

Pirbright Village Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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1. Our Vision

At Pirbright Village Primary School, inclusion is at the heart of everything we do. We believe that every child, regardless of their background, starting point or individual needs, has the right to experience an ambitious, joyful and successful start to their education. We recognise that children develop at different rates and arrive with a wide range of experiences, strengths and needs. Our role is not to lower expectations, but to provide the support, challenge and opportunities that enable every child to flourish.

We are committed to creating an environment where every child feels welcomed, valued and celebrated as a unique individual. Through warm relationships, high-quality teaching and carefully planned provision, we ensure that every child is known, understood and supported to achieve their full potential. We believe that diversity strengthens our community and that every child should see themselves reflected, respected and represented within our curriculum and school life.

Our Reception provision is underpinned by the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, the Education Endowment Foundation's evidence on *Excellence in Reception*, and Ofsted's expectations for high-quality early education. These documents consistently emphasise that excellent outcomes are achieved through ambitious curricula, exceptional teaching, purposeful play and high-quality interactions. At Pirbright, we believe these principles are most effective when they are delivered through an unwavering commitment to inclusion.

2. Our Aims

Our aim is to ensure that every child leaves Reception with the knowledge, confidence and skills needed to thrive in Key Stage One and beyond. We provide an ambitious curriculum that is accessible to all and designed to remove barriers to learning from the earliest opportunity.

We strive to develop children who are confident communicators, enthusiastic learners and compassionate members of our school community. Alongside academic success, we place equal importance on children's personal, social and emotional development, recognising that secure wellbeing, positive relationships and a strong sense of belonging are essential foundations for successful learning.

We believe that equity is achieved through understanding each child's individual needs and responding with thoughtful adaptations, skilled teaching and appropriate support. High expectations remain consistent for every learner, while recognising that children may require different pathways, levels of scaffolding or additional provision to achieve success.

3. Inclusion

Inclusion is not viewed as a separate aspect of our provision; it is the foundation upon which our curriculum, teaching and relationships are built. We believe that every child should learn alongside their peers, participate fully in school life and experience success within an ambitious curriculum.

Adults develop a deep understanding of every child's strengths, interests and barriers to learning. This knowledge informs planning, teaching and interactions, ensuring that learning is appropriately scaffolded while maintaining high expectations. Adaptations are responsive and purposeful, enabling children to access the same rich learning experiences as their peers rather than a reduced curriculum.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, those eligible for Pupil Premium funding, children learning English as an Additional Language and any child who may be vulnerable receive timely, carefully planned support. Where appropriate, we work closely with families and external professionals to ensure that provision is coordinated and responsive. Early identification and intervention enable children to receive support at the earliest opportunity while remaining fully included within the life of the Reception classroom.

We celebrate children's individuality and actively promote respect, kindness and belonging. Every child is encouraged to develop confidence in who they are while learning to value and appreciate the experiences and perspectives of others.

4. Our Curriculum

Our Reception curriculum has been carefully designed to ensure that knowledge and skills build progressively across the year, preparing children exceptionally well for Year One. Whilst it fully reflects the seven areas of learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage, it goes beyond simply covering the framework by identifying the essential knowledge, vocabulary and experiences that children need to become successful learners. Our curriculum is ambitious for every child and is designed to remove barriers to learning through careful sequencing, rich vocabulary and purposeful opportunities for repetition and retrieval.

The three Prime Areas of Learning - Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, and Physical Development- are prioritised throughout the day because they underpin success across every aspect of the curriculum. These are taught alongside Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design through a combination of direct teaching, purposeful play and carefully planned continuous provision.

Learning is thoughtfully sequenced so that children revisit important concepts regularly, allowing knowledge to become secure over time. Adults make explicit links between new learning and what children already know, helping them to make meaningful connections and develop increasingly sophisticated understanding.

5. Teaching and Learning

At Pirbright Village Primary School, we recognise that excellent teaching in the early years looks different from teaching elsewhere in the school. Children learn best through a carefully balanced combination of explicit instruction, guided practice, meaningful play and skilful adult interaction. Teaching emphasises adaptive teaching, scaffolding and responsive adult interactions, rather than differentiation by task and this is all facilitated by highly trained EYFS practitioners in the environment. Teachers introduce new knowledge through short, well-structured teaching sessions before providing opportunities for children to apply and deepen their understanding through play. Continuous provision is carefully designed so that children can independently revisit previously taught learning whilst adults provide additional challenge through questioning, modelling and shared thinking.

High-quality adult interactions are central to our approach. Staff carefully observe children's thinking, listen attentively and respond by extending conversations, introducing ambitious vocabulary and encouraging children to explain their ideas. Adults use open-ended questioning alongside direct instruction where appropriate, ensuring that every interaction has the potential to move learning forwards.

Learning environments, both indoors and outdoors, are viewed as an extension of the classroom. Resources are thoughtfully organised to promote independence, curiosity and sustained engagement while reflecting current learning and children's interests.

The principles outlined within the school's Teaching and Learning Policy underpin practice within the Early Years. These principles are interpreted through developmentally appropriate pedagogy, recognising how young children learn best through a combination of explicit teaching, purposeful play, high-quality interactions and carefully planned continuous provision.

6. Communication and Language

The development of children's spoken language is fundamental to every aspect of learning. Research consistently demonstrates that secure language development is one of the strongest predictors of later educational success, and therefore communication is prioritised throughout every day.

Adults model rich vocabulary, encourage meaningful conversations and create frequent opportunities for children to articulate their thinking. Storytelling, high-quality texts, songs, rhymes and imaginative play all contribute to a language-rich environment where children hear and use increasingly sophisticated language. New vocabulary is explicitly introduced, revisited and embedded across the curriculum so that children develop both confidence and precision in their communication. Our aim is to close the language gap and supporting EAL learners through rich language and vocabulary.

7. Early Reading and Literacy

Reading is given the highest priority within our Reception curriculum because it opens the door to all future learning. Children receive daily systematic synthetic phonics teaching alongside regular opportunities to apply their knowledge in both reading and writing.

Story time is regarded as an essential part of every day. Carefully selected books expose children to ambitious vocabulary, rich language and a wide range of experiences beyond their own. Adults model fluent reading and foster a genuine love of books through shared enjoyment and discussion.

Writing develops alongside reading and oral language. Before children are expected to write independently, they are given plentiful opportunities to develop their physical skills, strengthen fine motor control, rehearse language orally and observe expert modelling. Writing opportunities are purposeful and meaningful, enabling children to communicate their ideas across all areas of learning.

8. Mathematics

Children develop mathematical understanding through carefully sequenced teaching that emphasises deep conceptual understanding rather than acceleration through content. Daily mathematics sessions provide opportunities for children to explore number, pattern, shape and spatial reasoning using practical resources and mathematical talk.

Adults encourage children to explain their thinking, justify their reasoning and solve problems collaboratively. Mathematical learning is reinforced throughout continuous provision, allowing children to revisit concepts independently within meaningful contexts.

9. Personal Development

Developing children's confidence, resilience and independence is integral to our curriculum. Positive relationships underpin all aspects of school life, enabling children to feel secure enough to take risks in their learning and develop perseverance when faced with challenge.

Clear routines, high expectations and consistent adult responses help children understand how to behave successfully within the school community. Adults explicitly teach emotional regulation, friendship skills and problem-solving strategies, supporting children to become increasingly independent and responsible learners.

Physical development is promoted through daily opportunities to develop both gross and fine motor skills. Outdoor learning, climbing, balancing and active play are complemented by activities that strengthen hand muscles and improve pencil control, ensuring children are well prepared for the demands of writing.

10. Play with Purpose

Play is the vehicle through which much of children's deepest learning takes place. At Pirbright Village Primary School, play is never viewed as separate from learning. Instead, it provides meaningful opportunities for children to revisit, apply and extend the knowledge and skills they have been explicitly taught.

Continuous provision is therefore planned with the same rigour as any adult-led lesson. Every area of the classroom has a clear curriculum purpose, carefully chosen resources and opportunities for children to practise previously taught knowledge whilst developing independence, creativity and sustained thinking.

Adults play a crucial role within continuous provision. They observe children's interests, identify misconceptions, extend vocabulary, model thinking, ask purposeful questions and provide carefully timed support that moves learning forwards. Sometimes this means joining children's play; at other times it means stepping back to allow children to develop independence and resilience. Professional judgement determines the appropriate balance.

11. Assessment

Assessment is an ongoing part of everyday teaching rather than a separate activity. Staff continually observe children's learning, listen carefully to their responses and use this information to inform future planning and identify next steps. Assessment is used to identify barriers early and adapt provision, not simply measure attainment.

Professional judgement is at the centre of our assessment practice. Evidence is gathered naturally through children's independent learning, conversations and participation in adult-led activities, avoiding unnecessary data collection. This allows staff to remain focused on teaching while ensuring that every child receives appropriate challenge and support.

The EYFS Profile is completed at the end of Reception in accordance with statutory requirements and provides a valuable summary of each child's attainment as they transition into Key Stage One.

12. Working in Partnership with Families

Parents and carers are children's first educators, and strong partnerships between home and school are essential to children's success. We value the knowledge that families have of their children and seek to build trusting relationships from the earliest stages of transition.

Regular communication, parent consultations, workshops and opportunities to share learning ensure that families remain actively involved in their child's education. We encourage reading, conversation and play at home as important extensions of children's learning in school.

13. Transition

Successful transition is viewed as a process rather than a single event. Before children join Reception, staff work closely with nurseries, childminders, families and other professionals to gain a thorough understanding of each child's strengths, interests and needs.

Similarly, transition into Year One is carefully planned to ensure continuity in routines, expectations and approaches to teaching. Close collaboration between Reception and Year One staff enables children to move confidently into the next stage of their education while maintaining the best elements of early years practice. It is essential that an enhanced transition for children with SEND or any vulnerability is planned for and prioritised.

Pirbright Practicalities

- home visits (where appropriate)
- preschool visits
- induction meetings
- transition arrangements
- workshops for parents
- the balance of child-initiated and adult-led learning
- the importance of indoor/outdoor continuous provision
- Reception Baseline Assessment
- EYFS Profile and transition to Year 1.

14. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

Leaders regularly evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and provision within the Early Years through professional dialogue, learning walks, observations, assessment information and moderation. This ongoing evaluation ensures that practice continues to reflect current educational research and national expectations.

As an evidence-informed school, we continually refine our Reception provision using the best available research, ensuring that every child receives the strongest possible start to their education. We ensure outcomes for disadvantaged groups, SEND, EAL and other vulnerable learners are carefully monitored so we can close any gaps at an earlier stage.

15. Our Commitment

At Pirbright Village Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that every child leaves Reception as a confident, articulate and enthusiastic learner who has developed the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to flourish in Key Stage One and beyond. Through ambitious teaching, purposeful play, exceptional relationships and a rich curriculum, we aim to provide every child with the foundations for lifelong learning and success.