POLICY DOCUMENT

EYFS Policy

Princess May Primary School's approach to the Early Years Foundation Stage — 2026–2027

Governing Body Representative (GBR)	Kristofer McGhee (Chair of Governors)
Signed by (GBR)	
Date approved	4 September 2026
Next review due by	September 2027
Related policies	Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Attendance and Punctuality Policy; Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions; First Aid Policy; Allergy Policy; Intimate Care Policy; Mobile Phone Policy; Online Safety Policy; Behaviour Policy; Health and Safety Policy; SEND Policy and SEND Information Report; Complaints Policy
Aligned to	EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers (in force from 1 September 2026); Development Matters (non-statutory curriculum guidance); Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026; Working Together to Safeguard Children; SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25; DfE Help for early years providers: screen use; Ofsted school inspection toolkit (early years)

About this version: this policy was approved by governors on 4 September 2026. It was updated in October 2026 to reflect the EYFS statutory framework that came into force on 1 September 2026, including the requirements on safer eating, sleep and screen use, and Ofsted's expectations for early years in schools.

1. Aims and scope

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Princess May is made up of our Nursery class (Caterpillars) and Reception class (Butterflies), for children aged three to five, taught together in a shared setting. Our aim is to give every child the best possible start to their education: to be happy, safe and secure, to make strong progress from their starting points, and to leave Reception confident, curious and ready for Year 1.

This policy sets out how we meet the EYFS learning and development, assessment, and safeguarding and welfare requirements. In line with the EYFS framework, where a requirement is already met by another school policy we do not repeat it in full, but this policy explains how it applies in the EYFS and where to find the detail.

2. Roles and responsibilities

- **The governing body** makes sure the statutory requirements of the EYFS are met, monitors the quality of provision and outcomes, and approves this policy.
- **The Headteacher** is responsible for the quality of the EYFS, makes sure it is resourced and staffed in line with the framework, and has the same high expectations for children in the EYFS as for the rest of the school.
- **The EYFS Lead (Sarah Ward)** leads the curriculum, teaching and assessment in Nursery and Reception, supports and develops staff, oversees day-to-day welfare arrangements, and keeps leaders and governors informed.
- **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (Hannah Blunden, Assistant Headteacher)** takes lead responsibility for safeguarding in the EYFS, supported by the Headteacher as deputy DSL.
- **The SENCO (Hannah Blunden)** coordinates support for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- **Each child's key person** builds a secure relationship with the child and their family, makes sure the child's care meets their individual needs, and is the first point of contact for parents and carers.
- **All EYFS staff** follow this policy, keep children safe, and provide high-quality teaching and care.

3. Our curriculum

Intent

We have high ambitions for every child and recognise that children have different starting points. Our curriculum is designed to:

- identify and sequence the key knowledge and skills children need for later learning, across all seven areas of learning;
- give **communication and language** the highest priority, because it underpins everything children learn;
- develop children's independence, resilience, confidence and positive attitudes to learning;
- celebrate the rich cultural and linguistic diversity of our community; and
- prepare every child for a successful transition to Year 1.

The areas of learning

We teach the three **prime areas** — Communication and Language; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; and Physical Development — and the four **specific areas** — Literacy; Mathematics; Understanding the World; and Expressive Arts and Design. Our curriculum is informed by Development Matters, used as guidance rather than a checklist.

We promote the **characteristics of effective learning**: playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically.

Communication, language and reading

- Every day, staff read aloud, re-read and talk about high-quality stories, rhymes and non-fiction, so that children build a love of books and a rich vocabulary.
- Songs, rhymes and poems are part of every day, helping children develop their voices, listening and phonological awareness.
- We use Core Books and The Literacy Tree to plan literacy, and Drawing Club to develop vocabulary, storytelling and early mark-making.
- In Reception, children are taught to read through **Read Write Inc. Phonics**, a systematic synthetic phonics programme that is logically sequenced and cumulative. Phonics teaching begins as soon as possible in the autumn term, and children who need extra help receive daily keep-up support. Nursery children are introduced to Fred Talk and sound games in preparation.
- Handwriting is taught through RWI in Reception, with attention to pencil grip, posture and letter formation (see the Handwriting Policy).

Mathematics

We use **Mathematics Mastery** in Reception and **Speedy Starters** in Nursery. Teaching is carefully sequenced so that children develop a secure understanding of number, numerical patterns, shape and spatial reasoning, use mathematical vocabulary with confidence, and practise number facts until they are fluent.

Learning through play and teaching

Children learn through a balance of child-initiated play in a carefully planned indoor and outdoor environment, adult-guided activities, and short, focused whole-class and small-group teaching. As children move through Reception, there is a gradually greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas, to prepare them for Year 1. All children have daily access to outdoor learning.

4. Teaching

- Staff prioritise high-quality interactions with children: modelling language, scaffolding and extending children's ideas, and helping them explain what they know.
- Staff choose what, when and how to teach based on children's age, stage and starting points, and check children's understanding so that gaps are identified and addressed quickly.
- Children have frequent opportunities to practise and consolidate what they have learned.
- Staff spend their time interacting with children rather than observing, recording and compiling evidence. Recording is kept to what is useful for planning and for parents.

5. Assessment

- **Ongoing (formative) assessment** is part of everyday teaching. Staff observe and talk with children to understand what they know and can do, and use this to plan next steps. It does not involve long breaks from interaction with children or unnecessary paperwork.

- **Progress check at age two:** children join our Nursery at age three, so this check is normally completed by a previous setting or health visitor. We ask parents and carers to share it with us.
- **Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA):** completed for each child within the first six weeks of Reception, in line with the statutory guidance.
- **Early Years Foundation Stage Profile:** completed for each child in the summer term of Reception, and no later than 30 June. Each child's development is assessed against the 17 early learning goals using teachers' professional, best-fit judgements. The Profile is completed for all children, including those with SEND.
- Profile results are shared with parents and carers, with an opportunity to discuss them with the class teacher. Year 1 teachers receive a copy of each child's Profile and a transition discussion with the Reception teacher, including any gaps in knowledge. Results are reported to the local authority on request.
- Termly assessments track progress for all children, including disadvantaged children, children with SEND, children with English as an additional language and summer-born children. Judgements are moderated within school, with local schools and through local authority moderation.

6. Inclusion

- **Early identification:** staff quickly identify children who face barriers to learning or wellbeing, with a particular focus on children whose language is less well developed or who do not readily engage with adults. Concerns about progress in any prime area are discussed promptly with parents and carers and the SENCO.
- **SEND:** we have regard to the SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25. The SENCO works with families, the key person and external professionals, and support is planned and reviewed regularly (see the SEND Policy and SEND Information Report).
- **English as an additional language:** children are supported to develop English while their home language is valued. Where a child's home language is not English, we take reasonable steps to assess their skills in their home language, and work with parents to understand whether there may be a language delay.
- **Disadvantaged children and Early Years Pupil Premium:** we use Early Years Pupil Premium and our wider resources to reduce barriers for eligible children, and leaders review how well this support is working.
- **Children known to children's social care** receive additional attention to their learning and wellbeing, working closely with the DSL and relevant professionals.

7. Working with parents and carers

We work in close partnership with parents and carers, who are their child's first educators. We share:

- how the EYFS is delivered at Princess May and how parents can find out more (including through our website);
- the activities and experiences we provide, our daily routines, and how parents can support learning at home;
- how we support children with SEND;
- the food and drink provided for children;
- our policies and procedures, with copies available on request, including what happens if a child is not collected on time or goes missing;
- how staffing is organised, and the name and role of their child's key person; and
- a telephone number to contact the school in an emergency (020 7254 1589).

Parents and carers are kept up to date with their child's progress through informal conversations, the online learning journal, termly consultations and written reports. We hold stay-and-play sessions and workshops, and support parents to help their children get ready for school.

8. Transition

- **Starting school:** we offer visits, stay-and-play sessions and an individual settling-in plan for each child, working with families and any previous settings.
- **Nursery to Reception:** children are supported by familiar adults, as the classes share a setting.
- **Reception to Year 1:** children visit their new class and teacher, Year 1 teachers receive the Profile and a detailed handover, and parents attend a transition meeting about the Year 1 curriculum.

9. Safeguarding and welfare

9.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- Safeguarding in the EYFS follows our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children, the Prevent duty and the procedures of the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- Every member of staff is alert to any concern about a child's life at home or elsewhere, and reports concerns to the DSL straight away. Where there is a risk of immediate harm, staff contact children's social care or the police directly.
- Allegations against staff are managed under our allegations procedures and referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- All EYFS staff receive safeguarding training that meets the EYFS criteria, renewed at least every two years, with regular updates in between. The DSL's training is also renewed every two years, and the DSL provides ongoing support and advice to staff.
- **Whistleblowing:** all staff, students and volunteers know how to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice, and that concerns will be taken seriously. Staff can also contact the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line on 0800 028 0285.

9.2 Mobile phones, cameras and devices

Staff and visitors do not use personal mobile phones or devices in areas where children are present. Photographs and videos of children are only taken on school devices, for learning and assessment purposes, and stored securely. Parents' consent is obtained for the use of images. See the Mobile Phone Policy and Online Safety Policy.

9.3 Suitable people

All EYFS staff are recruited in line with the school's safer recruitment procedures and Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, including enhanced DBS checks with barred list checks, references, and checks that staff are not disqualified from working in early years provision under the Childcare Act 2006. Staff must tell the school about any change in circumstances that may affect their suitability. Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or any substance that could affect their ability to care for children, and must seek medical advice about any medication that might do so. Smoking and vaping are not permitted on the school site.

9.4 Staffing, ratios and supervision

- **Nursery:** at least one member of staff for every 13 children, with a qualified teacher working directly with the children.
- **Reception:** classes of no more than 30 children per qualified teacher during ordinary teaching sessions, in line with infant class size legislation, with additional staff deployed according to children's needs.

- Staffing is always organised to meet children's needs and keep them safe. Children are usually within sight and hearing of staff, and always within sight or hearing. Nobody under 17 is counted in ratios.
- Each child is assigned a **key person**, and parents are told who this is.
- All new staff receive an induction covering safeguarding, child protection, emergency evacuation, and health and safety. Staff have regular professional development.
- EYFS staff have regular **supervision** meetings with the EYFS Lead or a senior leader every half term to discuss children's development and wellbeing (including child protection concerns), find solutions to issues, and receive coaching.
- All staff have a good enough understanding and use of English to keep children safe, keep records, liaise with other agencies and summon emergency help.

9.5 Paediatric first aid

- At least one member of staff with a current, full paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate is on site and available whenever EYFS children are present, and accompanies children on every outing.
- A member of staff with a current, full PFA certificate is in the room whenever children are eating.
- PFA certificates are renewed every three years. A list of staff with current PFA certificates is displayed in the EYFS and available to parents.

9.6 Attendance and absence

Our Attendance and Punctuality Policy is shared with parents and sets out how to report absence. Although children in Nursery and Reception may be below compulsory school age, we follow up every unexplained absence promptly, contacting parents and then emergency contacts. We consider patterns of absence and each child's circumstances, and refer any concerns to the DSL, children's social care or the police (for a welfare check) as needed.

9.7 Collection, late collection and missing children

- Children are only released to adults whom parents have named to the school. We need to be told in advance if someone different is collecting a child.
- If a child is not collected on time, we follow our late collection procedures, keep the child safe with familiar staff, and contact parents and emergency contacts. Repeated late collection is referred to the DSL.
- If a child goes missing, staff immediately alert the Headteacher or a senior leader, carry out a thorough search of the site, and contact the parents. If the child is not found quickly, the police are called. The incident is recorded and reviewed to prevent it happening again.

9.8 Health, illness and medicines

- We promote children's good health, including oral health.
- Children who are ill or infectious are cared for safely until collected. We follow UK Health Security Agency guidance on infection control and on when children should stay away from school, and discuss this procedure with parents.
- Medicines are only given with written permission from the parent or carer for that particular medicine. Prescription medicines are only given if prescribed for the child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist. A written record is kept each time a medicine is given and parents are informed the same day. Staff are trained where medical or technical knowledge is needed. All medicines are stored securely and out of children's reach. See Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions.

9.9 Food, drink and safer eating

- Meals, snacks and drinks are healthy, balanced and nutritious, with regard to the EYFS nutrition guidance. Fresh drinking water is always available.
- Before a child starts, we collect information about dietary needs, allergies, intolerances and health needs, and share it with all staff who prepare or handle food. At every meal and snack time, a named member of staff checks that the food meets each child's requirements.
- We work with parents and health professionals to develop allergy action plans (using the BSACI template), and all staff know the signs and treatment of allergic reactions and anaphylaxis. See the Allergy Policy.
- Food is prepared and cut in ways that reduce the risk of choking, in line with DfE food safety guidance. We talk with parents about the textures their child is used to and do not make assumptions based on age.
- Children sit down to eat, are always within sight and hearing of staff, and, where possible, staff sit facing them. Food sharing is prevented.
- Any choking incident needing intervention is recorded and shared with parents, and records are reviewed for patterns.
- Staff who prepare or handle food are trained in food hygiene.

9.10 Rest and sleep

Children who need to rest or sleep do so safely on a suitable, clean surface, within sight and hearing of staff, with their heads uncovered, and are checked frequently. Rest is discussed with parents to fit in with the child's routine.

9.11 Toileting and intimate care

We support children to become independent in toileting. Where help or changing is needed, staff follow our Intimate Care Policy, balancing children's privacy and dignity with safeguarding and support needs. There are enough toilets, hand basins and hygienic changing facilities, and a supply of spare clothes.

9.12 Behaviour

We support children to understand and manage their feelings and behaviour through warm relationships, clear routines, modelling and praise, in line with our Behaviour Policy. Corporal punishment, or the threat of it, and any punishment that could harm a child's wellbeing are never used. Physical intervention is only used where necessary to prevent injury or damage, using the minimum force needed. Every occasion is recorded and parents are informed the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

9.13 Premises, safety and risk assessment

- The EYFS indoor and outdoor areas are safe, suitable for children aged three to five, and meet the space requirements. Children have daily access to outdoor play unless weather makes this unsafe.
- Risks are managed through regular checks and risk assessments, with written risk assessments where helpful. Fire detection equipment is maintained, fire exits are clear and the emergency evacuation procedure is practised regularly.
- The site is secure. Visitors' identities are checked and visitors are supervised, and children cannot leave the premises unsupervised.
- Banned dog breeds (including XL Bully types) must never be present on the school premises. Other dogs are not allowed on site without the Headteacher's agreement.
- There is a space for staff to talk with parents confidentially and an area for staff breaks away from children.

9.14 Outings

Every outing is risk assessed, including the adult-to-child ratio, and is accompanied by a member of staff with a current PFA certificate. Visits follow the school's educational visits procedures. Vehicles and drivers used to transport children are properly insured.

9.15 Screen use and online safety

We have regard to the DfE guidance on children's screen use in early years settings. Screens are used rarely and only with a clear learning purpose, for example sharing a book, exploring a photograph or recording children's own learning. Use is short, led or supported by an adult, and interactive rather than passive. Staff check content in advance and only use content that is age-appropriate, slow-paced and free from adverts, autoplay and algorithm-driven recommendations. Children are never left alone with devices. We talk with parents and carers about healthy screen use at home. See the Online Safety Policy.

9.16 Accidents and injuries

A well-stocked first aid kit suitable for young children is always accessible, including on outings. All accidents, injuries and first aid treatment are recorded, and parents are informed the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable. Serious accidents, injuries or the death of a child are reported to local child protection agencies and as required under health and safety law, and we act on any advice given. See the First Aid Policy and Health and Safety Policy.

9.17 Records and information sharing

- For each child we record their full name, date of birth, the name and address of every known parent or carer, anyone else with parental responsibility, who the child normally lives with, and emergency contact details. Where possible we hold more than two emergency contacts.
- We keep a daily record of the children present, their hours of attendance and each child's key person.
- Records are kept securely in line with data protection law and our Data Protection Policy, and are only available to those with a right or professional need to see them. Parents can access the records about their child unless a legal exemption applies, and their comments are added if they ask.
- We share information with other professionals, settings and agencies where needed to meet children's needs or keep them safe.

9.18 Complaints

Concerns and complaints are dealt with under our Complaints Policy. In line with the EYFS framework, any written complaint about how we are meeting the EYFS requirements is investigated, and the person who made the complaint is told the outcome within 28 days. A written record of complaints and their outcomes is kept and made available to Ofsted on request. Parents and carers can also contact Ofsted if they believe the EYFS requirements are not being met. We tell parents when an Ofsted inspection is due and share the report afterwards.

10. Monitoring and review

The EYFS Lead and Headteacher monitor the quality of education and care through learning walks, discussions with children, reviews of planning and assessment, moderation, and feedback from staff and parents. Leaders report to the governing body on EYFS outcomes, the use of Early Years Pupil Premium, and compliance with the statutory requirements. This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if the EYFS framework changes.

11. Links to other policies

This policy should be read alongside: Safeguarding and Child Protection; Attendance and Punctuality; Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions; First Aid; Allergy; Intimate Care; Mobile Phone; Online Safety; Behaviour; Health and Safety; SEND Policy and SEND Information Report; Complaints; Handwriting; Data Protection; and Late Collection.