

Enhanced Early Years Observation, Planning & Teaching Policy

New Beginnings – “Watch Us Grow” Curriculum & Tiny Taskforce Integration

1. Safeguarding Statement

At New Beginnings, **safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is our highest priority**, in line with the **EYFS statutory framework (2021)**. All staff must:

- Protect children from harm and ensure their safety and well-being at all times.
- Be alert to signs of abuse, neglect, or safeguarding concerns.
- Report concerns immediately following the school’s safeguarding procedures.
- Ensure that all observations, photos, videos, and documentation comply with safeguarding requirements.

Safeguarding is embedded in **all aspects of observation, planning, teaching, and assessment**. Senior managers review all “We Are Learning” observations before sharing with parents to ensure content is appropriate, safe, and aligned with curriculum and EYFS requirements.

“Providers must ensure children are kept safe and that they take all necessary steps to protect children from harm.” – EYFS Statutory Framework, 2021, Section 3.5

2. Observation Principles

Observations must be:

1. **Purposeful** – linked to developmental milestones, curriculum strands, Tiny Taskforce responsibilities, and next steps.
 2. **Balanced** – capturing learning in adult-led, child-initiated, and routine activities.
 3. **Comprehensive** – covering all EYFS Areas of Learning and Watch Us Grow values.
 4. **Reflective of Effective Learning** – Playing & Exploring, Active Learning, Creating & Thinking Critically.
 5. **Safeguarding-Aware** – staff must ensure photos, videos, and written observations respect privacy, consent, and child protection protocols.
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3. Observation Expectations

We Are Learning Observations:

- Completed on a **3-week rota** for each child.
- **Longer, in-depth observations**, linking learning to EYFS and Watch Us Grow curriculum.
- Staff should use **Development Matters guidance** in the Family App to highlight learning and next steps.
- **Multimedia limits:** max **4 photos OR 1 video**, reviewed for safeguarding before sharing.

Short Achievement Posts:

- “Proud of Us” or Tiny Taskforce contributions can be shared between formal observations.

Parent Communication:

- Observations shared **verbally at handover**.
- Ensure all discussions and content respect **confidentiality and safeguarding guidance**.

Senior Manager QA:

- Review content for safeguarding, curriculum alignment, and assessment value.
- Feedback to staff supports safe, high-quality practice.

4. Planning for Learning – What Before How

Principle: Staff plan learning **starting with the intention (what and why), then the method (how)**.

Safeguarding Integration:

- All planned experiences must **maintain child safety**, including resources, environment, and supervision ratios.
- Risks must be assessed before introducing new experiences or materials.

Practice Steps:

1. **Learning Intention:** What should children learn and why now?
2. **Link to EYFS & Curriculum:** Identify areas, characteristics of effective learning, and Tiny Taskforce roles.

3. **Design Experiences:** Decide how the learning will happen via play, adult interactions, or guided activities.
 4. **Safety Check:** Ensure environment, resources, and interactions are safe and inclusive.
 5. **Review & Reflect:** Did the learning intention succeed safely? What are the next steps?
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5. Teaching for Learning

Intentional, Safe, and Effective Teaching

Principles:

- **Start with what and why** (intent) before planning the activity (how).
- **Scaffold and extend** learning through high-quality adult–child interactions.
- **Use play** as the main context for learning, with guided and direct teaching as appropriate.

Safeguarding Reminders:

- Observe and interact **without putting children at risk** physically or emotionally.
- Use **appropriate language and adult modelling**; avoid shaming or pressure.
- Ensure all **activities and resources are safe and risk-assessed**.
- Maintain ratios and supervision for active play, Tiny Taskforce roles, and group activities.

Teaching Practices Include:

- Scaffolding thinking and language.
 - Modelling problem-solving.
 - Encouraging reflection and self-expression.
 - Using continuous assessment to adapt teaching safely.
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6. Family App Use

- **We Are Learning:** 3-week longer observations, max 4 photos/1 video, manager-approved.
 - **Proud of Us & Early Achievement Awards:** Celebrate progress safely, ensuring media is appropriate.
 - **Parent Communication:** Include safeguarding-conscious discussions at handover.
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7. Senior Management / Quality Assurance

- Review all observations and media for **safeguarding, curriculum coverage, and assessment quality**.
 - Monitor progress with Key People.
 - Provide **guidance and CPD** for safe, high-quality observation and teaching.
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8. Parent Assessment Points & 2-Year Checks

- **Parent Assessment Points:** May/June and November — next steps and developmental progress discussed.
 - **2-Year Checks:** Completed with Key Person and parent; ensure privacy, safety, and confidentiality throughout.
 - **Settling in reviews**-When the child has been with us around 6-8 week mark.
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9. Staff Responsibilities

All Staff: Observe, plan, teach, and communicate with intent, following safeguarding protocols.

Key People: Track Tiny Taskforce participation, link observations to curriculum, ensure safe practice.

Leaders: Quality assure observations, support staff, monitor progress, and safeguard children.

10. Best Practice Tips

- Start with **learning intention before activity**.
- Embed **safeguarding in every step** — observation, planning, teaching, communication.
- Celebrate learning, effort, and achievement safely.
- Use observation data to plan next steps and scaffold learning responsibly.

11. Together time

Together time helps children feel safe and valued, builds strong relationships with adults and peers, provides opportunities to introduce ideas, routines, and learning in a supportive group setting.

A practitioners role at together time;

- Encourages **social interaction** and a sense of **belonging**
 - Supports **communication and language development**
 - Helps children learn **listening, turn-taking, and attention skills**
 - Often includes **songs, stories, discussions, movement, or together time activities**
 - Can be whole-group or small-group, depending on children's needs
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Key Features:

- Fully **EYFS compliant** with safeguarding at the core
- Integrated with **Watch Us Grow curriculum** and **Tiny Taskforce roles**
- Structured 3-week We Are Learning rota
- Multimedia limits (max 4 photos / 1 video)
- Parent engagement via Family App and handover
- Scheduled assessment points and 2-year checks
- Supports **teaching, assessment, planning, and professional development**

Recording Observations in Famly

When recording observations of children in Famly:

- **Use *Development Matters*** as your guide. This ensures observations are linked to learning goals, accurately track progress, and provide a clear picture of each child's development.
- **Add observations directly in the Famly app.** This keeps records up to date and accessible for both the team and parents.
- **Access *Development Matters* guidance** while writing an observation by using Famly's *Reference material* panel — this lets you view curriculum guidance (including *Development Matters*) as you enter an observation. You can find guidance on how *Development Matters* supports observations on the government website here: [Development Matters \(GOV.UK\)](https://www.gov.uk/development-matters)
- **Be thorough and specific** in your written observation, and include how it connects to the child's learning and development goals.

How to find the curriculum guidance in Famly:

1. Go to the child's *Journey* tab or open a *New Observation* in Famly.
2. In the observation screen, look for the *Reference material* panel — here you can browse guidance including *Development Matters* to support your assessment as you write.

We have been learning-example observation

Child X has had a very fun and engaging couple of weeks at nursery, exploring a variety of sensory and creative activities. She created mittens and snow globe paintings, using a sponge dipped in blue paint to make snowflakes, showing early hand–eye coordination and exploration of textures. She then used her hands with white paint to make prints on the mittens, enjoying the sensory experience. Jasmine also sprinkled glitter on her picture with help, showing curiosity and enjoyment in experimenting with materials.

For her snow globe, child x practised holding a paintbrush, dipping it into gold and blue paint to explore colour and mark-making, developing her fine motor skills and control.

Child x also engaged in the Hungry Turtle activity, placing scrunched-up tissue paper into bottles, showing emerging hand–eye coordination and focus. She displayed early social skills, taking turns while waiting for her friends to finish.

She thoroughly enjoyed watching a puppet show, sitting with her friends, and responding to the songs and actions, supporting her listening, attention, and social engagement.

Child x has shown curiosity, enjoyment, and emerging independence across her learning experiences. 🌟

Development points will be added by either your nursery manager or a member of the senior management team when the observation is reviewed. Staff should also be reading over the areas the observation was linked to, to support their learning and development of the development matters.

Communication and Language

- Responds to songs, stories, and puppets with gestures and vocalisations
- Uses early words and gestures to express ideas and needs
- Attends to adults and peers during shared activities

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Engages in turn-taking and early cooperative play
- Shows enjoyment when exploring activities and being with peers
- Demonstrates curiosity and confidence in the learning environment

Physical Development

- Develops fine motor skills through painting, handprints, and manipulating objects
- Practices hand–eye coordination when transferring small objects (tissue paper, glitter)
- Explores tools and materials safely under adult supervision

Understanding the World

- Explores textures, colours, and materials through hands-on activities
- Notices cause-and-effect when manipulating objects (pouring, stamping, dropping)
- Shows curiosity about familiar objects, people, and routines

Mathematics (Early Awareness)

- Explores size, quantity, and spatial relationships through filling, pouring, and placing objects
- Recognises simple patterns and repetitions during play

Literacy

- Attends to stories, songs, and rhymes
- Explores books and pictures, pointing or vocalising in response
- Begins to imitate words and actions

Expressive Arts and Design

- Explores materials, colours, and marks in creative activities
- Experiments with textures (paint, glitter, sponge)
- Engages in simple role play and enjoys imaginative responses to stories or songs

CoEL

Playing and Exploring

Active Learning

Creating and Thinking Critically

EYFS

Communication and language

Physical development

Personal, social and emotional

Mathematics

Understanding the world

Expressive arts and design

Expanded Tiny Taskforce – Roles Aligned to Watch Us Grow Curriculum

Job	Child-Friendly Wording	Aligned Watch Us Grow Core Value	EYFS Areas / Skills	Characteristics of Effective Learning
Line Leader	"I help lead the line."	Sense of Belonging	PSED – Building relationships, self-confidence, self-regulation	Active Learning – Responsibility, motivation; Playing & Exploring – Engaging in group routines
Meal Helper	"I help with meals."	Content & Active	PD – Health, self-care, fine motor skills; PSED – Independence	Active Learning – Following steps, persistence; Playing & Exploring – Engaging in practical tasks
Tidy-Up Crew	"I help tidy."	Sense of Belonging / Content & Active	PSED – Responsibility, cooperation; PD – Physical coordination	Active Learning – Completing tasks, perseverance; Playing & Exploring – Engaging with environment
Eco Warrior	"I help care for our world."	Naturally Inquisitive	UW – Environmental awareness, caring for nature; PSED – Responsibility, social awareness	Creating & Thinking Critically – Problem-solving and decision-making; Playing & Exploring – Observing and interacting with the environment
Litter Monitor	"I help keep our environment free from waste."	Naturally Inquisitive	UW – Environmental awareness; PSED – Responsibility, teamwork	Active Learning – Consistent action and follow-through; Creating & Thinking Critically – Thinking about impact and consequences
Book Buddy	"I look after the books."	Confident Communicator / Critical & Creative Thinkers	Literacy – Handling books, storytelling, mark-making; CL – Reading and discussing stories	Playing & Exploring – Engaging with books; Active Learning – Responsibility and persistence; Creating & Thinking Critically – Organizing and caring for resources

Job	Child-Friendly Wording	Aligned Watch Us Grow Core Value	EYFS Areas / Skills	Characteristics of Effective Learning
Handwashing Hero	"I help remind friends to wash hands."	Content & Active	PD – Health and self-care; PSED – Responsibility, caring for others	Active Learning – Following routines consistently; Playing & Exploring – Encouraging peers through modeling
Friendship Ambassador	"I help my friends feel happy and included."	Sense of Belonging	PSED – Relationships, empathy, emotional awareness; CL – Communication	Playing & Exploring – Engaging socially; Active Learning – Supporting peers; Creating & Thinking Critically – Problem-solving social situations
Storyteller / Presenter	"I share stories or news with the class."	Confident Communicator	CL – Speaking, listening, storytelling; Literacy – Writing, mark-making	Playing & Exploring – Engaging with stories; Active Learning – Confidence to speak to a group; Creating & Thinking Critically – Organizing ideas logically
Science Explorer	"I discover, investigate, and test ideas."	Naturally Inquisitive / Critical & Creative Thinkers	UW – Science, observation, investigation; Mathematics – Measuring and comparing	Playing & Exploring – Curiosity and experimentation; Active Learning – Persistence with investigations; Creating & Thinking Critically – Predicting, observing, problem-solving
Playtime Captain	"I help lead games and active play."	Content & Active	PD – Gross motor skills, teamwork; PSED – Cooperation, confidence	Playing & Exploring – Engaging actively; Active Learning – Motivation and perseverance; Creating & Thinking Critically – Planning and organizing games

✓ Highlights of the Expanded Taskforce

1. **All Core Values Covered:**
 - Confident Communicator, Sense of Belonging, Critical & Creative Thinkers, Naturally Inquisitive, Content & Active.
2. **Literacy Integration:**
 - Roles like **Book Buddy** and **Storyteller / Presenter** develop reading, writing, and oral communication.
3. **EYFS Areas Fully Represented:**
 - Prime Areas: PSED, CL, PD
 - Specific Areas: Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts & Design
4. **Characteristics of Effective Learning:**
 - **Playing & Exploring** – Curiosity, engagement, creativity
 - **Active Learning** – Persistence, responsibility, motivation
 - **Creating & Thinking Critically** – Problem-solving, planning, reflecting
5. **Child-Friendly Language:**
 - Each job is easy for children under 5 to understand and take pride in.

Early Years Achievement Awards

Aligned to Watch Us Grow Curriculum

Award Name	Aligned Watch Us Grow Core Value	Criteria / What to Celebrate	EYFS Areas / Skills	Child-Friendly Description
Curious Explorer	Naturally Inquisitive	Shows curiosity, asks questions, investigates new things	Understanding the World (UW), Characteristics of Effective Learning – Playing & Exploring	"I love asking questions and discovering new things!"
Creative Artist	Critical & Creative Thinkers	Uses imagination and creativity in art, role play, or music	Expressive Arts & Design (EAD), Creativity, Fine Motor Skills	"I use my imagination to make art, play, and music!"
Maths Magician	Critical & Creative Thinkers	Counts, measures, sorts, or solves simple problems	Mathematics (M), Problem-Solving, Critical Thinking	"I enjoy counting, measuring, and solving problems!"
Little Scientist	Naturally Inquisitive / Critical & Creative Thinkers	Observes, experiments, and explores the natural world	Understanding the World (UW), Critical Thinking, Investigation	"I explore, experiment, and find out how things work!"
Confident Communicator	Confident Communicator	Expresses thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly	Communication & Language (CL), Speaking, Literacy, Social Skills	"I share my ideas, feelings, and stories with others!"
Friendship Star	Sense of Belonging	Shows kindness, shares, helps peers	Personal, Social & Emotional Development (PSED), Relationships	"I am kind, helpful, and a good friend!"
Team Player	Sense of Belonging / Critical & Creative Thinkers	Works well in group activities, collaborates	PSED, Cooperation, Turn-Taking	"I work well with others and share ideas in groups!"
Little Chef	Content & Active	Demonstrates independence and skill in practical activities	Physical Development (PD) – Fine Motor Skills, Independence, Maths	"I can mix, measure, and help make food!"
Independent Achiever	Content & Active	Takes responsibility,	PSED, Independence, Self-Care Skills	"I can do things by myself and finish tasks!"

Resilience Star	Content & Active / Critical & Creative Thinkers	completes tasks independently Tries again after challenges, shows perseverance	PSED, Characteristics of Effective Learning – Active Learning	“I keep trying even when things are tricky!”
Festival Explorer	Sense of Belonging / Naturally Inquisitive	Participates and shows interest in cultural events	UW, PSED, CL	“I love learning about different festivals, celebrations, and cultures!”
Eco Hero	Naturally Inquisitive	Cares for the environment, learns about nature	UW, PSED, Critical Thinking	“I care for nature and help our planet!”
Storyteller Extraordinaire	Confident Communicator / Critical & Creative Thinkers	Tells imaginative stories or recounts experiences	CL, Literacy, EAD	“I tell stories and share ideas in my own special way!”

✓ How This Alignment Works:

1. **Watch Us Grow Core Values:** Each award maps to **one or more core values**, showing how your curriculum underpins achievement recognition.
2. **EYFS Integration:** Every award explicitly references **EYFS areas of learning** and literacy where appropriate.
3. **Literacy Inclusion:** Literacy is included in awards like **Confident Communicator** and **Storyteller Extraordinaire**, ensuring writing, storytelling, and reading are recognized.
4. **Characteristics of Effective Learning:** Awards highlight engagement, exploration, creativity, critical thinking, and perseverance.
5. **Child-Friendly Messaging:** Each award keeps a **positive, empowering description** for children to identify with.