

Supervision of Children in the EYFS Policy

Introduction

Under the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, providers must ensure that children are supervised at all times and that their safety and wellbeing are paramount. This policy reflects the EYFS statutory framework effective from September 2026, including the strengthened expectations relating to safer sleep, safer eating, choking prevention, children's welfare and safeguarding practice.

Children must always be appropriately supervised by a responsible adult. Supervision must be active and responsive, enabling staff to protect children from harm, respond quickly in an emergency and support children appropriately at all times. During higher-risk routines, including sleep, rest, meals, snacks, transitions, outdoor play, intimate care and visits, staff deployment must be planned carefully and reviewed in practice.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the expectations and responsibilities for the supervision of children in the setting, ensuring that all children are kept safe, their needs are met, and they have a positive and enriching experience in line with the EYFS standards and the September 2026 welfare requirements.

Aims of the Supervision of Children:

- To ensure that children are supervised by a qualified and responsible adult at all times.
- To promote a safe and nurturing environment that supports children's emotional, physical, and developmental needs.
- To comply with all regulatory and legal requirements to safeguard children and ensure their well-being.
- To provide children with appropriate levels of freedom and independence while maintaining supervision that is suitable for their age, stage of development, individual needs, activity and environment.

Supervision Regulations

Sight and Sound

At all times, children must be supervised in a way that enables staff to respond promptly to their needs. Children should normally remain within sight and/or hearing of staff, with direct sight required where risk is increased. Whilst eating, children must be within **sight and hearing** of a member of staff and must be supervised closely enough for staff to identify choking, food sharing or an unexpected allergic reaction.

- **Sight:** Children should be visible to staff at all times, meaning staff can observe them directly, either in the same room or in an adjoining space with clear sightlines.
- **Hearing:** If direct sight is not possible in a particular low-risk area, children must remain within clear hearing range of staff so that staff can respond immediately. This does not apply to sleep, eating or other high-risk routines where direct sight and hearing expectations apply.

Ratios

Staff-child ratios must be adhered to at all times as outlined in the EYFS framework, with additional staff or support needed in high-risk activities or environments (e.g., swimming, outings).

Outdoor Supervision

When children are playing or learning outside, staff must maintain close supervision. Children must be within clear sight or sound of staff at all times. Where the outdoor area is large, staff should be deployed in a way that ensures all children can be seen or heard.

Supervision During Transitions

During transitions between activities, indoors to outdoors, or when children are moving from one space to another, staff must ensure that children are supervised, and no child is left unsupervised at any point.

Group Supervision

When working with large groups of children, staff must be deployed to ensure that children are adequately supervised across the setting. Adults must remain vigilant to ensure that all children are safe and engaged.

Special Considerations

Children with additional needs

Extra attention should be given to children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Supervision should be adjusted accordingly to ensure they are supported appropriately.

Sleep and Rest Times

During rest and sleep times, children must be supervised in line with the setting's Rest and Sleep Policy. For children under two, staff must follow safer sleep requirements, including placing children on their back in their own separate sleep space on a firm, flat surface, unless written medical advice states otherwise. Babies aged 12 months and under must only be placed to sleep in a cot. Babies under six months must always have an adult in the same room for every sleep. All sleeping children must be frequently checked and must remain within sight and hearing of staff. Sleep checks must be recorded, including the time of the check, the practitioner completing the check and relevant observations.

Excursions and Outings

During trips or outings, children must be supervised closely with appropriate staff ratios and should remain within sight and/or hearing at all times. Staff must be responsible for the health and safety of children during the trip, with regular headcounts, dynamic risk assessment and additional controls for roads, transport, public spaces, toilets, food, allergies and emergency medication.

Responsibilities of Staff:

- Staff are responsible for ensuring children are supervised adequately and effectively, in line with this policy, the EYFS framework and related policies.
- Staff must continuously monitor the children in their care, observing and responding to their needs, ensuring they remain safe, engaged and supported.
- Staff must be aware of the setting's layout and how to ensure effective supervision in all areas, indoors and outdoors.
- Staff must use professional judgement to determine the appropriate level of supervision based on the children's age, development, activity, environment and any additional needs.
- Staff must apply higher levels of supervision during sleep, meals, snacks, transitions, visits, intimate care, outdoor play and any activity involving additional risk.
- Staff should ensure that children understand the expectations regarding safety and supervision in an age-appropriate way.

Supervision During Breaks or Lunch

Children should never be left unsupervised during lunch, snacks or breaks, whether indoors or outside. Adequate staff must be assigned to ensure that children are safe during these times, and a member of staff with a valid full paediatric first aid certificate must be in the room or immediate eating area whenever children are eating.

During meals and snacks, children must be seated safely in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair and must not walk, run, play or lie down while eating. Staff should sit facing children where possible, remain alert to choking risk, recognise that choking can be silent, prevent food sharing and respond promptly to any sign of an allergic reaction or difficulty eating. Any choking incident requiring intervention must be recorded and parents/carers must be informed.

Staff should monitor children's interactions, ensuring they are respectful and supportive of each other, and intervene when necessary to prevent any incidents.

Record Keeping

Attendance registers should be maintained at all times, recording which children are present and ensuring that children are never left unsupervised. Registers, headcounts and transitions must be accurate and up to date.



Staff should keep a record of any incidents or concerns regarding supervision, including children not being in sight or hearing when they should have been, sleep-check concerns, mealtime or choking incidents, unexplained absence from an activity, or any incident requiring first aid, safeguarding referral or parental notification.

Training

All staff must be trained in safeguarding and child protection policies, including how to supervise children effectively and respond to any incidents of concern. Training and briefings must also cover safer sleep, safer eating, choking prevention, allergy awareness, paediatric first aid arrangements, supervision during transitions and visits, and the safe use of mobile phones, cameras and electronic devices around children.

Supervision practices should be reviewed regularly in team meetings, staff supervision and leadership monitoring to ensure they are in line with current regulations, updated EYFS welfare requirements and best practice.

Review and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually or whenever there is a change in statutory guidance or regulations. Staff will be consulted about the effectiveness of the policy, and any areas for improvement will be addressed.

By following this policy, we ensure that children in our care are protected and supported, providing them with a safe, secure, and enriching environment in line with the EYFS framework.

Policy Owner: Nursery Manager

Policy Reviewed: August 2026

Next Review Date: August 2027