

Potten End Church of England Primary School

Rooted in faith, we nurture, grow and flourish
Matthew 4:30-32

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

Potten End Church of England Primary School

Policy Review

This policy was agreed by the Governing Board on.....July 2026

It is due for review on...July 2028.....

Signature

Date

Head Teacher

Signature

Date

Chair of Governors



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Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five 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 together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. (The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.' DfE July 2025).

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school children join Reception on a phased introduction at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and carers.
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.**

A Unique Child

At Potten End Primary School, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured. We know that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by their school and home environments and from the start we nurture positive relationships and links with families. We observe how each child learns to gain an understanding of the characteristics they develop to become effective learners. We use questioning, praise, and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning and high self-esteem.

We support children to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed for a successful start to school and future learning. This includes developing independence, communication skills, self-regulation, resilience, physical development and positive learning behaviours. We work closely with families to ensure children are ready to access the Reception curriculum and make a successful transition into Key Stage 1.

Inclusion

All children and their families are valued within our school. We value the diversity of individuals within the school and all children at Potten End Primary School are treated regardless of race, religion, or stage of learning. We do not group children based on notions of fixed ability. We teach the children that practice and effort lead to learning and improvement. In the early years the children begin to learn to take responsibility



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for their learning and begin to understand the concept of challenge.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of our children's range of life experiences and interests when planning for their learning. Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are identified as early as possible. Staff work closely with parents, the SENDCo and external agencies where appropriate to ensure children receive the support they need. Reasonable adjustments and targeted interventions are used to ensure all children can access the curriculum, participate fully in school life and achieve their potential.

In the EYFS we have realistic and challenging expectations and meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests and develop their self-esteem and confidence through a creative curriculum and stimulating learning environment.
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities and environments to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which each child's contribution is valued.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is vital that all children in the school are safe. We provide children with opportunities to help them develop the skills they need to keep themselves safe. Children should be allowed to take risks but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards both in the real and virtual world.

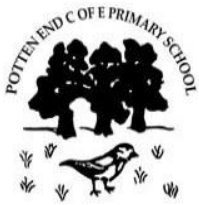
Positive Relationships

At Potten End Primary School we recognise that children learn to be confident and independent through the development of secure relationships. We develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise the important role parents play in educating the children. We do this by:

- Carrying out home visits where we talk to parents before their child starts at our school.
- Sending home welcome packs with key information about the school and year group.
- Inviting the children to 'Stay and Play' sessions, with their teacher in the classroom before starting in Reception.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.



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- Encouraging parents to attend consultation meetings in the first two terms to discuss their child's progress and development.
- Providing parents with a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of Reception.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress and allowing free access to their child's learning journey book.
- Offering an open-door policy for parents to discuss any concerns with their child's class teacher.
- Regular newsletters and curriculum information about the school and their child's year group.
- Inviting parents to play sessions, forest school afternoons, maths, phonics reading workshops, parent and child trips and whole class collective worship to share our learning.
- Inviting parents to a 'Meet the Teacher meeting'.

Good attendance and punctuality are promoted from the start of school life. We work closely with families to support regular attendance and recognise the important role attendance plays in children's learning, wellbeing and development.

Staff quickly develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. We have good links with local preschools and visits are undertaken before the children begin school. The EYFS teachers meet with staff to discuss the new intake of children and their developments so far in line with the Early Years Outcomes.

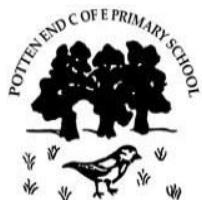
Safeguarding and Welfare

Safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment where children feel valued and protected. All staff are trained in safeguarding procedures and understand their responsibility to promote children's welfare and report any concerns in line with the school's safeguarding policy. We teach children how to keep themselves safe through everyday experiences, discussions and routines, helping them to develop an understanding of risks both in the real world and online.

Enabling Environments

At Potten End CE Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Both the indoor and outdoor environments provide opportunities for child-initiated learning across all seven areas of learning and reflect the planned curriculum. We provide stimulating resources which are accessible and open-ended so they can be used, moved, and combined in a variety of ways.

We provide a rich and engaging environment that promotes curiosity, independence and a love of learning. Through carefully planned experiences and interactions, children are encouraged to explore, investigate, problem-solve and develop their understanding of the world around them.



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Observation, Assessment and Planning

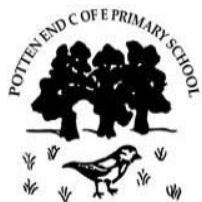
Planning within the EYFS is geared towards the children's interests. We plan first hand experiences and provide opportunities for challenges appropriate to the age and stage of each child.

In the EYFS assessment of attainment and progress is primarily based on observation, discussion, questioning and evidence of children's independent learning alongside adult led activities. Valuable evidence of children's learning is obtained through observation of independent and adult led learning. During observations, adults in the Early Years use 'in-the-moment' interactions and teaching to extend children's learning across the seven areas of learning. Assessment is an ongoing process based on professional knowledge, observations, interactions and discussions with children. Development Matters is used as a non-statutory guidance document to support practitioners' understanding of child development and to inform planning. Assessment information is used to identify children's next steps and ensure that learning opportunities meet the needs of all learners.

Learning and Development

At Potten End Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected. The children have time and freedom to become fully engaged and involved (Leuven Scales) in the activities and their learning. The prime area of Communication and Language is at the heart of our curriculum. Adults model and extend children's language through high-quality interactions, storytelling, questioning, sustained shared thinking and purposeful conversations. We place a strong emphasis on developing children's vocabulary and communication skills across all areas of learning.

Our EYFS curriculum is carefully sequenced to build children's knowledge, skills and vocabulary over time. Whilst we respond to children's interests and fascinations, we ensure all children gain the essential knowledge, experiences and cultural capital needed for future learning and success. We prioritise the development of early reading through a systematic synthetic phonics programme (Read Write Inc) and foster a love of reading through high-quality texts, storytelling and regular opportunities to share books



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Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

PRIME AREAS

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

SPECIFIC AREAS

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

These areas are delivered throughout the curriculum and linked closely together. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities.

The EYFS have their own outdoor area, which is used all year round in all weathers. Being outdoors encourages learning in different ways. It offers the children more opportunities to be creative and explore on a larger scale as well as to be physically active linking the indoors and outdoors together.

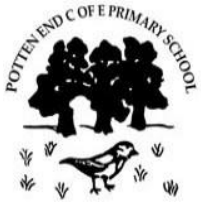
Play

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play, children can be inquisitive, creative, questioning, and experimental and will learn at their highest level. Playing with their peers is important for children's personal, social, and emotional development.

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. The adults model play and play sensitively with the children fitting in with their plans, extending their ideas and thinking. The children are encouraged to try new activities and judge risks for themselves. Through play and exploration, children develop creativity, critical thinking, communication and problem-solving skills. Adults carefully balance child-initiated learning with purposeful adult interactions to extend children's thinking and deepen learning. We talk to them about how we get better at things through effort and practice and that we can all learn when things go wrong. They practice and build up ideas learning how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own.

Transitions

The vast majority of children look forward to moving on in learning and in life, but for some children, transitions can be challenging. When transitions work well, children are assisted to develop confidence and acquire skills needed to manage future changes in their lives. Support from parents and staff at school can help transitions to be more successful. Transitions between Reception to Year 1 are recognised as an important



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time in the child's life. Therefore, time is designated for sharing information about each child with their new receiving teacher. As well as pictures of their new classroom environment. Vulnerable children are identified, and additional transition work takes place to ensure their move is successful.

Potten End has adopted the Herts Smooth Transitions Toolkit which identifies any barriers to children as they transition into EYFS. The information gathered from this is used to provide a suitably supportive transition package when starting Reception.