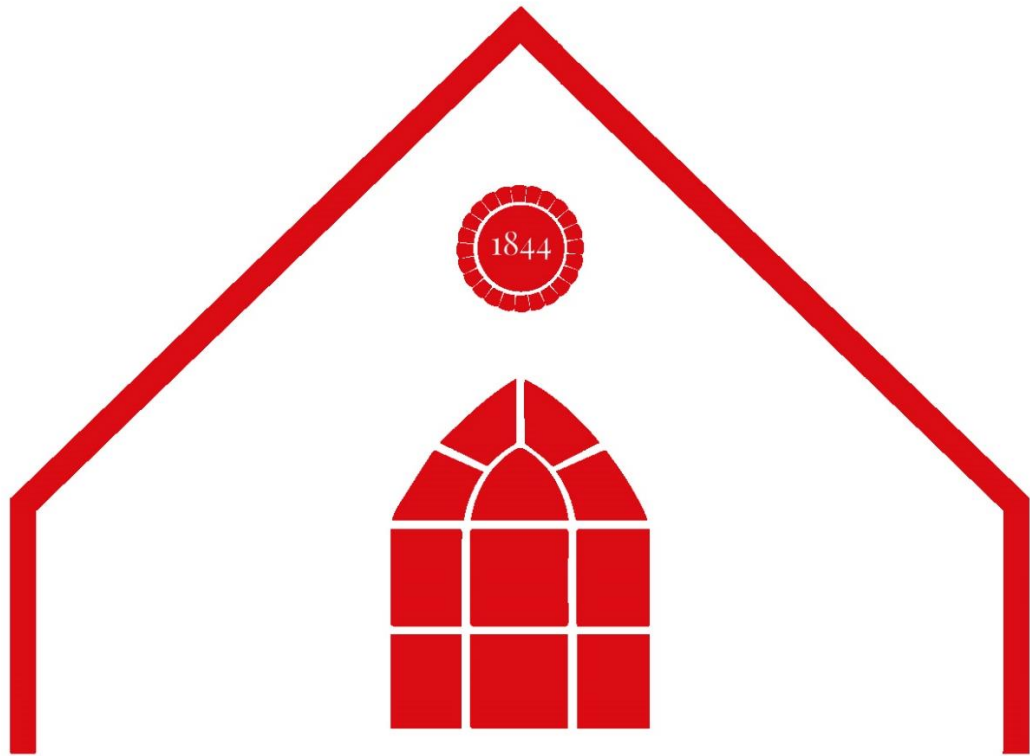




THE RACKHAM
C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Early Years Policy

Policy Number: STAT 062

Date: September 2026

The Rackham C of E Primary School and Pre-School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- Children access a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that provides the knowledge, skills and experiences needed for future learning and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so every child makes good progress and no child is left behind.
- Strong partnerships between practitioners, parents and carers.
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.
- Children feel safe, valued, supported and ready to learn.
- Early identification and effective support for children with SEND and those facing barriers to learning or wellbeing.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on the requirements of the **Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers (13 July 2026, effective from 1 September 2026)**.

It also reflects:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Data Protection legislation
- Local safeguarding partnership requirements.

3. Structure of the EYFS

At The Rackham C of E Primary School, EYFS consists of two year groups at Pre-School and a third year group in Reception.

Our EYFS provision consists of:

Pre-School

- Two-year-old provision
- Three and four-year-old provision

Reception

- Full-time school provision for children in the academic year in which they turn five.

The organisation of classes, admissions arrangements and staffing structures are reviewed annually to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and to meet children's needs effectively.

4. Curriculum

Our EYFS curriculum follows the statutory framework and is designed to develop confident, independent, resilient learners.

The EYFS consists of seven areas of learning and development.

Prime Areas

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Specific Areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

All areas are interconnected and delivered through a combination of:

- Direct teaching
- Purposeful play
- Child-initiated learning
- Adult-led learning
- Continuous provision
- Indoor and outdoor learning experiences.

At The Rackham, we have developed our own curriculum taken from Development Matters. The Rackham Early Years Curriculum focuses on milestones for pupils to be assessed against each half term.

Pupils are assessed as:

- On track
- Not on track plus some progress
- Not on track

From Christmas the Reception year pupils are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

4.1 Characteristics of Effective Learning

Staff ensure children develop the Characteristics of Effective Learning through opportunities to:

Playing and Exploring

Children investigate, experience things first hand and develop confidence to try new activities.

Active Learning

Children concentrate, keep trying when challenges arise and enjoy their achievements.

Creating and Thinking Critically

Children develop their own ideas, solve problems and make links in their learning.

4.2 Planning

Our staff are ambitious for all children, and plan activities and experiences for the children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests and development of each child in their care, and consider whether the child needs any additional support. They use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience.

Where a child may have a special educational need or disability (SEND), staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding the children's activities, staff reflect on the different rates at which children are developing, and take these into account.

Planning is based upon:

- Development Matters guidance
- Curriculum progression documents
- Assessment information
- Children's interests
- Children's next steps in learning
- School priorities

Practitioners consider the needs, interests and stage of development of every child.

Where children have SEND or additional needs, planning is adapted and specialist advice sought where appropriate.

4.3 Teaching and learning

Staff make sure that the children experience the 3 key characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring; active learning; and creating and thinking critically.

They respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As the children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more focus on teaching essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning, to help the children prepare for Key Stage One.

We provide:

- Safe, stimulating indoor areas
- Well-planned outdoor learning spaces
- Continuous provision across all areas of learning
- Resources reflecting the diversity of modern Britain and the wider world
- Opportunities for independence, collaboration and curiosity

Children are encouraged to make choices and develop independence through carefully designed learning environments.

5. Assessment

At The Rackham C of E Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development. Staff observe pupils to identify their progress, development and interests.

These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers and keep them up to date with the child's progress and development. Staff will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals.

Assessment is continuous and informs future teaching and learning.

Staff use:

- Observation
- Professional dialogue
- Learning conversations
- Assessment tasks
- Parent contributions
- Children's independent learning

to build an accurate picture of children's development.

Two-Year Progress Check

For eligible children aged between two and three, practitioners complete the statutory progress check and share findings with parents and carers.

Reception Baseline Assessment

Reception pupils complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment within the first six weeks of starting school.

EYFS Profile

At the end of Reception, practitioners assess children against the 17 Early Learning Goals, identifying whether children are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Emerging

Assessment information is shared with parents and Year 1 staff to support transition. Data is moderated internally and externally where required.

When a child is **aged between 2 and 3**, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed. It also focuses on any areas of possible concern, which may indicate a disability, special educational need or developmental delay. The progress check will describe the activities and strategies that the school intends to adopt to address any issues or concerns, involving parents and/or carers and other professionals as appropriate.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the reception baseline assessment (RBA).

In the final term of the academic year in which the child reaches age 5, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child (before 30 June in that term). 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')

We share the EYFS profile 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 and/or carers.

In exceptional circumstances, after discussion and only in agreement with parents and/or 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.

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. We submit EYFS profile 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 believe children achieve best when schools and families work together.

We foster positive partnerships through:

- Induction meetings
- Open days and transition events
- Home visits where appropriate
- Parent workshops
- Parent consultations
- Learning journals
- Curriculum information
- Reading records
- Newsletters
- An open-door approach

Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning and development regularly.

Wherever possible, parents must provide at least two emergency contact numbers.

We keep parents and/or carers up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile help to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Every child in preschool is assigned a key person in accordance with EYFS requirements.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to make sure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

We ask parents/carers to provide more than 2 emergency contact numbers for their child (where possible).

7. Staff

The school ensures all EYFS staff meet qualification requirements set out within the EYFS Statutory Framework and maintains records of qualifications and suitability checks. Staff must notify the Headteacher of any circumstances that may affect their suitability to work with children.

7.1 Professional Development

All staff receive training appropriate to their role.

Training includes:

- Safeguarding
- Child protection
- Behaviour management
- SEND
- First aid
- Early reading and phonics
- Curriculum development
- Assessment

Staff engage in continual professional development and evidence-informed practice.

7.2 Safeguarding Training

All staff:

- Complete safeguarding training.
- Receive regular safeguarding updates.
- Understand local safeguarding procedures.
- Understand their responsibilities under Keeping Children Safe in Education.

7.3 Safer Recruitment

The school operates safer recruitment procedures in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, the EYFS Statutory Framework and the school's Safer Recruitment and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies. All required pre-employment and suitability checks will be completed before an individual begins work with children, in accordance with statutory requirements.

7.4 Whistleblowing

All staff are expected to raise concerns regarding unsafe practice or safeguarding concerns.

Whistleblowing concerns will be treated seriously and investigated appropriately in accordance with the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

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 can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

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

See our child protection and safeguarding policy on our website for more information.

8.1 Responding to allegations or concerns

Any concern about a child's welfare or safety must be acted upon immediately in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Staff must report the concern to the DSL or DDSL and record it on MyConcern, the school's safeguarding recording system. The DSL/DDSL will determine the appropriate next steps, including referral to children's social care or other agencies where required. In an emergency, appropriate emergency services will be contacted.

8.1.1 Concerns or allegations about adults

Any safeguarding concern or allegation relating to a member of staff, supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer, contractor or other adult working with children will be reported and managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and the procedures set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education. Concerns about the Headteacher will be reported to the Chair of Governors. This includes concerns or allegations that may meet the harm threshold and low-level concerns that do not meet the harm threshold.

8.2 Staffing ratios

The school maintains statutory staff-to-child ratios in accordance with EYFS requirements. The school ensures all EYFS staff hold qualifications required by the EYFS Statutory Framework and that records are maintained and reviewed regularly.

Reception classes comply with infant class size requirements of at least one qualified teacher for every thirty pupils.

Staff must inform the Headteacher immediately of any circumstance that may affect their suitability to work with children.

8.3 Paediatric first aid (PFA)

At least one person holding a current Paediatric First Aid qualification is always available when children are present, including during educational visits.

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

Attendance is monitored closely.

Where children are absent unexpectedly:

- Parents will be contacted promptly.
- Emergency contacts may be used where necessary.
- Patterns of absence will be monitored and addressed.

The school works proactively with families to improve attendance and punctuality.

8.6 Oral health and tooth brushing

Children are supported to develop positive oral health habits through learning about:

- Healthy eating
- Limiting sugary foods and drinks
- Tooth brushing
- Regular dental visits

Where appropriate, schools may participate in supervised tooth-brushing programmes.

8.7 Safer eating

Children are supervised during meals and snacks. All children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating and drinking.

Staff:

- Understand food allergies and intolerances.
- Follow allergy action plans.
- Ensure food is prepared safely.
- Follow DfE nutrition guidance.
- Monitor and record significant choking incidents.

8.8 Online Safety and Electronic Devices

Digital content is checked for suitability before use.

The school ensures:

- Appropriate filtering and monitoring systems.
- Safe use of educational technology.
- Mobile phones and cameras are used only in accordance with school policy.
- Artificial intelligence tools and online content used within EYFS are age appropriate and risk assessed
- Advertising, auto play content and algorithm-driven content are avoided wherever possible within EYFS provision.

8.9 Children's Screen Use

From September 2026, any use of screens within EYFS provision is:

- Purposeful
- Age appropriate
- Carefully planned
- Supervised by adults

Screen use does not replace:

- High-quality interactions
- Play
- Storytelling
- Physical activity
- Outdoor learning

Assistive technology may be used where required to support individual children's needs.

Advertising, autoplay functions, algorithm-generated content and unrestricted internet content are not used within EYFS provision. All digital content is reviewed by staff before use.

8.10 Accident or injury

The school:

- Maintains accident records.
- Administers first aid when required.
- Informs parents on the same day of significant accidents or injuries.
- Reports serious incidents in accordance with statutory requirements.

8.11 Safety of premises

The school ensures that:

- Premises remain safe and suitable.
- Outdoor environments are checked regularly.
- Risk assessments are completed.
- Fire safety arrangements comply with legislation.

8.12 Toileting and privacy

Children's dignity and privacy are respected at all times.

Appropriate arrangements are in place for:

- Toileting
- Intimate care
- Nappy changing where applicable
- Infection control
- Safeguarding supervision requirements.

8.13 Banned Dog Breeds

Banned breeds under Section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, including XL Bully type dogs, are not permitted on school premises at any time, including where an exemption certificate exists.

8.14 Sleep and Rest

Where children require sleep, rest or quiet time due to identified needs, safe arrangements and supervision will be implemented in accordance with individual risk assessments.

8.15 Wraparound Care

Where Reception children attend school-run breakfast clubs or after-school provision, the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS continue to apply.

9. Monitoring arrangements

The Headteacher, EYFS Lead and Governing Body will monitor the implementation of this policy.

Monitoring may include:

- Learning walks
- Observations
- Assessment reviews
- Safeguarding audits
- Pupil outcomes
- Parent feedback

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation changes.

10. Linked Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Attendance Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Wraparound Care Procedures

This policy will be reviewed and agreed in line with Government guidelines by the Governing Body.

Approved and signed by:

Headteacher



Signed:

Date: September 2026

Chair of Governing body



Signed:

Date: September 2026