



## Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Name of School	Petersgate Infant School
Date of review	February 2025
Date of next review	February 2027
Reviewed by	Wendy Mitchell Headteacher

### School Vision

"for all children to grow into responsible, caring individuals who actively and positively contribute to the community."

At Petersgate Infant School, our vision outlined above is strengthened by our values of safety, caring, achievement, resilience and friendship. These values symbolise warmth, community and cohesion to ensure we are "working together to achieve our best".

As a school, we can apply these values through the following aims:

### Aims

- Ensuring everyone stays healthy and safe.
- Ensuring everyone feels valued and has a sense of belonging.
- Providing a high quality learning environment.
- Helping everyone enjoy learning and achieving their best.
- Nurturing and developing the whole child.
- Ensuring everyone makes a positive contribution to the school and wider community.

Safeguarding at Petersgate Infant School is carried out in line with the statutory guidance in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' published by the Department for Education.

### Aims

- For children to access a broad and balanced tailored curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- That there is quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- We form close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- For every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and antidiscriminatory practice

### Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2024 Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years. These are:

- *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 with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.*
- *Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).” (EYFS Statutory Framework 2024)*

### Structure of the EYFS

From September 2025, we will have 2 Reception classes which accommodate up to 60 children. The team of 2 teachers take responsibility for provision and the Headteacher and Teaching and Learning lead take responsibility for assessment analysis, working alongside the class teachers.

### Curriculum

Our early years setting uses knowledge of the children and educational programmes which must involve activities and experiences for children, as set out under each of the areas of learning outlined in the 2024 statutory framework of the EYFS. As a setting, these are based around our 3 aspirations for the children, whilst following the children’s interests.

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
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical Development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through **4 specific areas:**

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

In addition to the use of the Statutory Framework for the EYFS and guidance in ‘Development Matters’ to support our curriculum planning across the 7 areas of learning, we create curriculum ‘Aspirations’ that we feel are important to teach our current cohort of children based on our observations of them within play, conversations with parents, pre-school transitions and local community. These may change depending on the needs of the cohort, and can be found on our Early Years section of the website.

At Petersgate we follow guidance relating to the Characteristics of Effective Learning:

*“In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately.*

*Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:*

- *Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’.*
- *Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements.*
- *Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.”*

(EYFS Statutory Framework 2024)

### **Planning**

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas. The specific areas of learning provide children with a broad curriculum and with opportunities to strengthen and apply the prime areas of learning. This is particularly important in developing language and extending vocabulary.

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

### **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. The role of the adult is critically important when children are learning through their play. The adults will become play facilitators or play partners, to learning alongside/with the child whilst having meaningful and purposeful interactions.

Adults ensure that children have access to a challenging, stimulating and enabling environment where they can develop skills through a wide variety of provision. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance may gradually shift towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for the Year 1 curriculum.

### **Assessment**

At Petersgate Infant School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. At the beginning of the year, class teachers undertake the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment within the first six weeks of children starting school. Members of staff also carry out their own on-entry observations to ensure we have a full picture of each child. These are informed by information from pre-schools and family home visits.

Throughout the year, there are three Milestones to ensure the children reach our Aspirations and Early Learning Goals at the end of the year. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers through the use of Seesaw.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS assessment for each child.

Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development ('Expected')
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('Emerging')

The assessments reflect ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the assessments are then shared with parents and/or carers during parent consultation meetings at each milestone.

### **Working with parents**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development using SeeSaw to share the children's learning journey and by carrying out parents' evenings. These updates, along with the EYFS assessments at the end of the year, help to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

### **Transition**

To ensure a smooth and positive transition process into school, all children due to start at Petersgate in September are invited to a variety of transition events throughout the summer term.

These sessions form part of our Transition Road Map to ensure, as a school, we have as much information as possible about your child before they start school.

Allowing the children to visit the school with their parent and/or carer and meet peers and school staff will help to build this trusted and positive relationship between school and home.

It also provides the children an opportunity to explore the school environment and build relationships with school staff.

Pre-school visits are conducted to gather valuable transition information and allow staff to meet the children during the summer term. Home visits take place at the start of September to further support the transition process.

### **Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our child protection and safeguarding policies.