



## HILDENBOROUGH CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,” (Philippians 4:13) so that I can be the best that I can be, for myself, for others and for God.

# EYFS POLICY

## October 2025

We aspire for our community to flourish as we journey together to fulfil our God given potential by encouraging a delight in the pursuit of wisdom and knowledge. We cherish each person as unique and special, and celebrate God’s creation through providing rich experiences, which enlighten, challenge, shape and enhance life’s opportunities for all.

Last Reviewed	October 2024
Next Review Date	October 2026
Ratified by	FGB
Ratified on	12.11.2025
Lead Person	Jonathan Kenward

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## Aims

At Hildenborough CE Primary School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential. At Hildenborough, our vision is that every child will be the best that they can be and this vision underpins all that we do. Our Christian values of love, compassion, hope, honesty, courage and endurance teaches the learning behaviours that will support our children in flourishing.

To meet all statutory requirements as set in the [EYFS statutory framework](#).

## Principles into practice

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using children’s interests and play as the motivation for learning.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide appropriate, early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers and within the wider community.
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation, assessment and knowledge of the child.
- Provide opportunities for children to lead their own learning within a stimulating indoor and outdoor environment.
- Offer opportunities for children to engage in suitable, adult-initiated and adult-led activities when appropriate.

## EYFS Framework

We believe in building strong foundations for children’s learning, helping to shape their learning in the future. By creating a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences we are building lifelong learners with a love of education. There are four guiding principles from the EYFS Guidance.

### **A Unique Child**

Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

### **Positive Relationships**

Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or nurturing adults within their school setting. We strive to ensure that there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents. Both teachers are ‘key person’ for each child in the class.

### **Enabling Environments**

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. The indoor and outdoor environments are designed to ensure that children can learn independently through open-ended resources which they can access themselves. We strive to offer a wide range of rich learning opportunities with awe and wonder at the heart.

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## Learning and Development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected. We strive to invest in the development of the whole child through physical, social and holistic development and we are committed to ensuring that all of the children in our care are happy, enthusiastic and purposeful learners.

## The Early Years Framework

We offer provision, which takes account of the differing starting points of the children in the Early Years across the seven areas of learning:

1. Communication and Language
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
4. Literacy
5. Mathematics
6. Understanding the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

## The Characteristics of Learning

When planning and guiding children’s activities, we reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. We ensure that the characteristics of learning are highly valued in all our practice and underpin the planning and design of our learning environment. The three outlined 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.

## This is how we do it here

‘Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems.’ (Revised Statutory EYFS Framework). We want children to be highly involved in the learning process and for their learning to be relevant and purposeful. We believe that children learn best through high levels of wellbeing and involvement and so we strive to ensure that all children are healthy, happy and engaged. We believe that both indoor and outdoor play is an ideal vehicle for young children’s learning, helping children to explore, investigate and make sense of the world around them as well as building upon their natural curiosity and inquisitiveness. Child initiated play allows children to be challenged in their thinking as well as helping them to practice and develop skills, and to be intrinsically motivated in their learning. We provide our children with long, uninterrupted sessions to play both indoors and outside where they can follow their own interests and curiosities independently. This also gives children the opportunity to feel invested in an outcome, particularly when play is developed over the session.

Sessions are organised to maximise the amount of child initiated, free-flow play available, with short, adult-led times at the beginning and end of learning through play sessions. These times are given to daily

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phonics, maths and story sessions, as well as group times which focus on other areas of learning within the early year’s framework.

There are primarily three ‘layers of learning’ taking place in our Early Years classroom. These are:

- Book-led inputs, activities and exploration (activities and learning opportunities linked to a planned text, chosen specifically to provide opportunities for children to progress towards the Early Learning Goals).
- Curriculum-led inputs and activities (these are planned in to provide key knowledge goals for the wider curriculum in KS1 to build on).
- Planning in the moment using interests of the child or group (adults plan for prompts and seize on opportunities to build on play and learning in the moment, with consideration to the individual child and their particular targets, particularly with 3 focus children per week).

### Observation, Assessment and Planning

‘Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests and stage of development of each child in their care and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development.’ (Revised Statutory EYFS Framework). We follow a cycle of observation, assessment and planning. The Planning within the EYFS is based on children’s interests and next steps in learning. Our children lead their own learning and adult plans may be altered in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children as adults ‘teach in the moment.’

Our role as adults during play is a crucial in stimulating and supporting children to reach beyond their current limits, inspiring their learning and supporting their development. It is through the high-quality environment, adult interactions, guidance and support of an adult that children may extend their learning during play. Our approach to adult interactions acknowledges the broad range of teaching interactions that occur, including modelling, questioning, researching, recalling and setting challenges. It means being a partner with children, enjoying with them the power of their curiosity and the thrill of finding out what they can do with support and guidance where needed. High-quality adult interactions are essential when teaching in this way and we ensure that EYFS staff have an in-depth knowledge of the EYFS areas of learning and child development in order to effectively facilitate learning through play. We strive to continuously further develop the knowledge of our staff through CPD, research and networking opportunities.

Adults also assess ‘in the moment,’ checking children’s understanding, identifying any misconceptions and providing clear explanations to improve learning during interactions with the children. In so doing, they respond and adapt their teaching as necessary to each individual child. Any observations recorded by adults will include what was happening in the child’s play, what ‘teaching in the moment’ occurred and what the impact/outcome of this teaching was. Regular formative assessments of children’s learning are made and we use this information to ensure that future planning of group times, provocations and the continuous provision reflects our children’s identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teachers and other adults as appropriate. Assessments include information about children from the teachers’ knowledge of the child including anecdotes, and, when appropriate, observations are sometimes recorded through the use of individual folders, which all adults in the class contribute to.

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Each child is a ‘focus child’ for a minimum of three times a year. A pre-observation letter will be sent home (by email) informing parents that their child will be a focus child the following week. Parents are invited to upload photographs and videos of recent events, celebrations or experiences from home for the children to talk about with the rest of the class. Parents are also invited to share any questions or worries and concerns that they may have and to contribute to the learning record with any learning or milestones that have occurred at home.

Throughout the following week multiple observations of the child’s learning will be recorded by EYFS staff and at the end of the week parents will be invited to discuss their child’s learning and progress with one of the class teachers. Parents and children are welcome to access children’s folders and focus sheets at any time.

Children’s wellbeing and involvement are also recorded once a term as part of the focus child process. We take children’s levels of wellbeing and involvement seriously and will respond as appropriate for children who are scoring on the lower end of the scale to ensure that we can support each child with their individual needs and ensure that everybody is ready for learning.

From September 2021 all children now complete a statutory Baseline Assessment (Maths and Literacy) on entry to School. Each of the 7 areas of learning are monitored through pupil progress meetings and at the end of the Reception year, the EYFS teacher assesses each child against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and reports if the child achieves a Good Level of Development (GLD) or not.

Additionally, at the end of each Phonics phase taught, adults assess the children’s attainment termly.

To ensure good practice in EYFS, teachers complete an internal moderation of children’s learning journals with Year 1 teachers during the Summer term. Furthermore, the Early Years lead will organise meetings with other Kent schools to collaboratively assess together.

## **Tapestry**

All children have a profile on Tapestry and parents are invited to share their email to link between home and school. Observations are added to the Tapestry online journal sporadically for each individual child and more frequently for group observations. This is so parents can see what learning is happening within the reception classroom. This allows parents to make comments or upload observations from home that link to current targets or learning.

A Tapestry post is shared weekly, which informs parents what their child has been learning in school that week and what suggested activities they could do at home that further develops their learning. Parents are able to upload these tasks to Tapestry and once checked by the EYFS team, the observation will be added to the journal. This also provides opportunity for children to share photos and videos with the group, developing their Communication and Language and confidence speaking in front of others. This is often a valuable way for EYFS staff to gather more information about personal experiences or interests, which can help teachers consider prompts and developments to learning that may be introduced within the provision.

## **Group Times**

Children begin phonics at the earliest stage of Reception. We follow the Floppy’s Phonics scheme and closely track children’s development to ensure that we support their reading/phonic development appropriately. In Reception, children access phonics through a carousel to ensure phonetic knowledge is

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embedded via practical tasks through the week, through a range of guided and independent activities. The children use phonics to underpin both their reading and writing skills throughout their early infant schooling.

Short maths sessions are held with the whole class every day following our White Rose Maths scheme, as well as continuous ‘in the moment’ teaching through high quality interactions and stimulating resources during children’s play. Open-ended mathematical opportunities are evident throughout the environment which enable children to use and develop skills learnt during group times in real and purposeful contexts.

Due to recent changes to the EYFS guidance on food safety, we have adapted our timetable so that snack is fully supervised. The guidance states: *Infants and young children should never be left alone while they are eating.* We ensure that EYFS staff have a paediatric first aid qualification. Staff involved in snack preparation or cooking activities are also required to hold a food hygiene certification. Our EYFS are all in possession of this and this is updated accordingly.

### Enabling Environments

Our environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children’s development. An enormous amount of attention and effort goes into the design of furniture and into the organisation of space and materials in order to maximise opportunities for the children to lead their own learning. We wish to provide opportunities for the children to question, investigate and explore, as well as to inspire them. The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely, safely and independently. There are spaces where the children can be active and areas where they can be quiet. The classroom is set up to enable children to independently find and locate equipment and resources to aid their learning in whichever way possible.

Opportunities for children to develop creative skills are offered through a variety of resources including different media, loose parts, and story making resources, and open-ended maths and literacy resources are spread throughout the provision, enabling children to use skills learnt during group times in play as well as in real and purposeful contexts.

Outside learning is as important as the learning that takes place indoors. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant in our natural surroundings. We provide resources and opportunities for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all seven areas of learning as well as making connections with the natural environment. In addition to our continuous provision, enhancements and provocations are planned for on a daily basis, based on children’s needs and interests, and are intended to provoke ideas, thoughts and questions as children lead their own learning in the environment.

### A Unique Child

Hildenborough CE Primary School recognises that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We also recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates.

### Inclusion

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We value the diversity of individuals. All children are treated fairly, regardless of race, religion, gender or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. We believe that all our children matter, and we are committed to identifying and meeting the educational needs of all of our pupils. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences and backgrounds when planning for their learning. Children with special educational needs are identified and supported in liaison with the SENCO and/or appropriate outside agencies.

## Welfare

We aim to protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture, and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs. It is important to us that all children in the Foundation Stage are safe.

We aim to educate children about behaviour boundaries and school rules to enable them to make appropriate choices, these are taught through our learning values. Children should be allowed to take risks but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. Children are encouraged to wear sun cream during spells of hot weather. The school encourages the use of sun hats and provides waterproofs for wet weather. Learners have continuous access to fresh drinking water and are provided with a healthy fruit/vegetable snack and milk during the day.

Intimate care will be provided, where required, to children in line with our First Aid policy. Parents will be informed of any intimate care that is provided and this will also be recorded on CPOMS.

## Safeguarding

Safeguarding within Early Years Foundation Stage forms part of the whole school safeguarding policy. Procedures that are in place for the whole school also apply to EYFS. Safeguarding training takes place as necessary and at least annually. Where new child protection issues become relevant and are a priority, whole school training will take place. All staff new to EYFS will receive an induction and safeguarding training as appropriate.

## Supervision

Hildenborough CE Primary School will ensure that all members of staff who are working within the Early Years Foundation Stage are provided with appropriate supervision in accordance with the statutory requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage. Supervision ensures that:

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- All staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- All staff have the opportunity to discuss any issues, particularly concerning children’s development or well-being.
- All staff can confidently identify solutions to address issues as they arise (including ‘safeguarding’ as a routine item for discussion)
- All staff are able to create an environment where all members of staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role
- All staff have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time and they can receive coaching and mentoring as needed.

Supervision is carried out by Ruth Ardrey, Headteacher and/or Joe Kenward, Phase 1 Leader.

### Transition

When a child sets off for their first day at school, they should be full of positive emotions, excitement, confidence and happiness. This happens if they know exactly where they are going, who will be there, what they will be able to do when they get there and how long they will be staying there.

A successful transition means the child settles quickly into school, learning and developing from day one. Practitioners welcome a class of children and these children are settled, confident and ready to learn. Transition will be successful if:

- Practitioners know each child, including interests and have put relevant details in place to meet their needs
- Practitioners have formed a relationship with each family. Children have met and are starting to get to know the practitioners
- Children are familiar and happy with their new school environment, its routines and expectations
- Children have met and made friends with some of the other children who will be in their class.

To support transition, we talk to the child’s previous settings, meet with parents to inform them about our school, and arrange ‘stay and play’ sessions for the children in term 6. In September, we invite the children for 2 mornings before they start a full day. Each child’s transition could look different, depending on their needs.

### Parents as Partners

Children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with all of the children and their families. We acknowledge that parents are children’s first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make to their child’s education. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating their children.

We offer parents daily contact with a member of staff at the beginning and end of the day if and when this is needed. We welcome communication at all times through the school office and via Tapestry for learning links. We hold workshops with parents to discuss how young children learn and to share good practice from home and school. Each child has photos and observations made by adults in school to show their progress, and we welcome contributions of examples of work completed at home in the form of

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photographs, paper copies, verbal or written observations from parents and carers, etc. Parents have access to Tapestry where learning can be a 2-way communication between home and school.

Parents are invited to attend 2 parent consultations (term 2 and term 4) and parents receive a report on their child’s attainment at the end of the school year (term 6). This is in addition to the three focus week reports (observations) and subsequent parent meetings within the year. All staff involved with the EYFS develop good relationships with the children by interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. In Reception the teachers are the main ‘key person’ for each child.

**Appendix One: Focus Pupil Observation Sheet**

Learning Journey For ..... Term ..... Date ..... Week .....

**Identified Areas For Focus:**  
 General/Parents:  
  
 Profile:  
 \*  
 \*  
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P R I M E	COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE	
	PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	
	PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
S P E C I F I C	LITERACY	
	MATHEMATICS	
	UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD	
	EXPRESSIVE ARTS AND DESIGN	
	Obt indoors	
	Obt outdoors	
	Parent consultation	

**Identified Areas For Future Focus:**  
 General/Parents:  
  
 Profile:  
 \*  
 \*  
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