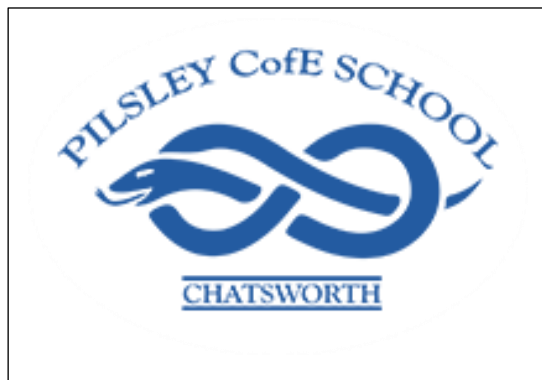




Pilsley C of E Primary School and Nursery EYFS Policy 2026

Introduction

At Pilsley C of E Primary School we are committed to providing a high-quality Early Years provision where all children are safe, valued and able to thrive. Our curriculum reflects the Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2021) and aligns with the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework.

Our school vision, *“From tiny seeds, great things grow,”*, rooted in the parable of the mustard seed, underpins our ethos. We believe that every child has the potential to grow, flourish and achieve from their own unique starting point. This vision shapes our commitment to nurturing confident, resilient and capable learners.

Particular attention is given to ensuring that disadvantaged children, children with SEND and those who may be vulnerable have equitable access to the full curriculum and are supported to achieve highly from their starting points

Intent

Our Early Years curriculum is designed to provide a broad, balanced and ambitious foundation for all children. We place particular emphasis on developing strong communication, language, literacy and mathematical skills, alongside fostering independence, resilience and a lifelong love of learning. Through high-quality interactions, a language-rich environment and purposeful play, we ensure that all children are supported to make excellent progress from their individual starting points.

Implementation

Teaching and Learning

Teaching in the Early Years is rooted in play-based learning, supported by skilled adult interaction. Children engage in a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, allowing them to explore, investigate and apply new learning in meaningful contexts. Practitioners use sustained shared thinking and carefully planned experiences to extend children’s understanding.

Staff play a key role in modelling language, asking purposeful questions and adapting teaching in response to ongoing assessment. Learning is practical, engaging and responsive to children’s needs and interests.

EYFS Curriculum

Our curriculum covers the seven areas of learning:

The prime areas:

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

Alongside the specific areas:

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

Learning is progressive and builds on prior experiences, ensuring that children develop the knowledge and skills needed for a successful transition into Year 1. We follow the Cornerstones curriculum, with children learning through carefully planned and sequenced topics that support the development of knowledge and skills over time. Planning remains flexible so that staff can respond to children's interests and developmental needs, ensuring learning is meaningful and that next steps are carefully sequenced.

Literacy, Early Reading and Language

Reading development is central to our Early Years curriculum as it underpins all areas of learning and supports children's future success. Developing early reading skills enables children to access the wider curriculum, build vocabulary and strengthen communication. By prioritising reading from the outset, we ensure that children develop confidence, fluency and a love of books, providing the essential foundations for continued learning.

A strong emphasis is placed on communication, language and early literacy within the environment. Singing and rhyme are used daily to support phonics development, helping children to develop an awareness of sounds, rhythm and patterns in language. The Read Write Inc. (RWI) programme provides a structured and systematic approach to phonics, supporting children in developing early reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

Children take part in daily phonics sessions which are carefully matched to their abilities and supported by regular assessment. Home and school reading books are closely aligned with each child's developing phonics knowledge, enabling them to

practise and consolidate their skills both in school and at home. This approach ensures that children develop secure decoding, build fluency and gain confidence as readers.

Additional support is provided promptly for any children who require it, ensuring that all children are supported to keep up and make strong progress in early reading.

Key vocabulary is identified, explicitly taught and revisited across the curriculum to develop children's communication and understanding.

Mathematics

Mathematics is taught through a coherent and progressive approach using Maths No Problem alongside daily NCETM (**National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics**) Maths Mastery sessions.

Our approach emphasises developing a deep and secure understanding of number from an early stage. Through practical, hands-on experiences and visual representations, children explore mathematical concepts in a meaningful way, enabling them to build strong number sense. This mastery approach ensures that children develop confidence, fluency and the ability to reason about maths, providing firm foundations for future learning.

Children are given frequent opportunities to explore mathematical concepts practically, talk about their thinking and make connections between ideas. This supports them in developing secure number sense, recognising patterns and applying mathematical thinking in a range of contexts.

Children are encouraged to engage in mathematical talk, using appropriate vocabulary to explain their thinking, describe patterns and relationships, and reason about number. This supports the development of a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts and builds confidence in applying their knowledge.

Assessment

Assessment in the Early Years is ongoing and formative. Practitioners use observation and professional judgement to understand each child's learning and development, ensuring that teaching is closely matched to each individual's next steps.

We use Tapestry, which provides online learning journals, to record observations, photographs and videos, enabling us to monitor progress and share learning with parents and carers. This supports strong home–school communication and ensures parents are actively involved in their child’s development. Parents and carers can view their child’s development steps and are encouraged to record their own observations to share with school staff. The EYFS Profile is completed at the end of each child’s Reception year.

Impact

Through our curriculum and teaching approaches, children make strong progress from their starting points and develop the key knowledge, skills and vocabulary needed for future learning. By the end of Reception, children are well prepared for the transition into Key Stage 1.

Progress is monitored through regular assessment, moderation and tracking of both individual children and groups. Assessment information is used to identify gaps in learning, inform curriculum planning and ensure that children who are falling behind receive timely support.

Behaviour and Attitudes

We promote positive behaviour through clear expectations, consistent routines and supportive relationships. Children are supported to understand their emotions and develop self-regulation, enabling them to engage fully in learning. They are encouraged to show perseverance, develop independence and demonstrate respect for others and their environment. We use the Derbyshire PSHE Matters programme to support children’s personal, social and emotional development, helping them to build relationships, understand feelings and develop the skills needed for life in the wider world. In addition, we use a Zones of Regulation approach to support children in recognising and managing their emotions effectively.

Personal Development

We place a strong emphasis on supporting children’s personal, social and emotional development, recognising this as fundamental to their success both now and in the future. Children are encouraged to build confidence, form positive and respectful relationships, and develop an understanding of their own feelings as well as those of

others. They are supported to manage emotions, develop self-regulation and take increasing responsibility for their behaviour and learning.

Opportunities for exploration, independence and challenge are carefully planned and embedded across the provision, enabling children to develop resilience, perseverance and a sense of achievement. Through these experiences, children are supported to become confident, capable learners who are well-prepared for the next stage of their education and life beyond the classroom.

Outdoor Learning and Forest School

Outdoor learning forms an integral part of our Early Years provision. Through regular Forest School sessions in the local woodland, children are able to explore the natural environment, develop independence and engage in safe risk-taking. These experiences support physical development, well-being and resilience, while also encouraging curiosity and a sense of wonder. Children are supported to develop an understanding of seasonal change and the natural world, caring for the environment, the woodland space and the creatures within it. Through shared experiences, they also build positive relationships, learning to work collaboratively and respect both others and the world around them.

Positive Relationships and Parent/Carer Partnership

We recognise that parents are children's first educators and value the vital role they play in their child's development. Strong partnerships with parents are promoted through transition visits, ongoing communication and regular opportunities to discuss children's progress.

Tapestry online learning journals are used to share learning and encourage parents to contribute to their child's learning journey. This collaborative approach helps to ensure continuity between home and school.

We work in partnership with families to promote regular attendance and punctuality, recognising the importance of consistent participation in learning from the earliest stages.

Inclusion

We are committed to providing a fully inclusive environment where all children have equal access to high-quality learning opportunities. We recognise that children develop at different rates and bring a wide range of experiences, and we respond to this by

identifying individual needs at the earliest possible stage. Appropriate support and targeted interventions are put in place to ensure every child is able to make progress and achieve their full potential.

We work closely with parents, the SENCo and external agencies where necessary to provide coordinated support and ensure that provision is carefully adapted to meet the needs of each child. Through this approach, we ensure that all children are valued, supported and able to succeed.

Enabling Environments:

Our learning environments are carefully organised to be safe, stimulating and accessible, enabling children to feel confident, secure and appropriately challenged. Indoor and outdoor classroom spaces are designed to promote independence, exploration and curiosity, with clearly defined areas of learning supported by planned continuous provision and purposeful adult-led activities.

Play-based learning is central to our approach, recognising its essential role in children's development. Children are given opportunities to direct their own learning through carefully planned experiences, allowing them to explore their interests and make sense of the world around them. Practitioners support and extend this learning through skilled interactions, guiding children to deepen their understanding and build on their ideas. Self-directed learning is carefully balanced with adult-led experiences, with this balance gradually shifting as children develop and prepare for more formal learning.

Continuous provision and open-ended resources enable children to take ownership of their learning, encouraging creativity, problem-solving and sustained engagement. Our curriculum is further enriched through a range of experiences both within and beyond the school environment. Through planned experiences, visits, visitors and enrichment opportunities, children develop cultural capital and broaden their understanding of the wider world.

Children take part in visits to local areas and places of interest, including wildlife and farm parks, Chatsworth and local churches, as well as weekly Forest School sessions in the local woodland. Learning is also enhanced through visitors such as local clergy, emergency services and visiting artists or scientists. In addition, children participate in whole-school events and celebrations, such as Easter activities and science week, which broaden their experiences and strengthen their sense of belonging within the school community.

Safeguarding and Welfare

Children's safety and well-being are our highest priorities. We follow all statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements, ensuring that staff are well trained and vigilant at all times so that children are kept safe. A safe, secure and nurturing environment underpins all aspects of learning and development.

All staff working within the Early Years setting are appropriately trained to ensure the safety and well-being of children. This includes staff trained in paediatric first aid, in line with EYFS statutory requirements, ensuring that children receive prompt and effective care in the event of an accident or emergency. We work in accordance with wider safeguarding guidance, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, to ensure robust procedures are in place to protect all children.

Leadership and Management

Effective leadership ensures that the quality of provision remains high. This is achieved through ongoing professional development, including up-to-date training in safeguarding, early years practice and first aid, alongside regular monitoring of practice and strong collaboration between staff and governors. Leaders maintain high expectations, monitor outcomes closely and ensure that continuous improvement remains a key priority, enabling staff to provide a safe, high-quality learning environment for all children.

Transition

We support children carefully through key transition points, including starting school and moving into Year 1. This is achieved through visits, information sharing and close collaboration with families and other settings, ensuring that children feel confident and secure.

Transition into our Nursery is carefully planned and tailored to meet the individual needs of each child. We recognise that children join us with a wide range of experiences and levels of confidence, and we work closely with families to ensure that each child is supported as they begin their early years journey.

We offer a range of transition opportunities, including taster sessions, visits and opportunities for parents and children to spend time in the setting prior to starting.

These sessions allow children to become familiar with staff, routines and the environment in a supportive and gradual way.

Strong communication with parents and carers underpins this process, enabling us to gather key information about each child's interests, needs and development so that we can provide a positive and personalised start to their time in Nursery. The EYFS curriculum and KS1 curriculum is carefully planned to ensure Reception and Year 1 experience continuity in content, pedagogical approaches and learning experiences.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed regularly to ensure that it reflects current statutory guidance and best practice in early years education. This policy will be reviewed in June 2027.