Leigh Primary School

Sharing, Caring and Learning Together

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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	Signed	Date
Approved by Governing Body	Governing Body	15.07.26
Chairman of Governors	David Dorrell	15.07.26
Headteacher	Jenna Halfhide	15.07.26

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the current Early years foundation stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, the school's EYFS Parent Handbook and the school's linked statutory policies and procedures. It is a local statement of practice for Leigh Primary School and does not replace the statutory framework.

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that Leigh Primary School's EYFS provision reflects both statutory expectations and the day-to-day practice described in the EYFS Parent Handbook. It aims to ensure:

- children access a broad, balanced and ambitious EYFS curriculum that gives them the knowledge, vocabulary, skills and experiences needed for strong progress through school and life;
- children experience a happy, memorable and well-supported start to school in Panda Class, with play, wellbeing, relationships and belonging at the heart of provision;
- quality and consistency in teaching, learning and care so that every child, including children who are disadvantaged, children with SEND and children with EAL, is supported to make good progress from their starting points;
- communication and language, oracy, love of books, phonics, early reading, mathematics, physical development and personal, social and emotional development are prioritised as foundations for future learning;
- children develop independence, resilience, empathy, confidence, positive friendships and a strong voice, so that they are well prepared for Year 1 and beyond;
- staff work in close partnership with parents, carers, previous settings and relevant professionals, recognising parents and carers as children's first and most enduring educators;
- every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity, reasonable adjustments and anti-discriminatory practice.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Early years foundation stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, effective from 1 September 2025, and should be read alongside current statutory and local safeguarding guidance.

The policy is also informed by the Childcare Act 2006, Education Act 2002 section 175, Children and Families Act 2014, Equality Act 2010, SEND Code of Practice, Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, Keeping Children Safe in Education, Working Together to Safeguard Children, relevant Kent safeguarding procedures and the school's own statutory policies. Linked policies are reviewed whenever national or Kent local guidance changes.

3. Structure of the EYFS

At Leigh Primary School, Early Years provision is delivered through one Reception class, known as Panda Class. The school confirms the published admission number, class organisation and staffing model annually and ensures that provision meets statutory staff:child ratios, qualification requirements and supervision expectations.

Children are supported by consistent key adults to support them to settle, builds secure relationships, shares information with parents and carers, and supports continuity of care and learning. Staff deployment, cover and contingency arrangements are organised so that children remain safe, well supervised and effectively supported throughout the school day, including during indoor and outdoor learning, transitions, lunchtimes, visits and use of the village environment.

The school day and routines are communicated to families through the EYFS Parent Handbook and school communications. Children may enter the classroom from 8.30am, with school starting at 8.45am; Panda Class currently finishes at 3.10pm. The school supports a phased start in the first weeks of Reception and remains flexible where individual children need additional support to settle.

Wrap-around care is available through the school's breakfast and after-school provision. Families are signposted to the school website for the detail and policies associated with wrap-around care.

4. Curriculum

4.1 Curriculum intent

Our EYFS curriculum follows the current EYFS statutory framework and is shaped by the school's EYFS Parent Handbook. It recognises children's prior experiences from home and previous settings, and staff work in partnership with parents, carers and other practitioners to secure the best possible start at Leigh Primary School.

The curriculum is designed to enable children to succeed by teaching the prime and specific areas of learning while deliberately enhancing the characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically. It identifies the knowledge, vocabulary and experiences children need from entry to the end of Reception, while allowing staff to adapt teaching responsively without lowering ambition.

Leigh Primary School places a strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development, communication and language including oracy, and physical development. Oracy is promoted as a life skill that develops thinking, understanding, self-confidence, resilience and empathy. Reading is prioritised through a text-rich environment, daily story times, high-quality texts, role play, retelling, vocabulary development and home sharing of books.

The curriculum maximises meaningful cross-curricular links, first-hand experiences, local opportunities, outdoor learning and sustained periods of play. Children are encouraged to develop a lifelong love of learning both in and outside school. By the end of Reception, the school's intent is that all children make strong progress from their starting points and are equipped with the skills, knowledge, confidence and dispositions needed for a smooth transition into Year 1.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development. The prime areas are communication and language, physical development, and personal, social and emotional development. These are strengthened and applied through literacy, mathematics, understanding the world, and expressive arts and design.

4.2 Planning and continuous provision

Each half term, EYFS staff introduce a theme to provide inspiration for learning while retaining flexibility to follow children's interests and ideas. Planning combines the school's curriculum expectations, adult-directed teaching, responsive in-the-moment planning and children's self-directed exploration. Staff deliberately secure the knowledge, vocabulary and experiences set out in the curriculum while building on children's fascinations and prior learning.

Children learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-guided activities. The timetable is carefully structured and changes through the year to reflect children's developing needs. Directed teaching, small-group work and responsive adult support enable staff to check understanding, identify misconceptions quickly and provide real-time verbal feedback.

Continuous provision is the resources and opportunities available for children to explore repeatedly and independently. At Leigh Primary School, continuous provision is planned across the indoor and outdoor classrooms and is reviewed for what children learn, not simply for engagement. Children have time to return to explorations, collaborate, make choices, consolidate learning and develop independence, curiosity, resilience and confidence.

Children free-flow between classroom and outdoor areas where appropriate. The school values outdoor learning in all seasons and uses the courtyard, playground, village Green, school field and forest school area to support physical development, exploration, science, creativity, local knowledge and wellbeing. Reading, writing and mathematics are promoted purposefully across provision so that children apply what they know in meaningful contexts.

The class wall displays document the learning journey are used with children to reflect on shared experiences, revisit prior learning, retrieve vocabulary and plan how learning might grow next. Adults listen to children's ideas about what they want to learn and play, while also ensuring that the curriculum remains broad, sequenced and ambitious.

4.3 Teaching and learning in practice

Adults model language, extend children's thinking, revisit key learning and check understanding during play, routines and adult-guided sessions. Staff use high-quality interactions, sustained shared thinking, modelling, direct teaching, questioning and carefully planned resources to move learning forward. Adults join play sensitively without taking over and use observation and professional judgement to decide when to support, extend, model, challenge or step back.

Communication, language and vocabulary

Communication and language are taught through planned opportunities and continuous modelling throughout the provision. Adults model active listening, including whole-body listening, articulate ideas in full sentences and extend sentences using language such as "and", "but" and "because". Children are encouraged to ask and answer questions, sustain back-and-forth conversations, sequence ideas using language such as "before", "after" and "next", and explain their thinking.

Vocabulary development is given high priority. The class collects and revisits important words, including through the school's "magpie nest" approach, so that children use new vocabulary in context and within sentences. Staff model and revisit Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary, recognising that children's vocabulary starting points vary.

Children have story time at least once a day with a range of themes, text types and genres. Songs, rhymes, poems and stories are revisited and often learnt by heart. Adults model expression and prosody, and children are given role-play, sequencing, story mapping and retelling opportunities so that they develop comprehension, creativity, imagination and a love of books.

Personal, social and emotional development

Staff build warm, supportive relationships and get to know children and families well through transition work, informal discussion and formal consultation. Practitioners actively promote kindness, sharing, cooperation, listening, asking for help, helping others, following instructions and supporting friendship. Children are supported to express feelings, understand the feelings of others, persevere, value mistakes as part of learning and develop strategies for self-regulation, including through the school's Zones of Regulation work.

Physical development and healthy choices

Children are given repeated and varied opportunities to develop core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, coordination, agility and fine motor control. Provision includes open-ended gross-motor resources, wheeled resources, obstacle-course equipment, the trim trail, active blasts, yoga, expressive dance, gymnastics and games taught by a specialist sports coach. Fine-motor development is supported through threading, sewing, woodwork, pouring, stirring, spray bottles, dressing dolls, small-world play, construction, clay and daily handwriting practice following Little Wandle letter formation.

Healthy choices are promoted through hygiene routines, healthy snacks and lunches, opportunities to grow and prepare food, physical activity, pedestrian safety, appropriate use of technology and discussion about screen time, sleep and wellbeing.

Literacy and early reading

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Reception children engage with core texts linked to the school's writing and reading approach, including Pathways to Write. Teaching includes modelled reading and retelling, structured comprehension opportunities, a focus on vocabulary, dedicated phonics and handwriting sessions following Little Wandle, reading practice in groups and one-to-one reading where appropriate. Home reading books are matched to children's secure phonics knowledge, alongside sharing books that broaden children's experience of fiction and non-fiction.

Mathematics

Mathematics is taught through adult-guided teaching, games, songs, rhymes, practical tasks, continuous provision and mathematical talk. The school uses Mastering Number to secure core number and fluency as a foundation for Year 1, alongside White Rose. Children have daily Maths Meeting opportunities to develop fluency, revisit key concepts and address misconceptions. Concrete manipulatives, pictorial representations and purposeful provision support subitising, counting, comparison, composition of number, number bonds, shape, pattern, measure and spatial reasoning.

Understanding the world and expressive arts and design

The wider curriculum is taught through understanding the world and expressive arts and design, with purposeful links to the National Curriculum. Children build on natural curiosity through local experiences, maps, family and community discussion, stories from the past, celebrations, different beliefs, the natural world, seasonal change, forest school and outdoor exploration. Creative provision supports children to explore materials, refine ideas, create collaboratively, move to music, sing, perform, develop storylines and express ideas and feelings.

5. Assessment

At Leigh Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of teaching, learning and development. Staff use professional judgement, observation, conversations with children, information from parents and carers, transition information from previous settings and a small number of meaningful checks to identify what children know, can do and need next. Assessment improves teaching and helps staff act promptly where children may be falling behind.

Before children start and during the first half term, staff gather information from parents, previous settings, learning journeys, observations and conversations to understand each child's starting points. This helps staff plan experiences and support so that children make progress from their individual starting points.

Assessment is proportionate and does not require excessive paperwork or prolonged time away from children. Adults annotate planning with significant observations or support needed so that action can be taken the same day or the following day. Practitioners draw on their knowledge of the child, professional discussions, photographs and physical examples of learning such as drawings or models.

Learning journey wall displays are used as records of shared learning and retrieval, not as the assessment system. They help children revisit experiences, discuss learning, retrieve vocabulary, develop pride and consolidate important knowledge. Google Classroom may be used to share classroom learning with parents and carers, and the school uses approved digital systems, including Marvellous Me where appropriate, in line with data protection, safeguarding and online safety expectations.

Phonics and early reading are assessed through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised. The programme is delivered with fidelity through daily teaching, decodable books matched to secure phonics knowledge, regular assessment and targeted keep-

up support. Parents and carers are updated about phonics and reading progress and may be provided with flashcards or other support where gaps or consolidation needs are identified.

Within the first six weeks of a child starting Reception, staff administer the Reception Baseline Assessment securely and in accordance with the annual DfE assessment and reporting arrangements. The RBA is a statutory accountability assessment. Children do not pass or fail it, there is no score shared with parents, pupils, teachers or external bodies, and it is not used to label individual pupils. Schools share narrative statements with parents on request in line with the assessment arrangements.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS Profile for each child in the final term. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are meeting expected levels of development or not yet reaching expected levels, known as emerging. The school completes, quality-assures and submits the EYFS Profile in line with the annual handbook and local-authority collection arrangements, by the statutory deadline of 30 June unless statutory exceptions apply. Outcomes and a narrative are shared with parents and used to support transition into Year 1.

Assessment judgements are quality-assured internally and through professional discussion, with reference to the current EYFS Profile Handbook. EYFS staff, the EYFS leader, SLT, the Inclusion Manager/SENDCO and Year 1 staff work together so that transition is well planned and children's learning, welfare and support needs continue to be met.

6. Working with parents and transition

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and carers. Transition is planned as a process rather than a single event. Staff gather information through meetings with families, discussions with previous settings, transition information, informal conversations and, where appropriate, optional home visits.

Families are invited to a meet-the-teacher consultation before children start school. During the first weeks, staff make themselves available to discuss how children are settling, and parents and carers are encouraged to speak to staff quickly if they have any concerns. The phased start supports children to settle gradually and can be adapted where individual children need additional flexibility.

Home visits are optional, risk assessed and completed in line with the school's lone-working and visiting procedures. They are offered to build a positive relationship between school and family, allow children to meet staff on familiar territory, gather useful information about interests, health, family circumstances, language, social and emotional needs, physical independence and settling, and give families a private opportunity to ask questions. Families who prefer not to have a home visit are offered an equitable alternative, such as a meeting in school or online.

Parents and carers receive information about their child's learning, development and wellbeing through informal dialogue, open-door communication, consultations, reports, Google Classroom blogs, Marvellous Me where used, and the statutory EYFS Profile at the end of Reception. The school currently provides formal consultation opportunities across the year, with written information at the end of the year about achievement against the Early Learning Goals.

Staff share practical information to help families support attendance, routines, independence, language, reading, phonics, mathematics, wellbeing, friendship and healthy choices at home. Parents and carers are encouraged to share special events, worries, questions, children's interests and relevant changes in family circumstances so that staff can support children effectively.

We encourage parent partnership through:

- showing respect and understanding for the role of parents and carers in children's education;
- listening to accounts of children's development, interests, strengths and any concerns parents or carers may have;
- making families feel welcome through friendly, approachable communication and an open-door ethos;
- maintaining ongoing dialogue through appropriate face-to-face, written and digital communication;
- being flexible in settling arrangements where this supports the child;
- inviting parents and carers to share learning, the class floor book and examples of work;
- using Google Classroom to share classroom learning in line with data-protection and safeguarding expectations;
- inviting parents and carers into school to share appropriate skills and experiences;
- inviting parents and carers to accompany staff on trips where this supports safe and inclusive provision.

The school supports families who need translation, interpretation, accessible formats, flexible appointments or help with digital access. Parents and carers who have concerns are encouraged to speak to the class teacher or EYFS leader in the first instance. Formal concerns or complaints are managed through the school's published complaints procedure.

To support social belonging, children in Panda Class are paired with older buddies, currently from Year 5, who help them settle into life at Leigh, support play at lunch and break times and provide familiar friendly faces around school.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

At Leigh Primary School safeguarding is the first priority. All staff and visitors share responsibility for ensuring that every child is safe and able to thrive in a supportive and nurturing environment. All EYFS staff follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, staff code of conduct and relevant Kent safeguarding procedures.

Children are taught about boundaries, rules, routines and why they exist. We use online safety lessons and picture story books to begin to teach basic online safety awareness such as limiting screen time from an early age. In addition, staff teach PANTS from the NSPCC to encourage them to understand what parts of their body are private. Staff support children to make safe choices, develop independence, take appropriate risks and recognise and avoid hazards. Children learn best when they are healthy and safe, when their individual needs are met and when they build positive relationships with adults and peers.

EYFS welfare and wellbeing are promoted through secure attachments and belonging, warm key-person relationships, outdoor learning, independence in personal care, hygiene routines, healthy food choices, physical activity, safe use of technology, appropriate rest and routines, and consistent support for behaviour and self-regulation.

EYFS welfare arrangements

The school's EYFS welfare arrangements are implemented through the safeguarding policy and associated school procedures. These arrangements cover designated safeguarding lead and deputy arrangements; local referral routes including the Kent Front Door; staff suitability, safer recruitment, DBS and disqualification checks; paediatric first aid; health, medicines, illness and accident records; intimate care; arrival and collection; ratios and supervision; risk assessment; key-person arrangements; behaviour and physical intervention; food, allergies and dietary needs; emergency procedures; online safety, mobile phones and cameras; and complaints.

The EYFS Parent Handbook signposts families to the school's DSL and deputy DSL arrangements, online safety reporting through CEOP, the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line and safeguarding policies. The handbook also reminds families that the school is nut free and sets out expectations for healthy snacks, reusable bottles and lunch arrangements.

Arrival and collection routines are managed so that children are safely handed over and registered. Late arrivals are directed through the school office. Children are collected from the agreed EYFS collection point unless alternative arrangements have been agreed in line with school procedures.

Food and drink arrangements support health and safety. Children are encouraged to bring a filled reusable water bottle and, where they bring their own snack or lunch, to follow healthy-eating and allergy-safe expectations. The school provides fruit at break times and supports safe, supervised lunch routines indoors or outdoors as appropriate.

Outdoor learning is risk assessed and supervised. Children use the classroom, courtyard, playground, village Green, school field and forest school area to support learning and wellbeing. Appropriate clothing, wellies and waterproofs are requested where needed so that children can access outdoor learning safely in different weather conditions.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy is reviewed at least bi-annually and sooner where statutory guidance, local safeguarding arrangements, school practice, the EYFS Parent Handbook, curriculum arrangements or organisational structure changes. The policy owner is the Pupil and Curriculum lead, with operational input from the Foundation coordinator/EYFS leader and safeguarding leaders.

Leaders and governors use a light-touch quality-assurance cycle to evaluate EYFS curriculum delivery, children's participation and progress, inclusion, attendance, behaviour and routines, safeguarding and welfare, parental engagement and staff development. Evidence includes observations of practice, staff discussion, children's experiences, parent/carer feedback, transition information and proportionate information about outcomes; it does not require burdensome data collection.

Regular monitoring by SLT, the Inclusion Manager/SENDCO and the EYFS leader supports staff subject knowledge, identifies CPD needs and helps ensure that learning is tailored to children's specific needs. The governing body receives assurance that EYFS statutory requirements are met. At every review, this policy is shared with the governing board for approval.

Appendix 1. Associated statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

The EYFS statutory framework requires schools to have clear policies and procedures in place, but these do not all need to be separate EYFS-only documents. Leigh Primary School confirms where each relevant requirement is covered through the school's associated policies and procedures.

EYFS requirement / area	Where covered
Child protection and safeguarding	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy; KCSIE; Kent safeguarding procedures; EYFS Parent Handbook safeguarding information
Behaviour, relationships and physical intervention	Behaviour/Personal Development Policy
Health, medicines, first aid and accidents	Medical Needs and First Aid Policy; accident and illness procedures; paediatric first-aid arrangements
Risk assessment, health and safety and emergency procedures	Health and Safety Policy; risk assessments; emergency and evacuation procedures; outdoor learning and visits procedures
Intimate care and personal care	Intimate Care Policy/procedures; safeguarding policy; health and hygiene routines
Food, allergies and healthy choices	Medical Needs/First Aid procedures; allergy records; nut-free and healthy snack/lunch expectations; school meals procedures
Online safety, mobile phones, cameras and records	Online Safety Policy; Acceptable Use Policy; Data Protection Policy; Image Use and Smart Tech Policy
SEND and inclusion	SEND Policy; SEND Information Report; Equality objectives;
Safer recruitment, staff suitability and conduct	Safer Recruitment Policy; Staff Code of Conduct;
Attendance, arrival and collection	Attendance Policy; school registration procedures; EYFS arrival and collection routines
Educational visits and outdoor learning	Educational Visits Policy; risk assessments; Outdoor learning procedures
Complaints and concerns	School Complaints Procedure; whistleblowing procedures; safeguarding escalation routes in Child Protection Policy

Approval

	Signed	Date
Approved by Governing Body	Governing Body	15.07.26
Chair of Governors	David Dorrell	15.07.26
Headteacher	Jenna Halfhide	15.07.26