



**Sutton Bonington
Primary School**

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

**Approved: July 2026
Next Review: Summer 2027**



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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
- A close working partnership between staff and 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 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), effective from 1 September 2025.

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Our vision for the EYFS

Our vision for the EYFS is in line with our school vision:

We are an inclusive school where every member of the community is valued and we all **BELONG** – children, parents, staff, governors, volunteers and friends

We are a successful school where we all **STRIVE** for excellence in all we do through a broad and ambitious curriculum

We are a supportive school where all children and adults **FLOURISH** due to strong relationships and opportunities to develop personally

In addition, our vision within the EYFS is to give every child the best start to their early education by providing a stimulating environment which promotes high quality play-based learning. We want our children to be inspired through an ambitious and well sequenced curriculum alongside a balance of child initiated and adult led experiences which will prepare our pupils with the knowledge, skills and language for future success and for the next stage of their education. We ensure that we develop all children's ability to self-regulate whilst working in partnership with our parents through strong and respectful relationships.

Our vision within the EYFS is based on the seven key features of effective practice as outlined in the 'DfE Development Matters non statutory curriculum guidance for the EYFS' – see appendix 1 for more information.

4. Structure of the EYFS

Here at Sutton Bonington Primary School, children usually join our Reception class in the Autumn term of the academic year that they will turn five. Children attend full-time and remain in the Reception class until they start in Year 1.

5. Curriculum

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

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

We also support the children in 4 specific areas which help strengthen and develop the 3 prime areas, and ignite the children's curiosity and enthusiasm:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

At Sutton Bonington Primary School our curriculum intent for Early Years is in line with that of our whole school and can be found on our website. This includes the Sutton Bonington values (kindness, resilience, honesty, curiosity, respect and pride).



6. Planning

Our staff are ambitious for all children and plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. When children first arrive in our school, staff working with them are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas to ensure essential skills for learning are in place. Once this is embedded and the children's development allows, there is a greater focus on the 4 specific areas.

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 activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

The planning within the EYFS is based on the Sutton Bonington EYFS curriculum which we have developed in line with the age related expectations statements from the Development Matters document and our curriculum for children in Year 1 (based on National Curriculum requirements). Topic planning takes place on a half-termly basis but planning is flexible and may be altered to take into account children's interests and needs. Adult focused activities are planned on a weekly basis. Children have the opportunity to work in each of the learning areas within the classroom and outdoors. Whole class, group and individual activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum, as appropriate. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning.

7. Teaching

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

Throughout the day, there are key times for discrete, adult led teaching e.g. phonics, maths, topic input and story. These sessions tend to last approximately 15-20 minutes with the session length increasing as the year progresses for sessions such as phonics.

As 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 and adult-led activities to help children prepare for Key Stage 1.

Our environment also very much serves as an additional teacher and we expect this to be of a very high standard.

8. Assessment

At Sutton Bonington Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement 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.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will undertake baseline assessments of children and will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) for all children. Assessments are then recorded termly.

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')

We share the EYFS profile with 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 EYFS profile 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.

9. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. We use the Tapestry app to share achievements between us and home.

Teachers and teaching assistants help to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet the needs of each child. They support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. They also help 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).

10. Staff

Staff training

We will:

- Train all staff in safeguarding procedures in line with Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance
- Support all staff to feel supported and confident in implementing our safeguarding policy and procedures
- Renew training every 2 years, or more often when it's needed to help maintain skills; keep up to date with any changes to our safeguarding procedures; or because of any safeguarding concerns

- Outline how training is delivered, and how staff are supported to put it in place, in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

Our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will:

- Provide ongoing support, advice and guidance to all staff
- Attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework
- Liaise as needed with local statutory children's services agencies and our local safeguarding partners

Safer recruitment

When recruiting staff, we will follow the procedures set out in the latest EYFS framework guidance on checking the suitability of new recruits, including:

- Obtaining a reference for any member of staff before they are recruited
- Recording information about staff qualifications and identity checks, vetting processes and references

See our safeguarding policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures.

Whistleblowing

We make sure that all staff are aware of our whistleblowing procedures, feel able to raise concerns about any poor or unsafe practice and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

In the event that a member of staff feels that they need to blow the whistle on misconduct, they should report their concern to the headteacher. If the concern is about the headteacher or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the chair of governors or CEO of the trust.

See our whistleblowing policy for details of our procedures for handling whistleblowing.

Malicious or vexatious allegations

If an allegation is made in good faith, but investigation finds no wrongdoing, there will be no disciplinary action against the member of staff who raised the concern.

If, however, an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, we will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the person making the allegation.

11. 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. Concerns are reported to our designated safeguarding leads and may lead to us notifying the local authority children's social care team, in line with local report procedures. In emergencies, we may also inform the police.

Concerns raised regarding the conduct of other adults will be referred to the headteacher (or chair of governors/trust CEO where the concern is regarding the headteacher) and will be investigated in line with the trust procedures.

Staffing ratios

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff:child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

- We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils

Paediatric first aid (PFA)

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

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

Absence

We're required to promptly follow up on absences.

If a child is absent for a prolonged time or if their parents/carers haven't told us about the absence, we will attempt to contact the parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts.

See our attendance policy for more on this, including our expectations of parents/carers to report child absences.

Oral health and tooth brushing

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

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

This is covered through our PSHE curriculum – please see our curriculum overviews for more information.

Safer eating

While children are eating, there will always be at least 1 member of staff in the room with a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate (from a course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the latest EYFS framework). All children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating and seated safely in an appropriate chair in a designated eating space.

Before a child joins our setting, we will get information on their:

- Dietary requirements and preferences
- Food allergies and intolerances
- Health requirements

We will share this information with all staff involved in food preparation and handling. At each mealtime and snack time it will be clear which staff member is responsible for checking that the food meets all the requirements for each child.

We will make sure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis; the differences between allergies and intolerances; and that children can develop allergies at any time, especially during the introduction of solid foods.

We will consult with parents/carers to:

- Create health care/allergy plans for their child – with the help of health professionals, where appropriate. We will also keep this information up to date and share it with all staff
- Discuss their child's progress with foods if necessary
- Where appropriate, work with them to move on to the next stage at a pace that's right for their child

We will prepare food in a way that:

- Prevents choking
- Meets each child's individual developmental needs
- Is in line with the DfE's [Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance](#)

In the event of a choking incident that requires intervention, we will record details of the incident and make the child's parents/carers aware. We will periodically review the records to identify whether we can change anything in our practice to make eating safer and then take action as appropriate.

Accident or injury

We keep a first aid box (which contains appropriate items for children) always accessible.

We keep a written record of accident or injuries and any first aid treatment.

We will inform parents or carers the same day as, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, of any:

- Accident or injury sustained by the child
- First aid treatment given

We will notify the relevant authority of any serious accident, illness, or injury to, or death of any child while in our care and inform them of the action taken, as soon as reasonably practicable.

Safety of premises

We make sure that our premises, including overall floor space and outdoor space, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children we care for and the activities provided on the premises.

We comply with requirements of health and safety legislation, including fire safety and hygiene requirements.

Toileting and privacy

We make sure that there are:

- Enough toilets and hand basins available for the children
- Suitable and hygienic changing facilities
- An adequate supply of necessary items such as wipes and spare clothes
- Separate toilet facilities for adults

During changes and toileting, we will balance children's privacy with their safeguarding and support needs.

12. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the headteacher and EYFS teacher every 2 years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

13. Links to other policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Visitor Policy
- Child on Child Abuse Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Early Years Risk Assessment
- Behaviour Policy

Appendix 1 - Seven Key Features of Effective Practice

1. The best for every child:

- All children deserve to have an equal chance of success.
- High-quality early education is good for all children. It is especially important for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- When they start school, children from disadvantaged backgrounds are, on average, 4 months¹ behind their peers. We need to do more to narrow that gap.
- Children who have lived through difficult experiences can begin to grow stronger when they experience high quality early education and care.
- High-quality early education and care is inclusive. Children's special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. All children promptly receive any extra help they need, so they can progress well in their learning.

2. High-quality care:

- The child's experience must always be central to the thinking of every practitioner.
- Babies, toddlers and young children thrive when they are loved and well cared for.
- High-quality care is consistent. Every practitioner needs to enjoy spending time with young children.
- Effective practitioners are responsive to children and babies. They notice when a baby looks towards them and gurgles and respond with pleasure.
- Practitioners understand that toddlers are learning to be independent, so they will sometimes get frustrated.
- Practitioners know that starting school, and all the other transitions in the early years, are big steps for small children.

3. The curriculum - what we want children to learn:

- The curriculum is a top-level plan of everything the early years setting wants the children to learn.
- Planning to help every child to develop their language is vital.
- The curriculum needs to be ambitious. Careful sequencing will help children to build their learning over time.
- Young children's learning is often driven by their interests. Plans need to be flexible.
- Babies and young children do not develop in a fixed way. Their development is like a spider's web with many strands, not a straight line.
- Depth in early learning is much more important than covering lots of things in a superficial way.

4. Pedagogy - helping children to learn:

- Children are powerful learners. Every child can make progress in their learning, with the right help.

- Effective pedagogy is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other, and through guided learning and direct teaching.
- Practitioners carefully organise enabling environments for high-quality play. Sometimes, they make time and space available for children to invent their own play. Sometimes, they join in to sensitively support and extend children's learning.
- Children in the early years also learn through group work, when practitioners guide their learning.
- Older children need more of this guided learning.
- A well-planned learning environment, indoors and outside, is an important aspect of pedagogy.

5. Assessment - checking what children have learnt:

- Assessment is about noticing what children can do and what they know. It is not about lots of data and evidence.
- Effective assessment requires practitioners to understand child development. Practitioners also need to be clear about what they want children to know and be able to do.
- Accurate assessment can highlight whether a child has a special educational need and needs extra help.
- Before assessing children, it's a good idea to think about whether the assessments will be useful.
- Assessment should not take practitioners away from the children for long periods of time.

6. Self-regulation and executive function:

- Executive function includes the child's ability to:
 - hold information in mind
 - focus their attention
 - think flexibly
 - inhibit impulsive behaviour.
- These abilities contribute to the child's growing ability to self-regulate:
 - concentrate their thinking
 - plan what to do next
 - monitor what they are doing and adapt
 - regulate strong feelings
 - be patient for what they want
 - bounce back when things get difficult.
- Language development is central to self-regulation: children use language to guide their actions and plans. Pretend play gives many opportunities for children to focus their thinking, persist and plan ahead.

7. Partnership with parents

- It is important for parents and early years settings to have a strong and respectful partnership. This sets the scene for children to thrive in the early years.
- This includes listening regularly to parents and giving parents clear information about their children's progress.
- The help that parents give their children at home has a very significant impact on their learning.
- Some children get much less support for their learning at home than others. By knowing and understanding all the children and their families, settings can offer extra help to those who need it most.
- It is important to encourage all parents to chat, play and read with their children.