Eastry Church of England Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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1. 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 anti-discriminatory practice.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Eastry Primary School, we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. The final year of the EYFS is referred to as the Reception year. All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of the practitioners working in Foundation Stage to take on the task of building upon that prior learning and experience. The Foundation Stage team work effectively together to support children's learning and development.

This is document outlines the philosophy, aims and principles of early years teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage (Year R) at Eastry Primary School. The document underpins practice in all areas of provision.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the relevant statutory framework and non-statutory documents for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2026 e.g.,

- Statutory Framework for the EYFS (DfE, 2025 – updated Sept 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Education Inspection Framework (Ofsted, 2023)

3. Structure of the EYFS

At Eastry Primary School, our Early Years setting is comprised of one group of reception children. There is capacity for 15 children. Currently, we have 12 children on roll. Our day begins at 8.35am and the children are collected at the end of the day at 3.15pm.

4. Curriculum and Learning

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2026.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 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

At Eastry Primary School we believe that once the children are secure in the prime areas of learning they will be prepared to access the specific areas.

However, all areas are important to ensure the development of the 'whole child'. We aim to deliver all the areas through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. We have adapted our practice and changed our curriculum in line with the changes made by the new curriculum.

4.1 Observation, Assessment and Planning

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs. All practitioners who work in the Foundation Stage at Eastry Primary School are involved in making observations of the children's new learning.

The planning within the EYFS is based around the children's interests and development needs. These plans are used by the EYFS team as a guide for weekly planning; however, they may alter these in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of recorded observations (written or photographed) as well as teacher's professional's judgement. When the children start in reception, we use the baseline assessment to provide us with a starting point for all of the children. We then track their progress throughout the year. 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.

We observe the children throughout the year during their 'Discovery Time' – their independent learning time. We use 'Evidence Me' programme to do this. Parents and carers have access to this too, so they can stay up to date with their child's learning and add comments of their own. These observations are used to inform the end of Foundation Stage assessment against the Early Learning Goals and the Characteristics of Effective Learning (DfE, 2021) Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written report against the Early Learning Goals to parents.

The parents are given the opportunity to meet the Foundation Stage team at various points throughout the year for shared learning events. There are also two opportunities for parents to meet their child's class teachers on more formal occasions.

4.2 Teaching

Early Years Foundation Stage

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is

important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

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." (DFE, 2019)

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- The Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

The Unique Child

At Eastry we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Positive Relationships

At Eastry we recognise that children learn to be independent, confident leaners from secure relationships with their peers and adults. We aim to develop caring, respectful, nurturing and professional relationships with the children and their families. We want the children to value these relationships and enjoy spending time with the adults in the provision.

Enabling Environments

Additionally, we believe that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

We also plan and consider the Learning Environment. The Foundation Classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that parents and guardians are the child's first and most enduring educators. When parents/guardians and practitioners work together in Early Years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

We aim to develop this by:
● Out-lining the school's expectations to parents/guardians during the new parents' workshops in the summer term.

● We hold further curriculum workshops to guide parents in supporting their child's learning at home.

● Holding parent/guardian class visits for different topics and celebrations

● Operating an "open door" policy, whereby parents/guardians can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner.

● Encouraging parents/guardians to listen to their child read each night and to comment on reading progress in a home/school reading diary.

● Discussing children's individual targets with parents/guardians' parents' evenings twice a year.

●Parents submit 'proud clouds' to celebrate learning they are proud of.

- Children and parents are invited to share their learning and experiences from home by drawing / writing / adding photos for their Tuesday Newsday Books to be shared with the class. The School adds information to the Tuesday Newsday Book e.g., Termly newsletter and information about the week / term's learning.

7. Transition

Induction to Reception
During the summer term usually, nursery children who will be starting school in September make visits to the reception class as part of the induction process.

Parents/guardians have the opportunity to meet the class teacher and to visit the reception classroom on several 'stay and play' sessions.
Parents/guardians are given a pack which outlines the reception curriculum and school routines, along with other necessary documentation. They also have a parents' information session in the summer term to discuss the curriculum, the transition and how the reception year looks at Eastry Primary School.

Transfer records from pre-school settings inform reception practitioners about the new intake. Where possible, visits to other local pre-school settings are made in order to aid the induction process further. Teachers attend the local Preschool Transfer meetings – also attended by specialist teachers and nurseries.

Children are also visited in their home setting by two members of reception team.

Personalised transition is planned for vulnerable children or those identified as having S.E.N.D.

Reception to Year 1 Transition
Reception and Year 1 teachers have worked together (when appropriate due to mixed year groups) to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible.

At Eastry Primary School:

● Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the reception year.

● Reception practitioners plan longer and more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer term; encouraging less dependence on adult support, for children who are developmentally ready for this.
● Reception children meet Year 1 teachers (when appropriate due to mixed year groups) during assemblies and other whole school activities during the reception year. They also come and read stories and play with them in child-initiated time in the final term once a week.

● End of Year assessments against the Early Learning Goals and the Characteristics of Effective Learning are shared and discussed.

● Reception and Year 1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July (when appropriate due to mixed year groups).

● Year 1 classrooms include learning areas similar to the reception classrooms: e.g., role-play, writing table and discovery time to aid the transition into year 1.

8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Safeguarding and Welfare

'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.' (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2025)

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children.

At Eastry we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2025. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare and safeguarding of children
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate to the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so following safer recruitment practices.

- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.
- pediatric first aid trained person when we eat snack and lunch
- privacy when changing children is considered (please see our intimate care policy)
- absences for all children are followed up in line with our attendance policy

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years through the lessons we teach. This has been a recent adaptation to our curriculum. We talk to them about the effects of:

- ✓ Eating too many sweets
- ✓ The importance of brushing your teeth

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our Child Protection including Online Safety Policy.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the EYFS teacher every year.

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

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

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See Child Protection inc. Online Safety Policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	Fire and emergency plan
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See Child Protection inc. Online Safety Policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Child Protection inc. Online Safety Policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy