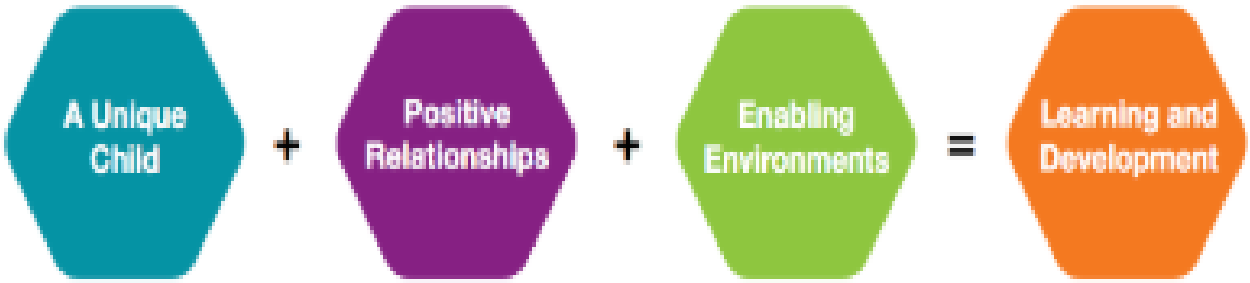
Eastling Primary School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Date: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

Our Vision

At Eastling Primary School, we aim to provide every child with the skills to become a happy, independent and curious lifelong learner.

Our Principles

At Eastling Primary School, we strive to meet every child's entitlement to develop a love of learning that will enable them to have the best possible future life chances.

Key Requirements

"All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential"

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2026

The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children stay safe, be healthy, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and achieve economic well-being by providing:

- quality and consistency, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- a secure foundation which creates learning and development opportunities that are planned around the interest and needs of the children, informed by regular assessments and reviews
- partnership working between practitioners, parents and carers
- equality of opportunity ensuring that there is no discrimination and every child is included and supported.

The guiding principles which shape our practice are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

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

Curriculum

At Eastling Primary School, we recognise that every child is unique. We understand that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. We want our children to be independent and self-motivated learners, encouraging the children to adapt their work, think critically and take risks with their learning.

Our EYFS Curriculum

- is at the heart of our learning journey approach
- is distinctive, innovative and strategically planned with the individual pupils in mind
- is reviewed in the light of national developments, new thinking and research and development
- introduces challenging, engaging and real-life problems
- strives to encourage and develop a love of learning
- lets learning happen within a child centred approach
- ensures resources and apparatus are available to support learning at every stage of development
- ensures resources and apparatus are available to support learning in every area of the EYFS curriculum
- ensures all areas of learning are regarded with the same level of importance
- includes fundamental British values to teach children a sense of self and belonging; enabling them to learn and stay true to the values that make people good human beings
- ensures that children learn to live together peacefully, with each of them playing a valuable role in the multicultural world in which they live

The Reception class follows the curriculum as outlined in the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2026.* This document defines what we teach and details the specifics of our setting and school.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are important and included in the curriculum taught. There are three prime areas, which are seen to underpin all of the basics and support the other more specific areas of the curriculum.

The Prime Areas of Learning and Development

1. **Communication and Language.** This area encourages developing competence in listening and attention, and in understanding and speaking.

2. **Physical Development.** This area focuses on the child's developing physical control, moving and handling, and health and self-care.

3. **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**. This area focuses on making relationships, self-confidence and self-awareness, and managing feelings and behaviour. This is critical for very young children in all aspects of their lives and gives them the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning.

The Specific Areas of Learning and Development

4. **Literacy**. This focuses on reading and writing. Children are taught phonics throughout the EYFS.

5. **Mathematics**. This area focuses on learning through practical activities and on using numbers and understanding shape, space and measure.

6. **Understanding of the World.** This area focuses on children's developing knowledge and understanding of their own environment, through learning about people and communities, the world and technology. It forms the foundation for later work in Science, Design and Technology, History, RE, Geography and ICT.

7. **Expressive Arts and Design.** This area focuses on the development of the child's imagination and her or his ability to communicate and express ideas and feeling in creative ways. It incorporates exploring and using media and materials. Creativity is fundamental to successful learning.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Through regular observations, we will discover children's interests and assess what children know. Also fundamental to our practice is to assess how children learn and it is our duty to report to parents their children's individual dispositions and attitudes to learning. This will be assessed using the Characteristics of Effective Learning which are:

- **Playing and exploring – engagement.**

Children investigate and experience things and events around them and 'have a go'.

- **Active learning – motivation.**

Children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve.

- **Creating and thinking critically – thinking.**

Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different and experiences and develop strategies for doing things.

Planning

Through planning, teachers ensure that there is a balance of adult led/initiated and child-initiated activities across the day. During child-initiated activities the adults' role is to show an interest in the children's ideas, build conversation, facilitate and share ideas and model different skills. Such interaction with the children is essential as this helps to build the children's understanding and therefore guides new learning. This is then re-fed back into the planning to ensure that the topics being covered reflect the children's fascinations currently within the class. By being fluid in this way current topics can be readily introduced and adapted. This allows for spontaneity within EYFS and allows for unexpected occurrences, such as a bird's nest in the garden, visit from a local police officer or new siblings, to become an integral part of our learning.

Direct Teaching

At specific times in the day the children will take part in an activity that is teacher led. Such sessions include daily phonics lessons, daily reading and daily maths lessons, as well as teaching new skills to support their learning within the classroom environment and in our extended outdoor classroom. All direct taught sessions are carefully planned and tailored for each group using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. Planning is changed and tailored regularly and, in response to the result of taught sessions, ensuring all teaching and learning is relevant and challenging for each child.

Learning Through Play

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. Children learn best from activities and experiences that they have initiated and play with peers is important for children's development. We carefully plan our environment and provide opportunities to reflect these interests to inspire them further, whilst also making sure that children also have the opportunity to extend and practise the skills they have learned through direct teaching.

Constant opportunities are provided for children to be able to make their own decisions and choices in order that they can become independent, confident and happy learners as soon as is possible for each individual child. Some children will need gentle encouragement in this step as they become more comfortable in their new setting. Through play children explore and develop learning experiences, helping them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules.

Children at Eastling Primary School soon grasp the rules we have in EYFS. They see the high expectations we have in every aspect of our day and delight in trying to meet these. 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 enjoy risk taking in a controlled and fun way.

Giving children the opportunity to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, allows them to discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. With adult support this process enhances children's ability to think critically and ask questions. Adults can support them in making connections by showing

genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning. Children have the choice to be outside during the entire day, with provisions for typical British weather.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting of Progress

Assessment is an essential and important part of EYFS, enabling parents and staff to recognise children's progress, understand their needs and plan activities and support. Assessment takes a variety of forms in order to gain an understanding of each child's level of understanding. This can be through observations, photographic evidence, examples of work, parental conversations etc. Assessment occurs throughout any taught session as well as during free flow times when children are embedding and extending any previous learning. These assessments will then be used to shape and adapt any future learning.

Our assessment procedures do not involve long breaks from interaction with the children. Observations are taken using the Tapestry App, which allows staff to take photos, videos and to make notes while observing what the children are doing or saying. From such observations we can ascertain what the next steps are for the children. We are then able to share these experiences with the children's parents on an almost daily basis. This is a two-way process whereby parents may input observations of their own, add comments to post and like observations they can view. As it is an app based 'Online Learning Journey', it is highly accessible as parents can access on mobile phones, tablets as well as on computers.

On entry to Reception children complete *The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)*, a statutory assessment used to provide a starting point to measure progress made between reception and the end of year 6. In addition to this, teachers carry out their own baseline for each child at the beginning of the academic year. At the end of each half term assessments are collated to track how well the children are progressing. Opportunities for a Parent Teacher Consultation are provided throughout the year to provide information about children's progress and to discuss the children's learning journey from Tapestry, to talk about children's strengths, achievements, interests and next steps. These form the basis for the monitoring of pupil progress as the children progress through school.

On-going teacher assessments are undertaken in line with the *Foundation Stage Profile* and these form the basis for the end of year report to parents.

We ensure our end of EYFS assessments are reliable through:

- our knowledge of the child gained through observation and interaction
- our environment enables the child to flourish to their full capacity
- our assessments ensure a range of contributors e.g. parents, other teachers, SENCO and other relevant adults
- in-house moderation across the EYFS team and with senior leadership
- moderation with the Local Authority (LCC)

Special educational needs and disability (SEND) and Inclusion

All children are entitled to an education that enables them to achieve the best possible outcomes. At Eastling Primary School, we are fully committed to providing an inclusive environment where every child, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), is valued, supported, and able to thrive.

In line with the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2026* and the *SEND Code of Practice (Updated 2024),* we ensure that all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum tailored to meet their individual needs. We recognise that early identification and intervention are key to positive outcomes, and we work closely with families, external professionals, and our designated SENDCo to develop targeted support plans. Our inclusive approach celebrates diversity and promotes equal opportunities, removing barriers to learning so that every child can reach their full potential in a nurturing and supportive environment.

Safeguarding and Children's Welfare

Children learn best when they are happy, safe and feel secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the people caring for them.

At Eastling Primary School, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children is our highest priority. In accordance with the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2026*, we are committed to ensuring that every child in our Reception class is safe, secure, and supported in their development. We adhere to the safeguarding requirements set out in the EYFS, which include maintaining robust policies and procedures for child protection, ensuring staff are appropriately trained, and fostering an environment where children feel confident to speak up. Our approach is also guided by the latest *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* statutory guidance, which underlines our duty to identify and respond to signs of abuse or neglect promptly. By embedding a culture of vigilance, we work in partnership with families, external agencies, and the wider school community to ensure every child's well-being is protected and their right to a safe, nurturing learning environment is upheld.

Induction and Transition

Parents of children who are offered a place in Reception are invited to an induction meeting in June. Children are invited to visit the school for three sessions before the summer holidays and staff visit the children and their families at home prior to them starting school. Staff also liaise closely with the children's pre-school providers.

All children in Reception start school in September. Children begin by staying for a number of short sessions until lunch. They then stay for lunch, before building up to full days by the end of week 2. For some children, a longer transition period may be required. In such circumstances staff liaise fully with parents to accommodate the children's needs.

To ensure the best possible transition we:

- value the parent as the first educator of their child

• make contact with the local nurseries and pre-schools where our new intake are coming from to discuss essential information on every child

•share important information about our school during new-parents meeting

• use written information sent by pre-schools to inform early planning

• hold a series of 'welcome/taster' sessions for parents and children in June and July

• share information in a transition meeting(s) with key adults for children with additional needs

• meet with every parent and child before beginning school to share important information from home and school.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

The school recognises the huge importance of establishing effective relationships with parents/carers in ensuring the children achieve their full potential. Parental involvement is actively encouraged. Parents are very welcome to chat to staff prior to the start of the school day or at the end of the school day giving them opportunities to discuss any concerns with staff.

Staff ensure that parents are well informed about the curriculum their child is experiencing through Tapestry, the child's special book, notes, letters, newsletters and notice boards. Staff take the opportunity at the end of the day to talk to parents about significant achievements or any concerns.

Throughout the year, parents are invited to attend workshops that help support their child's development at home. Parents are also very welcome in the Reception classroom to share interesting information relating to our weekly themes, as mystery readers and during special events such as pumpkin decorating sessions and our annual Mothers' Day breakfast.

Equal Opportunities

Staff ensure that all children have equal access to the curriculum. They will be encouraged to respect similarities and differences within cultures other than their own. The school seeks to develop tolerance and concern for others.

Monitoring

The Early Years Leader is responsible for the monitoring of this policy. Areas for development will be incorporated into the School Improvement Plan as necessary.

The Reception Team

Our Reception team consists of teachers who are passionate about the early years. They understand the needs of the young child and how best to create an environment to enable a love of learning. Our aim is that it is hard to distinguish between teacher and teaching assistant in our setting. Everyone works towards the same goal: to ensure every child achieves to their highest ability by learning through play and enjoyment.