



The Mulberry Bush CASTERTON

PRIVATE DAY NURSERY 6 MONTHS - 4 YEARS

The Early Years Foundation Stage.

What is it?

The Mulberry Bush follows the Early Years Foundation Stage commonly referred to as the EYFS. This is a document that gives Early Years Providers requirements and guidance to follow, to help us support your child's learning and development from birth to five years old. All early Years Providers must follow the EYFS, the new updated version was released in 2025.

EYFS Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that must be part of Educational Programmes in the Early Years. These are divided into three Prime Areas and four Specific Areas. All these areas of learning and development are important for children and are interconnected, however three areas are particularly crucial for sparking children's imagination curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, we aim to build on a child's capacity to learn form relationships and thrive as unique individuals. These three Prime areas are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical development
- Personal Social and emotional development.

These are areas of learning that we plan for, for your child from birth. As the children progress through their development we add in four specific areas of learning that will begin to build on these skills but will also start the journey to developing the skills needed to read and write, develop number skills and explore the world around them. These specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive Arts and Design.

Communication and Language

Development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment: to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations

Physical Development

This area involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food

Personal, Social and Emotional development

This area involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Literacy

Involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics

Involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures

Understanding the World

Involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment

Expressive arts and design

Involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

EYFS Observations and Recording

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum requires all nurseries to carry out formative assessment from when a child first starts to attend a setting outside of the home, until the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

When your child first starts The Mulberry Bush you will be part of the initial observation process, we like to settle a child into the environment and spend time with them and yourself to get a good understanding of where the child is at now. We fill in an All About Me book and you will make a family photo album, these two documents together with the settling in sessions will give the Key person a good starting point for what your child has already achieved. We will then work on some 'Next Steps' for their development and plan an individualised program of activities to best allow your child to flourish in our learning environment.

Along the way we will make observations of your child's achievements and record these following the EYFS Development matters guidelines, to ensure your child is making good progress in their development and we will record this as part of your child's learning journey using our online Family system. These are a fantastic way of building up a picture of the whole child, the activities they participated in and their interests. Typically consisting of a compilation of photographs, work samples and summaries of the day.

Our Curriculum

We have developed our own curriculum based on the statements within the Development Matters (September 2021) document. Each room has their own way of planning depending on the age group of the children.

Our curriculum is designed around how young children learn best: through play, exploration, and secure relationships. We prioritise life skills because these underpin all future learning. By focusing on communication, independence, and emotional wellbeing, children are equipped not only for school readiness but for lifelong success.

The curriculum reflects our community and ensures all children, regardless of background, have access to rich, meaningful experiences. It is inclusive, ambitious, and responsive to individual needs.

This curriculum is ambitious, inclusive, and rooted in the EYFS framework. It ensures clear progression, strong pedagogy, and a focus on life skills, preparing children for their next stage of education and beyond.

At The Mulberry Bush we focus on enabling our children to build skills for life, supporting and teaching children from 0-5 a progression of skills that will enable them to achieve. For each area of the EYFS, we have created goals for this progression in order to ensure that children thrive during their time with us.

Assessments

As a child progresses through Nursery, parents will also receive more formal assessments of the child's progress, each child will receive a Summative assessment twice per year. Staff also produce a 2 year old Check, which is a requirement of the EYFS. This ensures there is Early Identification of any possible developmental delays, or areas where children are progressing at a higher rate. We really welcome and value parents participation and feedback though the child's journey though nursery. The 2 year old check is normally completed between the child's 2nd & 3rd Birthday, and involves a fce-to-face meeting between parents and the child's key worker.

We welcome parents to add and upload observations of their child whilst at home. This can be from going to the park or doing some baking with grandparents. It's wonderful to see the child in their home environment and can be very useful during the first few months at nursery.

Next Steps and The Characteristics of Effective Learning

When planning the next steps for your child's learning, our Nursery practitioners have a clear understanding of the Characteristics of Effective Learning and how these thread through all the seven areas of learning – this enables key next steps to be planned effectively. We like to think of them as Hands, Heart, Head.

- Playing and exploring. (with their hands)
- Active learning. (their hearts is in the activity)
- Creative and thinking critically. (using their Heads to develop their play)

A child can be playing with their hands but they might not be enjoying the activity and their thoughts may be elsewhere. When a child is fully involved in an activity they will be using the hands to develop the ideas that they have in their head and they will be doing something that they enjoy and want to do. This is why our activities are planned around the children's interests and our practitioners are trained to support the children to develop their ideas by asking open ended questions and providing the children with the resources and facilities to test these ideas.

This policy was adopted on	1 st September 2014
Signed	
Date disseminated to staff	1 st September 2014
Reviewed on	18 th March 2026
Date to be reviewed	July 2026

Curriculum updates due July 2026 – Policy to be reviewed following this