



EASTINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Early Years Foundation Stage

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Eastington 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 and as preparation for life.

At Eastington we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be 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 assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Aims

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, and having positive social, emotional and physical well-being.

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), effective from 1 September 2025.

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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

4. The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. The learning and development requirements cover:

- the areas of learning and development which must shape activities and experiences (educational programmes) for children in all early years settings
- the early learning goals that providers must help children work towards (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five)
- assessment arrangements for measuring progress (and requirements for reporting to parents and/or carers)

5. The safeguarding and welfare requirements cover the steps that providers must take to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

Overarching principles

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years settings. These are:

- 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 with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See “the characteristics of effective teaching and learning” at paragraph 1.18). The framework covers the education and care of all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

We aim to provide a broad, balanced, rich and stimulating curriculum and environment which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to his/her full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

We will achieve this through:

- providing a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment, which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs
- providing a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond Eastington School
- providing opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development
- using and valuing what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress
- enabling choice and decision-making, fostering independence and self-confidence
- working in partnership with parents and valuing their contributions, providing opportunities to share in their child's learning using learning journeys
- ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender, or ability, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development
- providing experiences for all children, whatever their needs, which are inclusive

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals. All children at Eastington School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Children with special educational needs are identified and supported in liaison with the Special Needs coordinator and /or appropriate outside agencies where relevant. We work closely with the support services, and if it is thought that further initial support is required prior to entry we contact and liaise with the appropriate service.

We endeavour to provide early intervention of children's needs and if possible, to work with pre-school settings to allow for appropriate support to be identified as they move into the school setting.

We work hard for all children to be included in whole school activities, participate in theme weeks, sports days, whole school assemblies and trips.

The system of 'Big' and 'Little' friends, where each Reception child is paired with a Y6/5 child, helps support them in these activities. We believe this to be a valuable experience for all those involved and promotes positive relationships in keeping with the ethos of the school.

It is of paramount importance that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children through our school values and giving clear expectations. 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 well-being of all children.

Safeguarding

Our safeguarding procedures are outlined in our Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy.

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."

At Eastington School 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 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 for 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, in accordance with the schools Safeguarding Policy.
- 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.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Health and safety

Teaching in the Foundation Stage will comply with Eastington's Health and Safety Policy.

Positive Relationships

At Eastington School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. We model positive relationships between adults and adults and children.

Parents as Partners

We acknowledge that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating their children.

We do this through:

- Parents being able to come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner.
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during 'get to know us' sessions.
- The children attend pre-school sessions on the school premises for 1-4 afternoons a week during term 6.
- We invite all parents to an induction meeting and offer them the opportunity to meet individually with their child's teacher during the term before their child starts school.
- Inviting parents to a reading and spelling evening in September to talk about how phonics and reading is taught in reception.
- Parents are given a reception document which outlines the curriculum and school routines, along with a pack to be completed and returned

to school. Transfer records from pre-school settings inform reception practitioners about the new intake. Parents also fill in a document that helps us to get to know their child and family.

- We offer parents regular informal opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class.
- We offer formal parental consultation meetings for parents, twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress.
- Encouraging parents to listen to their child read each night and to comment on reading progress in a home/school reading diary.
- Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- We arrange a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents e.g. class assemblies, sports day.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

We have good links with local pre-schools. Regular visits are undertaken by the EYFS teacher.

Learning and Development

The Early Learning Goals (the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should acquire by the end of the reception year) and the educational programmes (the matters, skills and processes which are required to be taught to young children) are set out in the "Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2025" document.

In EYFS, children are constantly learning through play this is due to their naturally inquisitive, creative and active nature. The 'Development Matters' document outlines the three characteristics of effective learning; these are the three elements which underpin a child's learning and development across all areas.

These areas are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

There are also 7 areas of learning and development for the Foundation Stage. All areas are equally important and interconnected. 3 areas are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These are the **Prime Areas** which are:

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – Self-Regulation, Managing Self, Building Relationships

- **Communication and Language** – Listening, Attention and Understanding, Speaking
- **Physical Development** – Gross Motor Skills, Fine Motor Skills

There are also 4 **Specific Areas** which are the areas through which the Prime areas are strengthened and applied, and they are:

- **Literacy** – Comprehension and Word Reading, Writing
- **Mathematics** – Number and Numerical Patterns
- **Understanding the World** – Past and Present, People, Culture and Communities, The Natural World
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – Creating with Materials, Being Imaginative and Expressive.

We believe these seven areas are equally important and dependent on each other to support a rounded approach to child development. We aim to deliver all the areas through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Enabling Environments

At Eastington School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development, and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Planning

Children in the Foundation Stage follow the same or a connected theme as the KS1 children. Medium Term Plans (MTP's) are created by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning; however, the teacher may alter these MTP's in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

In the Moment Planning

We allow for child initiated, real time, learning through play based on capturing the interest of a child at the current time. Careful observations by EYFS staff are key to the in the moment planning approach – opportunities to seize the moment when a child shows a level of interest and curiosity that can be drawn out and then enhanced and built upon need to be recognised.

Staffing and Organisation

Eastington is a one form entry school (PAN of 20) with mixed age classes. This means the Reception children work alongside the younger Y1 children in the school. The class has a full time TA which maintains an adult/pupil ratio of 1:15. The EYFS teacher liaises with the teaching assistant, regularly involving them in planning, preparation, and assessment. We are always aiming to improve our teaching skills, knowledge and understanding and so all practitioners are encouraged to participate in local authority courses, in service and local cluster

group training. Practitioners also conduct and attend in-house training and disseminate new initiatives, ideas, and teaching methods to colleagues.

Assessment, recording and monitoring

Children's progress will be at different rates and individual achievement will vary. However, all children can improve their knowledge, skills and understanding of the curriculum which enables them towards achieving their full potential.

At Eastington we recognise Baseline assessment as part of the learning process. It is necessary to:

- ~ determine the abilities and interests of the child on entry
- ~ meet their individual needs

During the term prior to school entry, the class teacher spends time with the children, getting to know their interests, whilst they make 2 visits to the classroom. There is close liaison with the leaders of the local playgroup/nursery. Information about an individual child's special/specific needs, identified at pre-school, is passed on during liaison meetings and recorded.

Assessment of children in school is a well-established process and formal baseline assessment will work alongside the informal assessments teachers make as they work alongside the children, using their professional judgement as part of the informative and supportive process.

We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs and next steps. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation and assessment for learning within lessons/sessions, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate.

The statutory baseline assessment is carried out in the first week of school.

Formative assessment

This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal observations, assessment on entry, other focused assessments e.g. sound/number, annotated examples of work, photographs, and information from parents.

Summative assessment

Children are also tracked using the school tracking system – Insight, which enables staff to set and monitor targets for each child's learning.

For each ELG, it must be judged whether a pupil is:

- Meeting the level of development expected at the end of the reception year (Expected)

- Not yet reaching this level (Emerging)

The Learning Environment

The EYFS 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 can find equipment and resources independently. The EYFS class has its own outdoor area. We aim for there to be free flow between indoor and outdoor learning as often as possible. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

Teaching and Learning

The features of effective teaching and learning in our EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching.
- building strong foundations through focusing on the core foundational knowledge and skills young children need to learn -
 - Oral language and vocabulary,
 - Sound-to-letter correspondence (phonics),
 - Orally composing simple sentences,
 - Pencil grip and letter formation,
 - Understanding numbers and early number sense)
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication
- Teacher led activities
- quality interaction by staff to support learning for a child/ren
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social, and emotional abilities.
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management.
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents.
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.

Play

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise, build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. We support children's learning through planned, purposeful play activities and decide whether child-initiated or adult-led will achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor has opportunities to discuss EYFS practice and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require further discussion. The Headteacher and subject coordinator will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

This policy cross references with the EYFS statutory framework:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68c024cb8c6d992f23edd79c/Early_years_foundati on_stage_statutory_framework - for group and school-based providers.pdf.pdf