



PYRFORD CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS POLICY

Approval Date: 29 March 2021

Revision Approved: 4 October 2021 *in light of new curriculum*

Review Date: Autumn 2022



**Where 'school' is referred to this encompasses Squirrels Nursery of Pyrford Primary.*

Pyrford Church of England Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

Our mission

We greatly value the importance of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life, in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

“The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children’s ‘school readiness’ and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- **Quality and consistency** in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.”¹

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Data Protection Act 1998

¹ DfE (2021) ‘Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage’ p.5



This policy has due regard to statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2021) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
- DfE (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Working together to safeguard children'
- DfE (2015) 'The prevent duty' & updated 2021

This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Assessment Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Equality Policy
- Administering Medication Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy

Roles and responsibilities

The Role of Governors

The governing body has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

The governing body has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual

orientation. The governing body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

The EYFS lead, in conjunction with the headteacher, has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.

Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy.

Governors will receive reports from the Headteacher and the EYFS leader and act upon areas identified as requiring improvement.

The Effectiveness sub-committee will meet regularly to monitor progress against targets.

Governors will visit the school and nursery to increase their knowledge of classroom activity. When visiting, governors will:

- Conduct Learning Walks accompanied by curriculum subject leaders
- Talk to pupils about their experiences.
- Talk to teachers about their experiences.
- Report their findings to the governing body and to the parent/carer community through the weekly newsletter.

External monitoring

- The school improvement officer will scrutinise all available data and discuss the school's self-evaluation, along with all matters arising from it, with the Senior Leadership Team.
- The school improvement officer will undertake lesson observations as appropriate.
- The school will moderate children's work with other local schools.

Safeguarding

When planning and delivering the curriculum of the school, staff should take into account the safeguarding responsibilities and these should be embedded throughout the curriculum. Specific areas of safeguarding should be covered through PSHE/SMSC/Collective worship. The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in the school's safeguarding policy.

Aims

Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Give each child a happy and positive start to their school life, in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.



- Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- Work alongside parents/carers to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.

We adhere to the four guiding principles which shape practice within EYFS settings:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between the school and parents/carers.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

To put these principles into practice, the school:

- Provides a broad and balanced curriculum, in line with the statutory EYFS framework, which takes children's different stages of development into account.
- Promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, recognising that all pupils are unique and special.
- Works in partnership with parents and/or carers.
- Plans challenging learning experiences, based on individual needs, which are informed by observation and assessment.
- Encourages pupils independence and decision making skills.
- Encourages development of pupils' understanding of social skills and the appropriate behaviour towards one another. Teaching appropriate methods of expressing needs and feelings.
- Implements a key person approach to develop close relationships with children.
- Provides a safe and secure learning environment that enables and develops learning.



Learning and teaching

We offer an EYFS curriculum based on an observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development. In partnership with parents/carers, the school promotes the learning and development of pupils to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape education programmes in EYFS settings. These are split into two sections – prime and specific; however, all the sections are interconnected and important.

The 'prime' areas of learning and development are:

- Communication and language
 - Listening, Attention and Understanding
 - Speaking
- Physical development
 - Gross Motor Skills
 - Fine Motor Skills
- Personal, social and emotional development
 - Self-regulation
 - Managing Self
 - Building Relationships

The 'specific' areas of learning and development are:

- Literacy
 - Comprehension
 - Word Recognition
 - Writing
- Mathematics
 - Number
 - Numerical Patterns
- Understanding the world
 - Past and Present
 - People, Culture and Communities



THE NEWARK TRUST

- The Natural World
 - Expressive arts and design
 - Creating With Materials
 - Being Imaginative and Expressive
- Activities are planned with regard to three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS:
 - Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things.
 - Active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.
 - Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.
- Activities are planned to reflect children’s interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience. Each area of learning and development will be implemented through a mix of adult-led and pupil-initiated activity.
- The classroom is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment. Open ended resources will be utilised to support exploration and critical thinking, as well as providing provocations to enthuse and motivate pupils.
- Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area, and daily outdoor activities are planned, unless circumstances, such as the weather, would make outdoor activity inappropriate and unsafe.
- We recognise that play is essential to pupil’s cognitive, imaginative, creative, emotional and social development. We aim to provide play experiences which have a balance between adult-led and child-initiated play; allowing pupils to explore their own ideas and apply what they have learnt in different situations.
- Staff members will be actively engaged in pupils’ play, either by undertaking careful observations or by joining in with the pupils in order to develop their activity.
- Staff members will ask open ended questions and challenge pupils to re-examine and extend their understanding of the world. All pupils will be encouraged to make and modify plans as a method of ensuring they review and reflect on their own learning.
- The school will respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through friendly and positive interaction.
- The Class teacher will discuss any cause for concern in a child’s progress, especially in the prime areas of learning, with the child’s parents/carers. A strategy of support will be agreed upon and consideration will be taken as to whether the child may have a special educational need or disability which requires additional support.



- The school takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children with English as an additional language (EAL) to use their home language in play and learning whilst also ensuring that these children have sufficient opportunities to reach a good standard of English. During assessment, if a child is found to not have a strong grasp on English, the class teacher will contact the child's parents/carers to establish their home language skills to assess if there is cause for concern about a language delay.
- Further information regarding learning and development are set out in the school's Teaching and Learning Policy.

Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping the school to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support. Parents/carers will be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development, and the class teacher will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents/carers.

- In order to recognise pupils' needs, understand their progress, and to plan activities and support pupils' development, progress will be monitored.
- Progress is recorded by observing and assessing children using a combination of written observations, photos, parental views and samples of work; however, paperwork is kept to a minimum and only what is necessary to promote successful learning and development is used.
- Staff members will observe children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. This information will then be used to shape learning experiences for each child.
- Teachers will use their judgement to assess if the children are 'on track' to meet their end of year goals at several stages throughout the year. These will be formally recorded on the school's tracker system and discussed at pupil progress meetings with class teachers and the Senior Leadership Team. Assessment will be reported to parents/carers in parent meetings and in an end of year report.
- Within the first six weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).
- At the end of the EYFS children will be assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG). Children will be assessed as having met the ELG or still working towards it. This will be reported to parents/carers in the end of Reception year report.

Reporting

Reporting to parents/carers provides the opportunity for communication about their child's achievements, abilities and future targets. We provide a summary report of the child's progress at the end of each term once the child is of school age.

End of year reports are written in Nursery and Reception, these are written so that they have a positive effect on pupils' attitudes, motivation and self-esteem. These include the results of any statutory tests and assessments, and gives information relating to progress and attainment.



We provide opportunities for two parent/carer consultation meetings so that parents/carers can discuss their child. We also give parents/carers the opportunity to discuss their child's progress, by appointment throughout the year.

Moderation

Regular moderation of work takes place to ensure consistency of assessment within the school.

Teachers meet in phase groups and in cross phase groups to analyse children's work against EYFS requirements.

The school liaises with other schools in the local area for moderation exercises.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We value all the children as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace. The Equal Opportunities Policy ensures that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have. The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy ensures all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible. SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the school/nursery's special educational needs coordinator (SENCO).

Individual Support Plans (ISPs)

ISPs are written and implemented for pupils who are not progressing or attaining as expected. Support and challenge is provided to meet the child's educational and social needs. ISPs are reviewed termly.

EHC Plans

Some children with additional learning needs may require an Education and Health Care Plan. These children will have significant and sometimes complex needs that require an intensive programme of support. More information can be found in the school's SEN Information Report.

Staffing

- We have a robust Recruitment Policy in place, which aims to ensure that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable. (see Safer Recruitment policy)
- Upon employment, all EYFS staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection, and health and safety.

- Staff will be supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience.
- All members of staff who have contact with children and families will be supervised by the EYFS lead. The supervision will provide opportunities for staff to:
 - Discuss any issues, particularly concerning the development or wellbeing of children, including any child protection concerns.
 - Identify solutions to address issues.
 - Receive coaching to improve their effectiveness.
- The EYFS lead holds at least a full and relevant level 3 qualification alongside at least two years' experience working in an early years setting. At least half of the other EYFS staff within the nursery hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.
- There will be at least one member of staff on the school/nursery premises at all times who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate. Any member of staff who has sole responsibility for looking after a group of children in the nursery will also hold a PFA certificate. All newly qualified staff with a level 2 or 3 qualification will be PFA trained. PFA training to be renewed every three years. The list of staff who hold PFA certificates can be found in the nursery entrance or school office.
- We provide a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.
- Only members of staff with level 2 English and maths qualifications will count towards the staffing ratios at level 3.
- The school adopts the following staffing ratios:
 - For children aged two, there is one member of staff for every four children. At least one staff member holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification, and at least half of the other staff members hold full and relevant level 2 qualifications.
 - For children aged three and over:
 - Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, there is one member of staff for every 13 children, and at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
 - Where a member of staff does not hold QTS, early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification, there is one member of staff for every eight



children. At least one staff member holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification, and at least half of all other staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

- Only under exceptional circumstances, and where the quality of care and safety of children maintained, will changes be made to the ratios.
- Parents/carers will be informed about staffing arrangements.
- Each child is assigned a key person whose role it is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, and to seek to engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home.
- The EYFS lead will inform parents and/or carers of whom their child's key person is, and will explain the role of the key person when their child begins attending the school/nursery.

Continuing Professional Development

- Through Performance Management, the Headteacher (or Senior Leadership Team) will identify CPD needs.
- The school will look at providing CPD in a range of ways such as: moderation with other schools, INSET, courses, coaching, mentoring, professional reading and national qualifications such as the NPQSL
- Periodically review individual performance against nationally agreed standards as per school schedule.
- Work as part of a team, sharing good practice and liaising across the disciplines, when appropriate
- Provide professional guidance for all staff and other adults within school in line with school and national recommendations.

Monitoring and reporting

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Effectiveness committee.