

Pearl Hyde 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
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, dated 13 July 2026 and effective from 1 September 2026.

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Pearl Hyde Primary School children are admitted to reception in the September following their fourth birthday. The school's EYFS provision comprises its Reception class; the school does currently not provide nursery provision however there is a privately run nursery on site that parents can access.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest statutory framework of the EYFS.

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

4.1 Planning

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers use the national schemes of work, where appropriate, to support their planning for individual children. The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. The planning is based upon topics with discrete phonics, mathematics and reading directed teaching. However, planning, which is based upon a different topic which is identified as vehicle of interest to deliver the children's next steps in learning, also therefore responds to the needs, achievement and interest of the children. Our medium and short term planning identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals. We link our curriculum throughout the school so that each curriculum area has defined end points but also flows and progresses with each child.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's learning, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

At Pearl Hyde Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

We recognise the importance of outdoor play, as per EYFS Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers effective from 1 September 2026. The outdoor provision requirement paragraph 3.68 states:

"Providers must provide access to an outdoor play area. If that is not possible, they must ensure that outdoor activities are planned and taken on a daily basis (unless circumstances make this inappropriate, for example unsafe weather conditions)."

Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff both indoors and outdoors.

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly. As the year progresses we ensure children are accessing all areas of the curriculum through the environment through tracking.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for year 1.

5. Assessment

At Pearl Hyde Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement in both the Prime and Specific areas. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

During the first term in Reception (within the first 6 weeks of a child starting Reception) the teacher assesses the ability of each child using Reception Baseline Assessment. This assessment allows us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. We complete the Statutory DFE baseline with children as well as our own baseline assessments.

Ongoing observations throughout the year inform the progress of each child. Over the year the assessments are monitored through regular moderations with local schools and at the end of the year the final judgements are moderated formally to ensure accuracy of assessment.

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 assessment results are sent to the LA for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We have rigorous handover with the year 1 teacher discussing attainment, next steps but also thinking of the whole child and sharing information to help the child continue to be successful with the national curriculum. We share this information too at parental consultation meetings and in the end-of-year report. 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, in partnership with other local schools and across the FP MAT schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

6. Working with parents

At Pearl Hyde Primary School, we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

A strong and effective partnership is built with parents through:

- A strong transition process into Reception which includes a home visit and/or nursery visit as well as 'play and stay' opportunities.
- Providing a handbook of information about commencing Reception at the school
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home/School agreement
- Providing an induction meeting for Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have
- Holding a parent consultation early in the academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if staff have concerns about the progress of a child they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them
- Written contact through a weekly class newsletter, Home/School reading diary and whole school newsletters
- Sharing the children's 'Learning Journey' with parents/carers and valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents/carers
- Offering parent/teacher consultation meetings throughout the year at which their child's progress is discussed
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in reception
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food tasting and photographs etc
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as a phonics workshop, assemblies, Christmas productions and sports day etc
- Offering a staggered start to school and this can be extended dependent on the needs and development of the child

7. 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 are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

First Aid and Eating

We have at least 3 people with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. The Higher Level Teaching Assistant based in reception holds paediatric first aid and supervises all snack and lunch times for Reception children.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in reception by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- Visiting the dentist
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- We provide healthy snack choice to promote good oral health

Screen time

Pearl Hyde Primary school has always prioritised teaching through interaction rather than the use of screens in all year groups but particularly EYFS. We have taken into account new guidance, we have chosen to include all of the guidance even though we start from Reception as we feel that when working with children who may be age 4 or 5 but developmentally working at a younger stage:

"Practitioners must have regard to the following guidance on children's screen use in early years settings." The accompanying DfE guidance for settings (published 13 July 2026) states:

Screen time advice for children aged 0-5

For children: Under 2 years: avoid screen time altogether other than in exceptional circumstances such as a video call with parents and carers. 2-5 years: screen time should be limited to 1 hour a day, less if possible.

We must consider that Children may already reach these screen time limits at home. Providers should take this into account when deciding whether and how screens are used in the setting.

DfE expectations for EYFS settings

The guidance says practitioners should:

- Take a **precautionary approach** to screen use.
- **Limit screen use** and only use screens carefully and intentionally for specific learning and development purposes.

- Ensure screens do not replace **play, real-world interaction, physical activity, sleep, or responsive adult engagement**.
- Consider the **quality, purpose and context** of screen use, not just the amount of time spent using screens.
- Choose developmentally appropriate content and avoid passive consumption.

Evidence

The DfE notes:

"Evidence suggests that too much screentime is associated with poorer cognitive and behavioural abilities in children, such as reduced verbal activity and reduced vocabulary, and can be associated with developmental delays, reduced attention and lower executive function."

The school's safeguarding arrangements set out how mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices with imaging or sharing capabilities may be used. Digital content is checked before use; advertising, autoplay, algorithm-driven content and unsuitable artificial intelligence tools are avoided in Reception.

Safer Recruitment

The school follows the safer-recruitment and suitability requirements in the EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education. Staff and regular volunteers working directly with Reception children must have the appropriate identity, reference, enhanced DBS and, where eligible, children's barred-list checks before starting. Occasional supervised helpers are managed through the school's risk-assessment and volunteer procedures. Staff and prospective staff must disclose relevant information that may affect their suitability, subject to the legal rules on protected convictions and cautions. The headteacher and Assistant Headteacher all hold the safer recruitment qualification.

Safe Sleep

The detailed safer-sleep requirements for children under two are not applicable because the school provides Reception provision only. If a Reception pupil needs to rest or sleep because of a medical condition, disability or other identified need, an individual plan and risk assessment will specify safe supervision and care arrangements. We recognise the statutory guidance states: "Children are always within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping."

Intimate Care

All parents/guardians in Reception sign to say their child can receive intimate care if needed. We always encourage children to be as independent as possible however, if a child does need assistance two members of staff would oversee this process, so it is as safe as possible whilst always considering the dignity of the child. If a child receives intimate care such as changing soiled clothes we always inform the person collecting the child, we also sign our records to show the time and the adults present.

Further information

When Reception pupils attend school-run breakfast or after-school care, the safeguarding and welfare requirements in section 3 of the EYFS framework continue to apply. The learning, development and assessment requirements in sections 1 and 2 do not apply to wraparound-only care for children who normally attend Reception or an older class during the school day.

Further safeguarding and welfare procedures, including child protection, allegations against staff, whistleblowing, online safety, safer recruitment and staff conduct, are set out in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Online Safety Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and associated procedures.

8. Monitoring arrangements

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head Teacher alongside Early years leader and subject leaders will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The Governing Body will also be part of this process.