

Aspire - Collaborate - Explore

'Together we learn – United we achieve'



Foundation Stage Policy 2026-28

TOWNVILLE ACADEMY
Head teacher: Caroline Burden

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Review date: September 2028



FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Our vision

At Townville Academy we aspire to offer the best possible early education for our children in a happy, safe, inclusive environment. We build firm foundations through a welcoming, holistic community approach placing the individual needs of the child at the heart. With high expectations and aspirations for every child we seek to ensure all children develop the skills and attributes they need to thrive and succeed both now and in the future. Good behaviour is central to ensuring we meet this vision.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life*
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind*
- Close partnership working between practitioners and parents and/or carers*
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice*
- Detail how our EYFS offer supports our whole school curriculum intent.*

Introduction

The Foundation Stage applies to children aged from birth to five years old (end of the reception year).

In our school children aged 3 may join our Nursery class.

In the September after they turn 4 years old, pupils will begin their Reception year.

The vast majority of nursery children continue their foundation education within the school's reception classes. Compulsory education for young children begins at the start of the term after their fifth birthday. Within the Nursery, the majority of places are allocated on a 15hour basis, as morning or afternoon sessions. We also offer a small number of 30 hours places which offer working parents an additional degree of flexibility. Parents are also given the opportunity to 'top-up' their hours to align with the 32.5hours of main school and to enable them to access wraparound care.

Most Reception children attend full-time education from the September at the start of their reception year.

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Our Foundation Stage Unit:

Our Foundation stage unit consists of up to three classes dependent on numbers and need. Children within all three classes have access to an outdoor area, in all weathers. Children are supported by a range of qualified teachers and support staff who interact daily with children across the unit; supporting, scaffolding, challenging and extending their learning through a range of adult-directed and child-initiated learning pathways. A child's key person is their class teacher. Transition from Nursery into Reception is seamless as teaching staff know and understand each unique child and are able to accurately meet and facilitate the next steps along their learning journey.

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Admissions:

Admission to Nursery:

Places are allocated on a first come, first served basis in the order of the returned completed nursery option forms. Where capacity and/or funding arrangements allow, children will commence their nursery education in the term of or following their third birthday. Allocated places that are not taken up straight away within the first two weeks of the term or where a child has an unauthorised absence of two weeks will be given to the next child on the waiting list. When places are available we also have a January and Easter intake.

Admission to Reception Class:

The school follows the Local Authority Infant and Primary Schools 'Guidance for Schools' policy. Places must be applied for through the local authority portal.

The foundation stage is a crucial period in a young child's life establishing firm foundations for their future education, achievements and well-being. The school's foundation stage follows the clear aims and guidance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to ensure that all the children achieve the Every Child Matters outcomes of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, and achieving economic well-being. The framework allows for continuing quality and consistency of early years education within the school and an overall ethos of reflection and evaluation of practice. The Statutory framework for the EYFS forms the back bone of the principles and practice throughout the foundation stage at Townville Academy. Our foundation classes adhere to the legal requirements set out in the statutory framework to ensure learning and development as well as welfare requirements are met and achieved.

Aims and objectives

The aim of the foundation stage is that every child should have the best possible start to their education, laying firm foundations for learning, achievement and well-being for their future education in order for them to achieve their full potential and be ready for school. We believe that each child's early experiences can have a major impact on their future chances. The foundation stage aims to offer a safe, secure and happy environment for young children in which they can personally succeed in their own right with the support and encouragement of the various adults around them.

Our objectives in the foundation stage are:

To set standards for learning: ensuring that every child makes good progress, making the most of their abilities and talents in order to reach their potential.

Provide for equality of opportunity: ensuring no child is disadvantaged whatever their background (religion, cultural, medical or social).

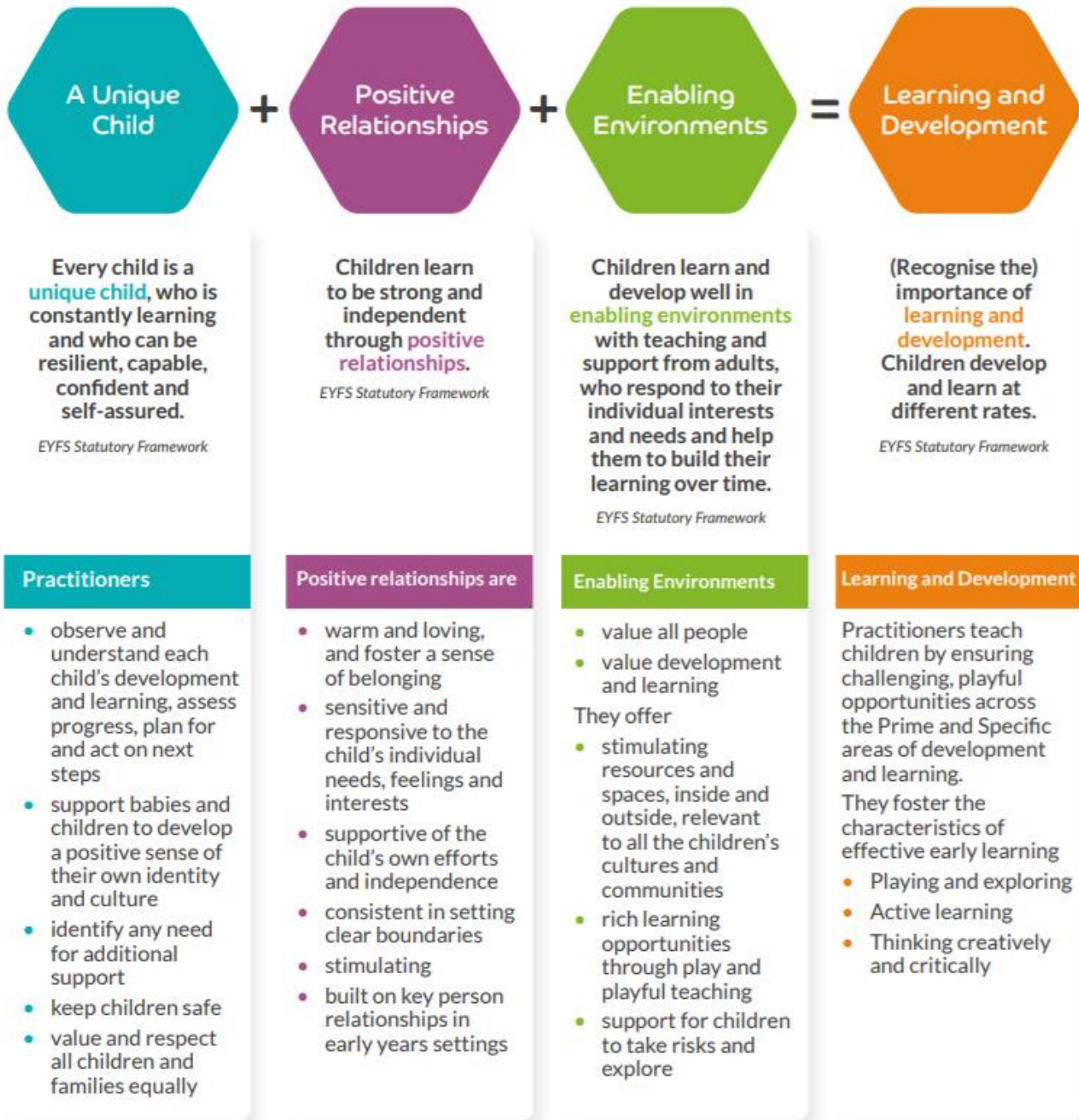
Create a partnership: for working with parents and other professionals between all settings that the children attend in order for them to develop their capabilities and potential (such as child minders, other foundation settings, speech and language support, EAL support, social services etc...).

Improving quality and consistency: providing clear standards and expectations and ending the distinction between care and learning. Moderation and monitoring of teaching and learning is an ongoing process and shared between the foundation unit staff, other foundation unit settings and other staff within the school where appropriate.

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To plan for the individual needs and interests of the child: This is informed by ongoing observational assessments and allows for a flexible approach to planning providing rich and personalised learning experiences. Planning is built around prior knowledge of the child and their abilities, talents and interests.

The 4 main themes set out in the EYFS (A unique child, positive relationships, enabling environments and learning and development) underpin the planning, assessment and practice of the foundation unit.



*Birth to 5 Matters Document (2021)

Teaching and learning style

At Townville Academy we believe each Unique Child reaches out to relate to people and things in a variety of ways. The Early Years curriculum acknowledges this and describes this as Characteristics of Effective Learning, these characteristics are broadly defined under three headings; playing and exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically. Each of these aspects supports a child's development through all areas of learning. Our understanding of each child and their unique learning skills enable us, throughout the foundation stage, to utilise a wide variety of teaching and learning strategies in order for the children to learn, progress and enjoy their experiences. The principle aim is to develop the children's knowledge, skills and understanding throughout the curriculum's seven areas of learning. These are divided into three prime areas of learning: **Communication and Language; Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Physical Development**. As well as the four specific areas: **Literacy; Mathematics; Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design**.

Children are taught through a balance of discrete teaching sessions, teacher-initiated activities and child/self-initiated play. Children's self-initiated learning is facilitated through carefully planned and continually enhanced areas of provision (i.e. maths area, writing area, construction area, water and sand, role-play, music, computers etc...). Continuous observations enable practitioners in the unit to scaffold, make assessments and plan for future learning. Other learning takes place through more structured teacher initiated and teacher led activities. Children experience some short whole class/group sessions and may, occasionally, work within small groups. Our staff are ambitious for our children and promote this through not only their teaching but also in the way they support children to foster effective characteristics for learning. Our foundation stage children are given many chances to talk, share ideas and review what they are learning and have achieved. Children use a range of ICT to support and enhance their learning throughout the seven areas of learning.

Across the Foundation Stage classrooms, children have a wide range of abilities, and the foundation unit provides suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the activities and provisions offered to the ability of the child. This is achieved through a range of strategies, effective tracking and next steps. The areas of provision provide open-ended resources and experiences for both nursery and reception children and they are enhanced to reflect the children's needs and interests, and provide challenge. Teaching assistants and nursery nurses are used to support children, provide effective intervention and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

Foundation Stage Planning and the Curriculum

We recognise that all children are unique and bring with them their own individual interests and experiences. Therefore, children in our foundation stage have many opportunities throughout the day which provide opportunities for child/self-initiated learning. It is at this point where planning takes place in the moment rather than prior to the session. We work this way because:

"Babies and young children are experiencing and learning in the here and now, not storing up their questions until tomorrow or next week. It is in that moment of curiosity, puzzlement, effort or interest – the 'teachable moment' – that the skilful adult makes a difference. By using this cycle on a moment-by-moment basis, the adult will be always alert to individual children (observation), always thinking about what it tells us about the child's thinking (assessment), and always ready to respond by using appropriate strategies at the right moment to support children's well-being and learning (planning for the next moment)."

From National Standards document Learning, Playing and Interacting P.22 - 23
The revised EYFS advises us to continue using this document.

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We have focus children NOT just focus activities. During the day whilst the children access the provision available staff approach the children, engage with them, play with them and support their independent learning and development. We acknowledge that it is during their child-initiated activity that children show high-levels of involvement and at this point, when the brain is most active, progress and development occurs.

Sir Michael Wilshaw says:-

“Early years provision is only as good as the quality of interaction between adults and children.”

Whilst many of our resources are accessible to the children at all times, giving them the opportunity to independently select resources to support their chosen activity. Practitioners also make enhancements to the provision based on what they learn from their interactions with the children designing them to ensure progress and interest is maximized.

We are a Read, Write Inc school. We use the proven Read, Write Inc scheme to introduce the children to phonics, reading and writing. We follow the Read, Write Inc Talk through stories to promote a love of high quality texts and reading. We use ‘Storying’ as a key part of our approach to early oracy and writing development. We believe that talk precedes writing and the ‘Storying’ approach enables us to support the children to live their stories before writing them. It also enables them to enhance and develop their individual imaginations – the best possible precursor to creative stories. Practitioners offer to help children record the stories they create, during child-initiated learning, in the role-play, small world or elsewhere within the provision. The children’s input to written recording is matched carefully to their ability; with appropriate scaffolding the children begin to see themselves as writers and are increasingly eager to record independently. The children’s stories are then shared with the whole class once a week, the children re-enact them together, ask questions about them and look at ways to improve or develop them further.

Practitioners also plan discrete teaching sessions and activities designed to ensure that all children are given the skills they need to access and achieve across the curriculum. The sessions and activities we design also aim to inspire awe and wonder in all our children. All practitioners ensure that planning is flexible and stems from the children’s interests, talents, needs and abilities.

Each week three children from each class become focus children, a pre-week questionnaire is sent out to gain information from the home environment. During the week observation sheets are completed, for each child, by all adults across the setting. At the end of the week class teachers meet with parents to discuss their child’s attainment and progress and to agree next steps for the child, planning support which can be offered by both home and school. In addition, all children have key teaching and learning recorded as observations on the tapestry system.

“Teaching should not be taken to imply a ‘top down’ or formal way of working. It is a broad term that covers the many different ways in which adults help young children learn. It includes their interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play and activities: communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges. It takes account of the equipment adults provide and the attention given to the physical environment, as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations.”

Ofsted, September 2015

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Foundation Stage and Assessment

Children are continuously observed and assessed throughout their time in the nursery and reception classes. On entry observations are crucial to establish a clear starting point to their learning journey. On Entry to Reception this includes the completion of the National Reception Baseline Assessment. Effective links are made with other settings to share information about the children. The child's individual profile is the main basis for assessments, summative records and tracking progress and achievement.

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning process within the foundation stage. Assessments are based on observations of what children are doing in their self-initiated activities as well through teacher led activities. Evidence gained through this is used to help plan each child's next steps for development.

Parents are encouraged to be part of the assessment process by making observations of their child's play and learning at home. Parents are encouraged to contribute these through the online Tapestry portal as well as before, during and after their child's week as a 'focus child'.

Each child has an online Tapestry portal where observations of child-initiated learning are shared. Photographs are used on here to form a part of the gathering of evidence and enhance observations.

We use a simple system for summative reporting within the nursery and reception years, this is aligned to the Development Matters 2021 ages and stages and provides valuable information for data analysis regarding pupil progress and attainment. At the end of the reception year the teachers make a judgement for each of the 17 early learning goals using the description of learning and development expected at the end of the EYFS. They consider the entirety of each early learning goal when making the judgement. Teachers will match their view of each child's attainment to the exemplification of national standards and children will be given an outcome of 'met' or 'not met' for each of the 17 ELGs. The data will then be sent to the LEA for submission and used to compare locally at authority level and nationally. The reception teachers also provide a written summary on each child's characteristics of learning which is given to both parents and year one staff.

In addition, Reception pupils are assessed in phonics at least every six weeks and regularly within maths in line with our progress expectations for maths. These systems ensure teachers hold an accurate view of each child's progress and is able to tailor any additional support required swiftly to ensure all children succeed.

Summative information is used to plan effective future learning and set targets and data is used to track pupil's progress throughout both the nursery and the reception classes. Each term children's progress is tracked across the seven areas of learning. Internal and cluster moderation at each assessment point enables us to ensure that our judgements are accurate and secure. Tracking helps staff provide the appropriate teaching, learning and targets for individual children, identify vulnerable children implementing specific intervention programs where appropriate.

Summative reports about individual children are produced at the end of both the nursery and reception years. These are shared with the parents and new class teachers. Progress and termly targets are shared with parents at Focus child parent's meetings, following their child's week as a focus child.

Foundation Stage and ICT

Technology is valued across the Foundation Stage. ICT is used, with clear learning objectives to enhance and support the teaching and learning within the foundation stage.

ICT is available for independent use by all children within the foundation stage through a variety of hardware such as a Tonies box, handheld metal detectors, electronic magnifying glasses, bee bots, remote control cars and other electronic toys.

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Age-appropriate digital literacy and e-safety are taught discreetly to support our pupils to engage safely with technology both at home and in school.

Foundation Stage and inclusion

We are an inclusive school. We strive to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs or disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language. For further details, see our Special Educational Needs Policy.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs or be gifted and talented. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style and adaptations to ensure appropriate adjustments are made to enable the child to learn more effectively and improve attainment.

Intervention through SEN support will lead to the creation of a Supporting Me To Learn Plan (SMTLP) for children with special educational needs. The SMTLP, may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to literacy and numeracy. Practitioners strive to ensure parents are fully involved with the support offered for children with SEND through close involvement and regular liaison. Where need identified is much greater, support from external agencies will be sought, as required, and a My Support Plan or application for an Education, Health, Care Plan may be made. At each stage we aim to ensure parents are fully informed and form part of the discussion and support process. Children with high levels of need may also access our Launchpad provision.

Pupil Safety

Safe Eating

Snack and mealtime provision in the Foundation Stage is safe, supervised and risk-assessed in line with the EYFS welfare requirements and KCSIE.

All surfaces at which food is prepared or eaten are cleaned before and after eating. Children and staff are expected to wash their hands with soap and warm water before eating meals or snacks, after meals or snacks and after going to the toilet.

Children will be seated while eating or drinking and supervised at all times; staff will position themselves to maintain clear sight and hearing of every child. A paediatric-first-aid trained member of staff will be present during snack and mealtime periods.

All staff receive annual training in allergen and anaphylaxis awareness and management.

All children will be given a piece of school fruit each day – this is not routinely chopped with children encouraged to take appropriately sized bites and chew food well before swallowing.

We are a nut aware school and request no food items containing nuts are brought into the building. Children are not given whole nuts or seeds at school and parents are requested not to place these in pack ups through annual communication.

Before admission we will collect and share with relevant staff full information about dietary needs, allergies, intolerances and medical or feeding requirements and will work with parents and health professionals to produce individual allergy/feeding plans where needed. We share annual food guidance in line with this policy and statutory guidance with parents/carers on entry to our setting and at least annually where children remain in our setting.

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Sleep

As children within our nursery are 3 or older, sleep is not a routine part of the day. We do acknowledge that occasionally a young child, particularly those attending for 30 hours or more, may fall asleep. Whilst this is rare we ensure this is managed appropriately. In such instances, the child will be moved to a flat, safe area in quiet space within the room.

For every sleep episode staff will log start and end times, the child's position and bedding, who was supervising, and any concerns or incidents; records will be kept on the child's Tapestry profile using the care diary function and shared with parents through this system. The child will remain within sight or hearing of an adult at all times.

If we feel the episode of sleep may be connected to illness; illness procedures are followed and parents will be contacted.

Toileting and intimate hygiene

Throughout our setting we ensure there is an adequate number of toilets and hand basins available.

Parents are encouraged to toilet train children in line with age-appropriate development expectations before their child starts nursery at 3 years old. For the small minority where this is not the case, staff will work with parents to help aid this journey.

For children who require intimate care due to an accident or more routinely until they achieve continence, staff will follow our intimate care policy. Nappy checks/changing is recorded and shared with parents through the care diary facility on Tapestry.

Resources

There is a wide range of resources available for the implementation and the delivery of the EYFS. The areas of provision within the unit form the basis of the curriculum for all the nursery and reception children. The resources are well organised, clearly labelled and of a very good quality and quantity. They are clean, well maintained and stored safely within the unit. Children have access to a vast range of stimulating resources promoting independence, responsibility and ownership by the children. The learning environment is planned both for indoors and outdoors with resources reflecting their life experiences and the wider world. It is free from stereotypical images and discriminatory practise. The local community and school environment is a rich resource exploited for its teaching and learning opportunities.

Monitoring and Review

The coordination and planning of the foundation stage is the responsibility of the EYFS lead, who:

- Supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in the foundation stage and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;*
- Regularly feeds back to Governors to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses within the foundation stage and indicates areas for further improvement;*
- Reviews planning, pupils work and leads moderation of the seven areas of learning.*
- Links with subject coordinators to moderate aspects of the seven areas of learning and inform the subject coordinators of how their subject is represented within the foundation stage and the EYFS.*

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- *Links with Accomplish Multi-Academy Trust and the LEA through locality pyramid events to moderate the foundation assessment judgements focusing across the seven areas of learning.*

Foundation unit staff meet weekly to discuss recent issues that have arisen within the unit and appropriate action is taken. Minutes are taken at these meetings. Shared observations provide clear next steps for planning and assessments.

A named member of the school's governing body is briefed to oversee the teaching of the foundation stage.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according the EYFS statutory framework.

<i>Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS</i>	<i>Where can it be found?</i>
<i>Safeguarding policy and procedures</i>	<i>See child protection and safeguarding policy</i>
<i>Procedure for responding to illness</i>	<i>See health and safety policy</i>
<i>Administering medicines policy</i>	<i>See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy</i>
<i>Emergency evacuation procedure</i>	<i>See health and safety policy</i>
<i>Procedure for checking the identity of visitors</i>	<i>See child protection and safeguarding policy</i>
<i>Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children</i>	<i>See child protection and safeguarding policy</i>
<i>Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints</i>	<i>See complaints policy</i>

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