

Stilton C of E Primary Academy Early Years Foundation Stage

At Stilton C of E Primary Academy, our Early Years Unit is made up of Ducklings Class (Preschool) and Owl Class (Reception).

1. Intent

At Stilton C of E Primary Academy, our EYFS curriculum is built upon the fundamental belief that every child is unique, learns differently and is valued. We intend to:

- **Foster a Love for Learning:** Nurture the foundations of learning to help children become committed, curious, resilient, and enthusiastic lifelong learners, deeply embedding the Characteristics of Effective Learning.
- **Build Strong Partnerships:** Work closely with parents and carers from the very beginning to ensure a smooth, confident, and happy transition into their educational journey.
- **Promote Holistic Development:** Emphasize the school's core motto of "flourishing through friendship" by embedding social, emotional, and spiritual growth into daily learning.
- **Support Language Development :** Create a language-rich environment where communication and oracy sit at the very heart of our early years curriculum.
- **Early Reading Success:** Use Sounds-Write program to give every child a robust foundation in decoding and encoding, ensuring early reading fluency and success from the start.
- **Build Strong Foundations (A Knowledge-Rich, Child-Centered Approach):** Plan from the Primary Knowledge Curriculum (PKC) to build the essential knowledge, skills, and vocabulary needed for future academic success. We balance this structured framework with open-ended play, ensuring that the core knowledge taught by adults inspires and deepens the children's independent exploration.

2. Implementation

We translate our vision into daily practice through a balanced, experiential, and rich learning environment:

- **Real-Life and First-Hand Experiences:** We believe presenting learning through real-life, first-hand experiences is essential. Learning is framed around engaging termly themes, such as *All About Me* and *Stories from the Past*.
- **Indoor and Outdoor Learning:** Children are provided with daily, free-flow opportunities for independent playing and learning across both our indoor and outdoor environments, ensuring the outdoor classroom offers equal ambition and challenge.
- **Child-Led Projects:** We provide open-ended resources and ample opportunities for children to develop large-scale projects based on their own interests, such as building car ramps with drain pipes, allowing them to apply and test their knowledge.
- **Skill Development and Inquiry:** Our learning experiences are deliberately structured to give children the time they need to practice new skills, ask questions, and actively deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- **Parental Engagement:** Continuous collaboration with families begins at induction and extends through regular communication, ensuring parents are active partners in their child's learning journey.
- **Role of the Adults:** Highly skilled staff follow the ShREC approach to systematically expand children's vocabulary, conversational confidence, and back-and-forth communication across all seven areas of learning.
- **Phonics Teaching:** We implement this through daily, highly structured Sounds-Write sessions delivered by fully trained staff.
- **Responsive Teaching and Assessment:** We use high-quality, formative assessment and "in-the-moment" interactions to notice, check, and adapt teaching automatically to move children's learning forward.

3. Impact

The success of our EYFS provision is measured by the growth, well-being, and readiness of our children:

- **Confident and Happy Learners:** Children settle quickly into school life, demonstrating high levels of well-being, confidence, and a secure sense of belonging.
- **Resilient and Committed Mindsets:** Children leave the Early Years as resilient individuals who are unafraid to take risks, learn from mistakes, and express deep curiosity about the world around them.
- **Strong Academic & Personal Progress:** Through continuous observation and high-quality interactions, all children, including those with SEND and disadvantaged backgrounds, make strong progress from their varied starting points across all seven areas of the EYFS statutory framework, working towards or achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD).
- **Social Flourishing:** True to our motto, children develop strong friendships, demonstrate empathy, and show a robust collaborative spirit that prepares them academically, socially, and emotionally for a smooth transition into Year 1.
- **Communication:** Children use a wide range of vocabulary and converse confidently with both peers and adults, supporting both academic and social development.
- **Early Reading Competence:** Children demonstrate strong phonic decoding and encoding skills, showing high levels of fluency and a genuine love for reading as they transition into Key Stage 1.
- **Characteristics of Effective Learning:** Children develop into independent, motivated, and critical thinkers who can plan, review, and adapt their own play and learning strategies.