

STOKE POGES SCHOOL

Early Years Foundation Policy

Date Approved	September 2026
Recommended Review Period	Annual
Date of Next Review	September 2027
Person Responsible for the Policy	Mrs Clare O'Sullivan

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a secure foundation for learning, development and 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/carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Guidance

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#) (EYFS framework), effective from 1 September 2026, and the latest version of the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

3. Structure of the EYFS

At The Stoke Poges School, we have two Reception classes, with 30 places in each.

4. 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.

Three areas, known as the prime areas, are 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

We also support children in 4 specific areas which help strengthen and develop the 3 prime areas, and ignite the children's curiosity and enthusiasm:

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

Children have access to a stimulating outdoor learning environment throughout the school day. Outdoor learning is recognised as an important part of the curriculum and provides opportunities to develop all areas of learning through exploration, investigation, physical activity and play.

Planning

The EYFS framework underpins our Reception curriculum and ensures that children experience a broad, balanced and ambitious range of learning opportunities across all seven areas of learning and development. Our long-term curriculum identifies the knowledge, skills and experiences that we intend children to acquire throughout the Reception year, while medium-term planning is responsive to children's interests, developmental needs and next steps in learning. All areas of learning and development are planned for and made accessible through high-quality indoor and outdoor provision.

Staff plan a balance of child-initiated, adult-directed and continuous provision opportunities that enable children to develop and learn effectively across the curriculum. Learning experiences are carefully designed to extend children's knowledge, language and understanding of the world around them. Through enrichment activities, educational visits, visitors and first-hand experiences, we seek to broaden children's horizons, deepen their understanding and develop their cultural capital.

Practitioners consider the individual needs, interests and stages of development of each child and use this knowledge to plan challenging, engaging and enjoyable learning experiences. Regular observation and assessment inform planning and ensure that teaching is responsive to children's needs. Where a child has a special educational need or disability (SEND), staff work closely with families and, where appropriate, external professionals and agencies to identify and provide the support required to help the child achieve their full potential.

In planning and guiding children's learning, practitioners recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and adapt their practice accordingly. They maintain high expectations and ambitious aspirations for all children, providing appropriate challenge and carefully scaffolded support to enable every child to make strong progress from their starting points.

High-quality continuous provision forms the foundation of learning in Reception. Well-resourced and purposeful learning environments encourage children to explore, investigate, practise and apply new skills independently. Practitioners enhance the provision through carefully planned activities, experiences and resources that respond to children's interests and promote their next steps in learning.

Throughout the Reception year, opportunities for small-group, adult-directed and whole-class learning are carefully planned where appropriate, taking account of children's age, stage of development and readiness. These opportunities complement, rather than replace, the central role of active, exploratory and play-based learning in supporting children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals and preparing them for a successful transition into Key Stage 1.

Teaching

Teaching in Reception is underpinned by our belief that children learn best through meaningful experiences, high-quality interactions and purposeful play. Our approach is informed by the work of **Greg Bottrill**, recognising the importance of curiosity, creativity, relationships and child-centred learning within a nurturing and enabling environment.

Practitioners provide a balance of child-initiated learning, high-quality continuous provision and carefully planned adult-directed teaching, both indoors and outdoors. Learning experiences are designed to engage, inspire and challenge children while promoting independence, resilience and a love of learning. Staff use ongoing observation and assessment to identify children's strengths, interests and next steps, ensuring that teaching is responsive to individual needs. High expectations are maintained for all children, with appropriate support and challenge enabling every child to make strong progress from their starting points.

Communication and language are at the heart of our teaching. Practitioners use skilled questioning, modelling and high-quality interactions to extend children's thinking, vocabulary and understanding. Early reading is prioritised through the systematic teaching of phonics using Read Write Inc. (RWI), alongside

regular opportunities to develop speaking and listening, comprehension and early writing skills. A love of reading is fostered through daily story times, high-quality texts and rich language experiences.

Teaching is further enriched through first-hand experiences, educational visits, visitors and wider curriculum opportunities that broaden children's knowledge of the world and develop their cultural capital. All children, including those with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, are supported to access the curriculum and achieve their potential. Through high-quality teaching, effective provision and strong relationships with children and families, we ensure that children are well prepared for a successful transition into Year 1.

5. 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. Staff will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals.

Starting reception

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

The RBA is a short, practical activity that each child will complete with their teacher during the first 6 weeks in reception. It looks at early mathematics, literacy, communication and language. It provides a starting point from which the school can measure how much progress pupils make across primary school. Results are compared with pupils' Key Stage 2 outcomes at the end of Year 6 to give an overall progress measure for the school as a whole – not for individual children.

The RBA is not used to make judgements about early years provision, either current or retrospective, and the RBA and its data is not used for any other purpose apart from creating primary progress measures.

The end of EYFS

In the final term of the academic year in which the child reaches age 5, and no later than 30th June in that term, staff will complete the EYFS profile for each child. Each child is assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

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

The EYFS profile will reflect staff members' own knowledge and professional judgement of a child to inform discussions with parents/carers, and any other person whom the teacher or parent/carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

The school shares the EYFS profile with the child's Year 1 teacher. This helps to inform a discussion between Reception and Year 1 teachers about the child's stage of development and learning needs, and helps with planning activities in Year 1.

The school shares the results of each child's 'progress check' and EYFS profile (but not the reception baseline assessment) with their parents/carers.

In exceptional circumstances, after discussion and only in agreement with parents/carers, a child might stay in EYFS provision beyond the end of the academic year in which they turn 5. In these exceptional cases, we will continue to assess the child throughout their time in EYFS provision and complete their profile at the end of the year before they move into Year 1.

An EYFS profile will be completed for all children, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). We will make the appropriate reasonable adjustments to the assessment process for children with SEND.

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools to ensure consistent assessment judgements. We submit EYFS data to the local authority on request.

6. Working with Parents and Carers

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there's a strong partnership between our staff and each child's parents and/or carers. 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 preschools where applicable, to meet the children and discuss progress with their keyworkers.
- Inviting parents to induction meetings and to workshops during the Reception year 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 encourage collaboration between children, school and parents.
- Providing parents with 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 Medium-Term Plans, which include activities to embed learning at home.
- Providing a carefully planned transition to Year 1. Reception and Year 1 staff work closely together to share information about a child's attainment, learning characteristics, interests and pastoral needs. All children are supported through transition visits and opportunities to become familiar with their new classroom and staff.

We have an open-door policy providing parents the opportunity 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 channels, including Facebook and X.

7. Staff

7.1 Staff training

We will:

- Train all staff in safeguarding procedures in line with Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) guidance
- Support all staff to feel supported and confident in implementing our safeguarding policy and procedures
- Renew training every 2 years, or more often when it's needed to help maintain skills; keep up to date with any changes to our safeguarding procedures; or because of any safeguarding concerns
- Outline how training is delivered, and how staff are supported to put it in place, in our child protection and safeguarding policy

Our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will:

- Provide ongoing support, advice and guidance to all staff
- Attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework
- Liaise as needed with local statutory children's services agencies and our local safeguarding partners

7.2 Safer recruitment

When recruiting staff, we will follow the procedures set out in the latest EYFS framework guidance and KCSiE on checking the suitability of recruits, including:

- Obtaining at least 1 written reference for any member of staff (including volunteers) before they are recruited
- Carrying out the necessary checks, including the appropriate level of DBS check
- Recording information about staff qualifications and identity checks, vetting processes and references.

See our safeguarding policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures.

7.3 Whistleblowing

We make sure that all staff and volunteers are aware of our whistleblowing procedures; feel able to raise concerns about any poor or unsafe practice; and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

In the event that an individual feels that they need to blow the whistle on misconduct, they should report their concern to the headteacher. If the concern is about the headteacher, or if it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the chair of governors.

See our whistleblowing policy for details on our procedures for handling whistleblowing.

7.3.1 Malicious or vexatious allegations

If an allegation is made in good faith, but investigation finds no wrongdoing, there will be no disciplinary action against the member of staff who raised the concern.

If, however, an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, we will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the person making the allegation.

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.

All practitioners are alert to any issues in children's lives at home or elsewhere.

See our child protection policy for more information.

8.1 Responding to allegations or concerns

If we have concerns about children's safety or welfare, we will immediately notify our local authority children's social care team, in line with local reporting procedures. In emergencies, we will also inform the police.

If a concern or allegation is about:

- A member of staff (including supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors) posing a risk of harm to children, we will report it to the headteacher as soon as possible
- The headteacher, we will report it to the chair of governors

Where we believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting the headteacher, we will report it directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

We will then follow the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy, found on the website, for managing the allegation.

8.2 Staffing ratios

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff-to-child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety.

We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils.

8.3 Paediatric first aid (PFA)

We have at least 1 person with a current first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises, and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. The PFA certificate is for a full course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the EYFS framework. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

8.4 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

We also have a DSL who has lead responsibility for safeguarding children. They are also responsible for:

- Liaising with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSPs (local safeguarding partners)
- Providing support, advice and guidance to all other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required
- Attending a safeguarding training course that complies with the criteria set out in annex C of the latest EYFS framework

8.5 Absence

We're required to follow up absences promptly.

If a child is absent for a prolonged time or if the parents/carers haven't told us about the absence, we will attempt to contact the parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts.

See our attendance policy for more on this, including our expectations of parents/carers to report absences.

8.6 Oral health and tooth brushing

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

8.7 Safer eating

While children are eating, there will always be at least 1 member of staff in the setting with a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate (from a course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the latest EYFS framework). All children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating, and seated safely in a designated eating space.

Before a child joins our school, we will get information on their:

- Dietary requirements and preferences
- Food allergies and intolerances
- Health requirements

We will share this information with all staff involved in food preparation and handling. At each mealtime and snack time it will be clear which staff member is responsible for checking that the food meets all the requirements for each child.

We will make sure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis; the differences between allergies and intolerances; and that children can develop allergies at any time.

We will consult with parents/carers to:

- Create allergy action plans for their child – with the help of health professionals, where appropriate. We will also keep this information up to date and share it with all staff

In the event of a choking incident that requires intervention, we will record details of the incident and make the child's parents/carers aware. We will periodically review the records to identify whether we can change anything in our practice to make eating safer, and then take action as appropriate.

8.8 Accident or injury

We keep a first aid box (which contains appropriate items for children) always accessible.

We record any accidents or injuries and any first aid treatments on Medical Tracker.

We will inform parents or carers the same day as, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, of any:

- Accident or injury sustained by the child
- First aid treatment given

We will notify the relevant authority of any serious accident, illness, or injury to, or death of a child while in our care and inform them of the action taken, as soon as reasonably practicable.

8.9 Safety of premises

We make sure that our premises, including overall floor space and outdoor space, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children we care for and activities provided on the premises.

We comply with requirements of health and safety legislation, including fire safety and hygiene requirements.

9. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the headteacher 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 to 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.