

STOKE POGES SCHOOL

Early Years Foundation Policy

Governors Committee Responsible for the Policy	Governing Board
Date Approved	September 2025
Recommended Review Period	Annual
Date of Next Review	September 2026
Person Responsible for the Policy	Ms McDade

1. Introduction - The Early Years Foundation Stage

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full 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”. (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2023)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the area of education upon which young children build the rest of their lives. It is a single framework for care, learning and development. All learners should be given the opportunity to experience the best possible start to their education to develop solid foundations which will ensure that they flourish throughout their school years and on into adulthood.

The ‘Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2023’ refers to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they will turn five. The Foundation Stage is important in its own right and in preparation for later schooling. It sets out a series of Early Learning Goals for children to work towards by the time they reach the end of EYFS at the age of 5+. Whilst the expectation is that most children will achieve the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Reception year, younger children will be provided with experiences which will support them in reaching the goals at the appropriate time.

2. 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
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and antidiscriminatory practice

3. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) (EYFS) that applies from September 2021.

4. Structure of the EYFS

At The Stoke Poges School, our early years provision includes two Reception classes for 30 children.

5. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest EYFS statutory framework. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. 3 areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Planning

The EYFS framework provides a long-term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year. Medium term planning is created and considers the individual children's learning and developmental needs. All Areas of Learning and Development are planned for and available to access within the setting. The learning opportunities provided include a range of adult focused and child-initiated activities both indoors and outdoors.

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable them to develop and learn effectively across all areas of learning, as well as opportunities to develop their cultural capital.

Staff also consider the individual needs, interests, and stages of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable learning journey for each child. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. They also show ambitious intent for all children and scaffold support to ensure all children make good progress from their starting points.

Staff are expected to develop a strong continuous provision, and then plan enhanced provision and additional adult directed activities to support this.

As children progress through the EYFS, key group work, adult-directed and whole class work will be planned, as appropriate for the age and stage of the pupils.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

Play based learning is paramount and during child initiated learning sessions children direct their own learning from an enabling environment and resource bank provided by staff. Staff enhance play and extend as needed to influence individual learning steps. This learning is underpinned by the CoETL. Our work is research informed. We have used the work Greg Bottrill – (Can I Go and Play Now) which ensures that there are exciting hooks to stimulate ideas and learning. Adult interactions must be meaningful and

supportive and not “interfering”. Practitioners are aware of individuals and groups next steps and support in play-based opportunities to scaffold children’s learning. For example, an adult maybe observing a group of children who are using the mud kitchen in a repetitive way. So, the staff may support their play by providing clipboards for mark making and writing recipes, scales for weighing ingredients and enhancing the recipes by encouraging the children to collect natural materials from the environment. Whilst Child Led learning is favourable, it is recognised that for some learning, groups of children will need to be taken to complete specific tasks. Teacher Directed Learning sessions are carefully matched to the learning needs of the individuals and groups of children. As children grow older and as their development allows the balance gradually shifts towards more Teacher Led activities to help the children prepare for the more formal learning ready for Year 1.

The teaching of reading will begin within the first term. Children will begin with a single daily Read Write Inc. (RWI) phonics session taught as a whole class, covering set 1 sounds as well as oral blending and segmenting. After these sounds have been taught, individual assessments will take place to allow the children to be split into ability groups. As the year progresses phonics sessions will increase in length and include a speed sound lesson and a reading/writing lesson. The children will be assessed every 6 weeks and progress will be recorded.

6. Assessment

At The Stoke Poges School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels (‘emerging’)

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

At The Stoke Poges School, we support children in using the three characteristics of effective learning. These are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

(Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2023)

7. Working with Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents are first and most enduring educators and we greatly value the contribution they make to their children’s education. We recognise the role that parents have played and their future role in educating the children. We do this through:

- Supporting children through the transition from preschool/nursery to Reception; members of the team visit or communicate with the main feeder nurseries and preschool where applicable, to meet the children and discuss progress with their keyworkers.
- Inviting parents to induction meetings during the term and to workshops during the Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child, particularly in relation to Literacy and Maths. • Encouraging parents to talk to the child’s teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting with parents twice a year in which parents and teachers discuss their child’s progress in private. Parents receive a report on their children’s attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Arranging a range of activity afternoons throughout the year that encourages collaboration between children, school and parents.
- Providing parents opportunities to celebrate and share their child’s learning and development by coming into school to events such as Star of the Week assembly and Celebration Assemblies.
- Uploading Termly Key Knowledge Organisers which includes activities to embed learning at home.

We have an open-door policy for parents to speak to staff at the beginning and end of the day.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child’s progress and development through a weekly blog on our school website and our school social media (Facebook and Twitter).

8. Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

We recognise that children learn best when they are healthy safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

Our Safeguarding and Welfare procedures are outlined in our Child Protection policy.

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

9. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by FGB every 2 years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Headteacher		Date	
Chair of Governing Board		Date	

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.

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