

Stokesay Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

RATIFICATION: Sep 2025

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: Sep 2026

REVIEWED BY: Executive Headteacher

APPROVED BY: Local Governing Body

Introduction

At Stokesay Primary School, our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provides the very best possible start for all children.

This policy ensures that:

- Every child in EYFS has equal entitlement and equal opportunity.
- All staff provide consistent, high-quality care, teaching and learning.
- Parents and carers understand what their children are learning and how they can help at home.
- There is smooth continuity between Nursery, Reception, and into Key Stage 1.

Why the Foundation Stage Matters

- Children learn and develop **faster from birth to five years** than at any other stage of life.
- A secure, safe, happy childhood is important in its own right and lays the foundations for lifelong learning.
- Good parenting and high-quality early learning give children the best chance to thrive.
- The **EYFS Statutory Framework (Jan 2024)** sets the standards all schools must meet.

Put simply: **EYFS is where future success begins.**

Expectations in EYFS

- By the end of Reception, children are assessed against the **17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs)**.
- We use *Development Matters (2023)* to guide provision and to ensure all children — regardless of their starting point — make strong progress.
- Every child's **unique needs, interests and stage of development** are taken into account.

Guiding Principles

Our practice is shaped by four principles:

1. **A Unique Child** – every child is capable, resilient and able to learn.
2. **Positive Relationships** – children learn best from strong, caring relationships with adults and peers.
3. **Enabling Environments** – children learn well in safe, stimulating, well-resourced spaces.
4. **Learning and Development** – children develop at different rates, so teaching must be flexible and inclusive.

Curriculum in EYFS

Children's learning covers **seven areas**:

Prime areas (core skills):

- Communication & Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social & Emotional Development

Specific areas (building on the prime):

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts & Design

We focus on three **Characteristics of Effective Learning**:

- Playing and Exploring – “having a go” and investigating.
- Active Learning – concentrating, persevering, and celebrating success.

- Creating and Thinking Critically – developing ideas, making links, and solving problems.

Teaching is delivered through:

- **Purposeful play** (child-initiated).
- **Planned activities** (adult-led).
- **Enhanced provision** (topic-based and interest-driven).

Inclusion

We provide for:

- Boys and girls equally.
- Children with SEND or disabilities.
- Children from all social, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds.
- Children who are more able, gifted or talented.

Support is tailored to individual needs. Barriers to learning are identified early and removed. Staff work closely with parents and outside agencies when required.

Organisation and Environment

- The indoor and outdoor environment is carefully planned.
- Children access sand, water, reading corners, maths and science resources, role play, creative materials, small world play and outdoor equipment every day.
- Resources are open-ended, encouraging independence and creativity.
- Children are taught to make their own choices and take responsibility for tidying away.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

- Staff observe children daily to identify next steps.
- Parents contribute through **Tapestry**.
- Nursery children have Learning Journeys; Reception children use Literacy and Maths books.
- **Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)** is completed in the first 6 weeks.
- **EYFS Profile (EYFSP)** is completed at the end of Reception (statutory).
- Termly assessments inform planning and interventions.
- Parents receive feedback through:
 - Autumn and Spring **Parents' Evenings**
 - Summer **End-of-Year Report**
 - Weekly Tapestry updates
 - Regular informal conversations at drop-off and pick-up

Learning Outdoors

- Children access outdoors in all weathers.
- Provision includes large-scale play, gardening, exploration and problem-solving.
- Weekly woodland sessions give children opportunities for adventure and discovery.

Parents as Partners

We believe children learn best when school and home work together. We:

- Run induction sessions and drop-ins before starting Nursery and Reception.
- Share weekly group updates with photos via **Tapestry**.
- Hold **Parents' Evenings in autumn and spring**.
- Provide **written end-of-year reports** in summer.
- Share **RBA outcomes and next steps**.
- Run workshops for phonics, maths, reading and other areas.
- Invite families to assemblies, Sports Day, outdoor learning days and shared reading.
- Encourage parents to add their child's "learning moments" to Tapestry.

- Send **weekly home challenges** linked to class learning.

Welfare and Safeguarding

We comply fully with:

- *Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2024)*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)*
- *Prevent Duty (2015, updated 2023)*

Key points:

- Every EYFS session has at least one **paediatric first-aider** present.
- Staff are fully trained in safeguarding, child protection, and safer working practice.
- All staff and visitors are subject to safeguarding checks.
- Behaviour is managed in line with the whole-school policy.
- Ratios and staffing always meet statutory requirements.
- Children's health and hygiene are promoted at all times.

British Values and Cultural Capital

We actively promote the **fundamental British values** of:

- Democracy
- Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Mutual Respect and Tolerance

Children experience:

- Class elections and school council involvement.
- Stories, assemblies and celebrations from different cultures.
- Visits and contributions from community members.
- Trips and enrichment activities to build **cultural capital** beyond the local area.

Staff Development

- All EYFS staff are qualified and regularly update their training.
- CPD needs are identified through performance management.
- Staff take part in courses, networking, and school-based CPD.

Admissions

- Places are allocated through Shropshire LA's admissions process.
- Reception capacity is **30 pupils**.
- Ratios always meet statutory EYFS guidance.

Transitions

We make transitions smooth and supportive:

- Parents and children visit classrooms before starting.
- Children attend taster sessions in Nursery and Reception.
- Parents complete questionnaires about their child's interests and needs.
- Reception and Year 1 staff meet to hand over assessments and plan for continuity.

Community Links

- Weekly assemblies from the local church ("Open the Book").
- Visits from local professionals (vet, police, first responders).
- Community events and celebrations that connect learning to real life.

Complaints

Complaints are handled in line with the Trust Complaints Policy, available on the school website.

Governance

- Governors monitor EYFS provision and outcomes.
 - The EYFS link governor (**Unjum Hussain**) reports regularly to the Local Governing Body.
 - Governors ensure statutory requirements are met.
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Monitoring and Review

- EYFS provision is reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory requirements change.
- Monitoring includes: EYFSP outcomes, lesson observations, environment walks, governor visits, and parent voice.