Al Risalah Nursery

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY



Introduction

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up."

At Al Risalah Nursery, we recognise that every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support they need to fulfil their potential.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provides the foundation for children's future learning, development and wellbeing. We believe that early childhood is important in its own right and that children should experience a happy, secure and stimulating environment where they feel valued, respected and confident.

We recognise that children develop at different rates and have individual interests, abilities and needs. Our approach is based on providing high-quality care and education through positive relationships, purposeful play and meaningful learning experiences.

We follow the Department for Education's EYFS Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, effective from 1 September 2026, and ensure that our practice meets the statutory requirements for early years provision in England.

We work in partnership with parents and carers, recognising them as children's first and most enduring educators. We value their knowledge, experiences and contributions and encourage their active involvement in their children's learning and development.

2. The Four Principles of the EYFS

Our practice is underpinned by the four guiding principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

2.1 A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is unique, capable and competent, with their own interests, experiences, abilities and individual developmental journey.

At Al Risalah Nursery, we:

- Value and respect every child as an individual.
- Recognise that children develop at different rates.
- Provide opportunities for children to develop independence, confidence and resilience.
- Encourage children to make choices and take appropriate risks.
- Celebrate children's achievements and progress.
- Provide appropriate support for children with additional needs.
- Promote children's physical and emotional wellbeing.
- Ensure every child feels safe, included and valued.

We recognise that children learn best when they feel secure, confident and supported.

2.2 Positive Relationships

We understand that children learn to become confident and independent through secure, positive relationships with adults and other children.

We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships by:

- Providing a consistent key person for every child.
- Developing secure attachments and trusting relationships.

- Treating children with kindness, dignity and respect.
- Listening to children's views, interests and concerns.
- Encouraging positive relationships between children.
- Working in partnership with parents and carers.
- Communicating regularly with families about children's progress and wellbeing.
- Promoting positive behaviour through encouragement, praise and appropriate boundaries.

All staff act as positive role models and understand the importance of professional conduct.

2.3 Enabling Environments

We recognise that the environment plays an important role in supporting children's learning and development.

At Al Risalah Nursery, we provide safe, welcoming, stimulating and inclusive environments where children can explore, investigate, play and learn.

Our environments:

- Reflect children's interests, needs and developmental stages.
- Provide access to a range of resources and learning opportunities.
- Encourage independence and decision-making.
- Include opportunities for indoor and outdoor learning.
- Support physical development, creativity and exploration.
- Provide quiet areas for children who need rest or time away from busy activities.
- Promote positive relationships and social interaction.
- Are regularly risk-assessed and reviewed to ensure children's safety.

We believe that children should have opportunities to learn through first-hand experiences and exploration.

2.4 Learning and Development

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates.

Our curriculum provides a broad range of meaningful experiences that support children's communication, physical, personal, social, emotional, intellectual and creative development.

We use observations, assessments and knowledge of individual children to plan experiences that build on what children already know and can do.

We provide a balance of child-initiated play, adult-led activities and purposeful interactions to support children's progress.

3. Aims of Al Risalah Nursery

Our aim is to provide high-quality early years care and education which supports every child's learning, development, health, safety and wellbeing.

We aim to:

- Provide a safe, caring, stimulating and inclusive environment.
- Deliver a broad, balanced and engaging curriculum.
- Support children to become confident, independent and resilient learners.
- Promote children's communication, language and early literacy skills.
- Develop children's physical abilities and understanding of healthy lifestyles.
- Support positive personal, social and emotional development.
- Encourage curiosity, creativity, exploration and problem-solving.
- Provide opportunities for children to develop mathematical understanding.
- Support children's understanding of the world around them.
- Respect children's individual backgrounds, cultures, beliefs and family circumstances.
- Provide appropriate support for children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Work closely with parents, carers and other professionals.
- Ensure children are protected from harm and receive appropriate care.
- Prepare children for their next stage of learning and development.

We believe that every child should have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

4. Learning and Development

The EYFS identifies seven areas of learning and development. These are divided into three prime areas and four specific areas.

4.1 The Prime Areas

The prime areas are particularly important for children's early development and provide the foundations for learning in the specific areas.

Communication and Language

We support children to develop their listening, attention, understanding and speaking skills through:

- Conversations and interactions.
- Stories, rhymes and songs.
- Group discussions.
- Role play and imaginative activities.
- Opportunities to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas.
- Positive adult interactions and modelling of language.

Physical Development

We support children to develop their gross and fine motor skills, coordination and understanding of healthy lifestyles.

Opportunities include:

- Outdoor play and physical activities.
- Climbing, balancing and movement.
- Running, jumping and dancing.
- Drawing, painting and mark-making.

- Manipulative activities.
- Developing independence in personal care.
- Learning about healthy eating and personal hygiene.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

We support children to develop positive relationships, self-confidence, emotional understanding and independence.

We encourage children to:

- Recognise and express their feelings.
- Develop friendships.
- Share, take turns and cooperate.
- Develop confidence and self-esteem.
- Understand appropriate boundaries.
- Develop independence.
- Show kindness, empathy and respect towards others.

4.2 The Specific Areas

The specific areas provide opportunities for children to apply and develop the skills learned through the prime areas.

Literacy

Children are supported to develop early reading, writing and communication skills through stories, books, mark-making, phonological awareness and opportunities to develop an interest in written language.

Mathematics

Children develop early mathematical understanding through counting, number recognition, patterns, shapes, measures, comparison and problem-solving activities.

Understanding the World

Children are encouraged to explore their environment and develop an understanding of people, communities, nature, technology and the world around them.

We provide opportunities for children to learn about different cultures, families, traditions and experiences.

Expressive Arts and Design

Children are encouraged to express themselves creatively through art, music, dance, movement, imaginative play, construction and exploration of different materials.

All seven areas are interconnected. We provide opportunities for children to develop skills across the curriculum through meaningful play and learning experiences.

5. Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

We recognise three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

Playing and Exploring

Children investigate, explore and experience new things. We provide opportunities for children to develop curiosity, make discoveries and learn through first-hand experiences.

Active Learning

Children are encouraged to concentrate, persevere and take pride in their achievements. Staff support children to remain engaged and develop confidence in their abilities.

Creating and Thinking Critically

Children are encouraged to make connections, solve problems, develop ideas and think creatively. Staff provide opportunities for children to experiment, question and develop their own solutions.

These characteristics inform our planning and interactions with children.

6. Curriculum Planning and Delivery

At Al Risalah Nursery, our curriculum is designed around children's individual needs, interests and developmental stages.

We provide a balance of:

- Child-initiated activities.
- Adult-led activities.
- Planned learning experiences.
- Spontaneous learning opportunities.
- Indoor and outdoor activities.
- Individual, small-group and whole-group experiences.

Planning is informed by observations, children's interests, developmental needs and knowledge of what children can already do.

Staff adapt activities and experiences to ensure that all children can participate and make progress.

Our curriculum is reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains relevant, inclusive and responsive to the needs of the children.

7. Learning Through Play

We recognise play as central to young children's learning and development.

Children learn through exploration, investigation, imagination, experimentation and interaction with others.

At Al Risalah Nursery, we provide opportunities for:

- Imaginative and role play.
- Construction and creative activities.
- Outdoor exploration.
- Physical activities.
- Stories, songs and rhymes.
- Sensory experiences.
- Small-world play.
- Mathematical and problem-solving activities.
- Opportunities to explore the natural environment.

Staff recognise when to support children's play through interaction, questioning, modelling and encouragement, while allowing children time and space to develop their own ideas.

We provide a balance of child-initiated and adult-led experiences to support progression across the EYFS curriculum.

8. Observation, Assessment and Planning

Observation and assessment are important parts of understanding children's learning and development.

Staff regularly observe children during their play, activities and interactions to identify their interests, strengths, achievements and areas where further support may be beneficial.

Observations may be recorded through written notes, photographs, learning journals and the nursery's online assessment system.

Assessment is ongoing and informs future planning. It is not intended to create unnecessary paperwork or interrupt children's learning.

Staff use their professional knowledge and understanding of child development to:

- Identify what children know and can do.
- Recognise progress and achievements.
- Identify possible gaps in learning.
- Plan appropriate next steps.
- Identify children who may need additional support.
- Share progress with parents and carers.

Progress Check at Age Two

In accordance with EYFS requirements, parents and carers will be provided with a written summary of their child's development when the child is aged between two and three years.

The progress check will focus on the three prime areas:

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

Where appropriate, staff will discuss any areas where additional support may be beneficial and agree appropriate actions with parents.

Transition and School Readiness

As children approach the end of the EYFS, staff will support their transition to school or the next stage of education.

Where applicable, the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) will be completed in accordance with statutory requirements.

Information will be shared with receiving schools, with appropriate arrangements for confidentiality and information sharing.

9. The Key Person Approach

Every child will have a designated key person who is responsible for supporting their care, well-being, learning and development.

The key person will:

- Develop a secure and trusting relationship with the child.
- Support the child's settling-in process.
- Build positive relationships with parents and carers.
- Observe and monitor the child's progress.
- Contribute to planning for the child's individual needs.
- Share information about the child's development.
- Identify any concerns and discuss these with the Nursery Manager.
- Support transitions and changes in the child's routine.

Where appropriate, a back-up key person will be identified to provide continuity of care.

10. Induction and Settling In

We recognise that starting nursery is an important transition for children and their families.

Al Risalah Nursery provides an induction and settling-in process to help children become familiar with their new surroundings, staff and routines.

The process may include:

- An initial meeting with parents or carers.
- Gathering information about the child's health, development, interests and routines.
- Opportunities for the child and parents to visit the nursery.
- Introducing the child's key person.
- Gradually increasing attendance where appropriate.
- Providing reassurance and emotional support.
- Maintaining communication with parents throughout the transition.

We recognise that every child is different and will adapt the settling-in process according to individual needs.

11. Home and Nursery Links

We recognise parents and carers as children's first educators and value their knowledge and understanding of their child.

We aim to establish strong partnerships through:

- An open-door approach to communication.
- Regular discussions about children's learning and development.
- Sharing observations and achievements.
- Parent consultations where appropriate.
- Providing information about the curriculum.
- Sharing ideas and activities to support learning at home.
- Workshops and opportunities for parental involvement.
- Seeking feedback from families.
- Working together when additional support is needed.

Parents and carers are encouraged to share information about changes in their child's circumstances, health, interests or development.

We believe that a strong partnership between home and nursery provides the best support for children's progress and wellbeing.

12. Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

At Al Risalah Nursery, we are committed to providing an inclusive environment where every child is valued, respected and supported.

We ensure that children have equal opportunities to access the curriculum regardless of:

- Ethnicity.
- Culture.
- Religion or belief.
- Home language.
- Family background.
- Gender.
- Disability.
- Special educational needs.
- Individual ability or developmental stage.

We recognise that children may require different levels of support to access learning and development opportunities.

Staff will:

- Identify and respond to individual needs.
- Make reasonable adjustments where necessary.
- Adapt activities and resources.
- Work with parents and carers.
- Seek advice from relevant professionals.
- Monitor children's progress.

- Provide additional support where appropriate.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The Nursery Manager will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to support children with SEND.

The nursery will identify a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo), who will work with staff, parents and external professionals.

Where a child requires additional support, the nursery will:

- Discuss concerns with parents and carers.
- Observe and assess the child's needs.
- Agree appropriate support strategies.
- Develop individual targets where appropriate.
- Monitor progress and review arrangements.
- Work with relevant external agencies.
- Follow the SEND Code of Practice and applicable EYFS requirements.

We aim to provide inclusive experiences wherever possible, rather than unnecessarily separating children from their peers.

13. Safeguarding and Child Protection

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility at Al Risalah Nursery.

We are committed to protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare at all times.

All staff must understand their safeguarding responsibilities and follow the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The nursery will:

- Have a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and appropriate deputy arrangements.
- Ensure staff receive safeguarding induction and ongoing training.
- Follow local safeguarding partnership procedures.
- Maintain appropriate staff supervision and professional boundaries.
- Respond promptly to concerns about a child's welfare.
- Record and report concerns accurately.
- Make referrals to relevant agencies when required.
- Work with parents and professionals where appropriate, while ensuring that information is shared safely and in the child's best interests.

All staff must report safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL or follow the nursery's escalation procedures.

Staff must never promise a child confidentiality where a safeguarding concern has been disclosed.

14. Safer Recruitment and Staff Suitability

Al Risalah Nursery is committed to ensuring that all adults working with children are suitable and safe to do so.

The nursery follows safer recruitment procedures in accordance with the current EYFS framework.

These include:

- Appropriate identity and qualification checks.
- References and employment history checks.
- Enhanced DBS checks and barred list checks where legally required.
- Verification of staff suitability.
- Maintaining a single central record of required checks.
- Appropriate induction and supervision.
- Ongoing monitoring of staff conduct and suitability.

New employees must not commence employment before the required criminal records check has been received, in accordance with the September 2026 EYFS requirements.

Volunteers, including supervised volunteers, must receive the enhanced criminal records checks required by the current framework.

All staff must understand their responsibility to disclose relevant information that may affect their suitability to work with children.

Any allegation of harm involving someone working, living or looking after children at the premises must be managed and reported in accordance with the current EYFS requirements and safeguarding procedures.

15. Health, Safety and Wellbeing

The health, safety and wellbeing of children are central to our practice.

We provide a safe and hygienic environment and take reasonable steps to prevent accidents and protect children from harm.

The nursery will:

- Carry out regular risk assessments.
- Maintain safe indoor and outdoor environments.
- Ensure equipment and resources are suitable and safe.
- Maintain appropriate staff-to-child ratios.
- Provide adequate supervision.
- Follow safe food handling and hygiene procedures.
- Promote personal hygiene and handwashing.
- Maintain appropriate first aid arrangements.
- Record accidents, injuries and incidents.
- Inform parents of accidents and injuries in accordance with EYFS requirements.
- Ensure appropriate medication procedures are followed.
- Maintain appropriate emergency procedures.

Staff must report any health and safety concerns to the Nursery Manager immediately.

16. Safer Sleep and Rest Arrangements

Al Risalah Nursery recognises the importance of safe sleep and rest arrangements for young children.

We follow the safer sleep requirements within the September 2026 EYFS Statutory Framework.

The nursery will ensure that:

- Children have appropriate opportunities for rest and sleep according to their individual needs.
- Sleeping arrangements are safe and suitable for the child's age and developmental stage.
- Staff follow the current safer sleep requirements and relevant guidance.
- Children are appropriately supervised while sleeping.
- Sleeping areas and equipment are kept clean and safe.
- Individual sleep needs and routines are discussed with parents.
- Any concerns about a child's sleep or wellbeing are reported to the Nursery Manager.

Staff must never leave sleeping children without the supervision required by the EYFS framework.

Individual arrangements will be made where children have additional medical or developmental needs.

17. Use of Screens and Digital Technology

Al Risalah Nursery recognises that children are growing up in a digital world and that screen use must be carefully considered during the early years.

In accordance with the September 2026 EYFS framework, the nursery will have regard to the Department for Education's guidance on screen use in early years settings.

Our approach is to prioritise real-life experiences, interaction, communication, physical activity and learning through play.

The nursery will:

- Ensure screen use is purposeful and appropriate to children's ages and developmental needs.
- Prioritise face-to-face interactions and active learning.
- Avoid unnecessary or prolonged screen exposure.
- Ensure screen use does not replace physical play, outdoor learning, social interaction or creative experiences.
- Use digital technology only where it adds value to children's learning.
- Ensure that content is age-appropriate, safe and suitable.
- Supervise children whenever screens or digital devices are used.
- Follow the nursery's Screen Use Policy.

Staff will consider the needs of individual children and ensure that screen use supports, rather than limits, their learning and development.

18. Behaviour and Positive Relationships

We believe that children learn to manage their feelings and behaviour through positive relationships, consistent boundaries and supportive adult guidance.

Staff will:

- Model positive behaviour.
- Encourage kindness, respect and cooperation.
- Recognise and praise positive behaviour.
- Support children to understand and express their feelings.
- Help children develop problem-solving skills.
- Set clear and appropriate boundaries.
- Respond calmly and consistently to challenging behaviour.

Physical punishment, humiliating treatment and inappropriate discipline are not permitted.

Staff will never use physical punishment or threaten physical punishment.

Where a child's behaviour causes concern, staff will work with parents and carers to understand the underlying needs and agree appropriate strategies.

Further guidance is provided in the nursery's Behaviour Management Policy.

19. Intimate Care and Personal Hygiene

We recognise that young children may need support with personal care, including toileting, washing, dressing and changing.

All children have the right to privacy, dignity and respectful care.

Staff must:

- Treat children sensitively and respectfully.
- Encourage independence appropriate to the child's age and development.
- Follow the nursery's Intimate Care Policy.
- Maintain appropriate safeguarding procedures.
- Communicate with parents about individual care needs.
- Record and report any concerns or unusual incidents.

Parents will be asked to provide information and appropriate consent for intimate care arrangements in accordance with the nursery's procedures.

Children will never be treated in a way that undermines their dignity or makes them feel uncomfortable.

20. Medication and Medical Needs

The nursery recognises its responsibility to support children with medical conditions and individual healthcare needs.

Parents and carers must provide accurate information about their child's health, allergies, medication and medical requirements.

The nursery will:

- Obtain appropriate parental consent before administering medication.
- Ensure medication is stored safely and securely.
- Maintain accurate medication records.
- Ensure staff understand individual healthcare plans.
- Make appropriate arrangements for children with allergies or medical conditions.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate training where required.
- Follow emergency procedures when a child becomes unwell.

Medication must only be administered in accordance with the nursery's Medication Policy and relevant EYFS requirements.

21. Nutrition, Food and Healthy Eating

We aim to promote healthy eating habits and positive attitudes towards food.

The nursery will provide or support access to appropriate food and drink arrangements that meet children's individual needs.

We will:

- Encourage healthy and balanced eating.
- Provide access to drinking water.
- Consider allergies, dietary requirements and cultural needs.
- Maintain appropriate food hygiene standards.
- Supervise children appropriately during meals and snacks.
- Encourage independence and positive mealtime experiences.
- Follow safe eating and choking prevention procedures.

Staff must ensure children are within sight and hearing of an adult while eating, in accordance with EYFS requirements.

Further details are provided in the nursery's Food and Nutrition Policy.

22. Outdoor Learning and Physical Activity

We recognise the importance of outdoor learning and physical activity in children's development.

Outdoor play provides opportunities for children to develop physical skills, confidence, independence, curiosity and an understanding of the natural environment.

We aim to provide:

- Opportunities for daily outdoor learning where appropriate.
- Access to suitable outdoor equipment.
- Opportunities for climbing, balancing, running and movement.
- Natural and sensory experiences.
- Opportunities to explore the environment.
- Activities that promote cooperation and problem-solving.

Outdoor activities will be appropriately supervised and risk-assessed.

23. Transition and Continuity of Learning

We recognise that transitions can be significant experiences for young children.

Transitions may include:

- Starting nursery.
- Moving between rooms or age groups.
- Changes in key person.
- Moving to another setting.
- Transitioning to school.

We will work with parents, carers and other professionals to ensure that transitions are positive and supportive.

Relevant information about children's learning, development and individual needs will be shared appropriately, with due regard to confidentiality and data protection.

24. Records, Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Al Risalah Nursery maintains appropriate records to support children's care, learning, development and safeguarding.

Records may include:

- Registration and admission information.
- Emergency contact details.
- Medical and allergy information.
- Learning observations and assessments.
- Progress checks.
- Accident and incident records.
- Medication records.
- Safeguarding records.
- Relevant parental communication.

All records will be stored securely and accessed only by authorised individuals.

Information will be shared with parents, carers and relevant professionals where appropriate and in accordance with data protection and safeguarding requirements.

The nursery will maintain records in line with the current EYFS framework and applicable data protection legislation.

25. Complaints and Parental Feedback

We value the views and contributions of parents and carers.

Parents are encouraged to raise questions, concerns or complaints with the Nursery Manager.

The nursery will:

- Listen to concerns respectfully.
- Respond promptly and professionally.
- Investigate complaints fairly.
- Maintain appropriate records.
- Explain the outcome and any actions taken.
- Inform parents of the relevant external complaints procedures where appropriate.

We regularly seek feedback from parents and carers to support continuous improvement.

26. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively and reviewed regularly.

The policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance or nursery procedures.

The nursery will monitor its practice through:

- Staff supervision and support.
- Observation of teaching and interactions.
- Monitoring children's progress.
- Reviewing safeguarding and health and safety arrangements.
- Parent feedback.
- Staff meetings and training.
- Self-evaluation and quality improvement planning.

We are committed to continuous improvement and ensuring that all children receive high-quality care and education.

---

27. Roles and Responsibilities

Nursery Manager

The Nursery Manager is responsible for:

- Ensuring the nursery meets EYFS statutory requirements.
- Leading curriculum development and quality improvement.
- Ensuring safeguarding and welfare procedures are effective.
- Ensuring appropriate staffing, qualifications and supervision.
- Monitoring children's learning and development.

- Supporting staff training and professional development.
- Working in partnership with parents and external professionals.
- Reviewing policies and procedures.
- Ensuring the nursery provides inclusive and high-quality provision.

All Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Understanding and implementing the EYFS framework.
- Providing high-quality care and learning experiences.
- Supporting children's individual needs.
- Maintaining safeguarding and health and safety standards.
- Developing positive relationships with children and families.
- Observing and supporting children's development.
- Following nursery policies and procedures.
- Maintaining professional conduct and confidentiality.
- Participating in training and professional development.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- Share relevant information about their child's development and wellbeing.
- Participate in discussions about learning and progress.
- Inform the nursery of changes to contact details, medical needs or family circumstances.
- Contribute to their child's learning and development at home.
- Share feedback and raise concerns when necessary.

---

28. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is informed by the following legislation and guidance:

1. Department for Education – Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, effective 1 September 2026.
2. Early Years Foundation Stage (Welfare Requirements) Regulations and applicable amendments.
3. Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004.
4. Childcare Act 2006.
5. Equality Act 2010.
6. Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
7. Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
8. Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
9. Working Together to Safeguard Children.
10. Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.
11. Current Department for Education guidance on screen use in early years settings.
12. Current Department for Education safer sleep guidance and requirements.

This policy should be read alongside all relevant Al Risalah Nursery policies and procedures.

POLICY APPROVAL

Policy: Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Setting: Al Risalah Nursery

Approved by: ___Shazra Abbasi_____

Position: ___Manager_____

Signature: ____*Shazra Abbasi*_____

Date approved: __Sept 2026_____

Next review date: September 2027