kitchen, Sports Hall, Swimming Pool, and outdoor areas. These are checked regularly and replenished as required to ensure they are fully stocked and ready for use.

Parents are informed immediately of any serious injury or health concern. Minor injuries, such as bumps or grazes, are communicated via the care diary on the ARC platform and verbally at the end of the school day. All head injuries are also reported to parents by telephone on the day of the incident.

All accidents and the treatment provided are recorded on an accident form and logged electronically on iSAMS. These records are monitored to ensure consistency in reporting and to identify any patterns or concerns.

All relevant staff are aware of the School's First Aid and illness procedures and follow them consistently to ensure children receive prompt and appropriate care.

Parents are asked to keep children at home if they are unwell and to notify the School Office by telephone between 8.00 and 9.00 am if their child will not be attending. Should a child become unwell during the school day, the School Nurse or Senior Matron will be contacted for guidance. Depending on the outcome of this consultation, parents will be contacted to discuss further arrangements.

Parents, or the responsible adult, are contacted and asked to collect their child if he or she is unwell. The child will wait quietly in the Sick Bay, the Pre-Prep Office, or a classroom with a member of staff until collected, ensuring appropriate supervision and comfort at all times.

For pupils with medical conditions requiring medication or specific care, parents must provide full and up-to-date medical information via the health questionnaire before the child's first term and update this information as necessary. Completed medical questionnaires must be received before a child starts school. The School works in partnership with parents to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to meet each child's individual medical needs.

Where a child has specific medical needs, parents are invited to meet with the Head of EYFS to discuss requirements. This may result in the creation of an Individual Healthcare Plan, which outlines the child's needs and the procedures in place to support them. The Head of EYFS meets regularly with the School Nurse to review medical information, Individual Healthcare Plans, and arrangements for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage with identified medical needs, ensuring that procedures are implemented effectively.

All relevant staff are made aware of children's medical needs and Individual Healthcare Plans, and procedures are followed consistently to ensure each child's safety and well-being.

Medication may only be administered with parental consent and in accordance with the School's procedures. The Pre-Prep Secretary and a member of the EYFS team are responsible for administering prescribed medication in accordance with the consent provided on the School's Medication Form. All medication is administered strictly in line with the prescribed dosage and instructions.

As part of the admissions process, parents are asked to provide consent for the School to administer medication if required during the school day. This consent is reviewed annually to ensure records remain up to date. If a child requires medication during the school day, parents will be contacted by telephone to confirm whether the medication has already been administered and to obtain verbal consent, where possible, before administration. Parents will be asked to follow up verbal consent with written confirmation via email.

A written record is maintained of all medication administered, including the date, time, dosage and person administering it, and parents/carers are informed on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable. For all EYFS children, parents are also informed via the ARC platform. Prescribed medication must be provided in its original container, clearly labelled with the child's name, dosage, and administration instructions.

Upon acceptance of a place at the School, parents authorise the Head to consent to emergency medical treatment, including general anaesthetic or surgical procedures under the NHS, should parents be unable to be contacted in time.

Further details are provided in the **Administration of Medicines (EYFS) Policy** and the **Care of Pupils and Boarders and Medical and First Aid Policies, including Administration of Medicine**, both of which are available on the School website or on request.

## Food and Drink

The School follows the **Early Years Food and Nutrition Guidance, May 2025**. Children are provided with a healthy snack and a drink of milk or water at morning break. For those remaining in school to attend after-school care, an additional snack of fruit or vegetables is provided after 3.30 pm. Drinking water is available to children throughout the day.

School lunches are freshly prepared, nutritious, and carefully planned. A vegetarian option is available, and the weekly menu is displayed on the EY notice board and on the school website. Children eat in the dining room under the supervision of teachers and teaching assistants.

A member of staff holding a full Paediatric First Aid qualification is always present while EYFS pupils are eating. A designated member of staff ensures that meals and snacks meet the specific dietary needs of each child. Wherever possible, Early Years staff sit facing the children during mealtimes to monitor safe eating, minimise the risk of choking or food sharing, and remain alert to any potential allergic reactions.

Nursery children are provided with benches adapted to support the size and needs of the Nursery children, supporting physical comfort and developmental stage during mealtimes. Reception children are seated on appropriately sized benches and demonstrate sufficient core strength and coordination to use these safely and effectively.

## Choking

In the event of a choking incident, comprehensive records will be maintained, and parents will be notified of the circumstances as promptly as reasonably possible. In line with the EYFS Framework, all choking incidents will be reviewed during Health and Safety meetings, with any emerging trends carefully examined.

## Special Diets

The School operates as a nut-free environment. Parents are required to notify the School of any food allergies or special dietary requirements before their child joins. The Head of Early Years is available to discuss concerns with parents, and the School will endeavour to accommodate special dietary needs wherever practically possible. In exceptional circumstances, pupils may be permitted to bring a packed lunch.

While the School seeks to understand pupils' food preferences through entry documentation, these preferences are only accommodated in exceptional cases. Any adjustments are considered carefully, in close partnership with parents and the child's Key Person or class Teacher, to support the development of a healthy, balanced, and varied diet, and are solely made at the discretion of the Headteacher. The Head of Early Years is always happy to discuss any concerns with parents, and the School will do its best to accommodate special dietary needs wherever practicable. In exceptional cases, pupils may be permitted to bring a packed lunch. This approach ensures the development of a balanced diet and supports the child's broader nutritional and holistic development.

## Oral Health

Healthy eating habits and good oral health are continually promoted. The latter is further supported by termly visits from a local dental practitioner.

## Sleep and Rest

The Early Years setting does not have a designated sleep period as children attending are aged three to five years. Where a child becomes tired or falls asleep during the school day, staff will respond to the child's individual needs, ensuring appropriate supervision and maintaining the child's safety, comfort and wellbeing. Parents/carers will be informed where appropriate.

## Complaints Procedure

**The School is committed to addressing** any concerns promptly, efficiently, and sensitively. The **Complaints Policy**, which applies equally to the Early Years Foundation Stage, is available on the School website or on request. All complaints are investigated thoroughly, and the complainant is notified of the outcome in writing.

Written complaints relating to the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements are investigated, and the outcome is communicated to the complainant within 28 days. Records of all complaints are retained for a minimum of three years following the child's departure from the School.

Parents of children in the EYFS also have the right to escalate concerns directly to **Ofsted** and/or the **Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI)**:

**Ofsted**

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

Address: Complaints, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

**ISI**

Telephone: 020 7600 0100

Email: [concerns@isi.net](mailto:concerns@isi.net)

Address: ISI, Complaints, Ground Floor, CAP House, 9–12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA