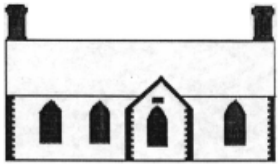

Earl Sterndale CofE Primary School

EYFS Policy

Review Date	Changes Required	Name & Position
January 2025	New Policy created-aligned with OFSTED Framework (2025) & KCSIE (2025)	Sarah Humpleby Headteacher
August 2026	EYFS Framework 2026 reference KCSIE 2026 Screen-use guidance Digital devices/content wording More explicit safer recruitment wording Dangerous dogs requirement Wraparound provision wording	Sarah Humpleby Headteacher

Vision

At Earl C of E Sterndale Primary School, our Early Years provision offers a nurturing, ambitious and inclusive start to school life. We are a small rural school rooted in community values, where relationships, play, language and emotional security form the foundation of learning. Our ethos—**"Making Good Decisions Together"**—guides everything we do.

We believe that all children are:

- **Competent learners** from birth
- **Unique individuals** who thrive when they feel safe, valued and understood
- **Curious explorers** who learn best through high-quality play and first-hand experiences

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Statutory Framework & Core Guidance

Our EYFS practice meets the requirements of:

- EYFS statutory framework dated 13 July 2026, effective from 1 September 2026
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**
- Non-statutory guidance including **Development Matters**

This policy is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers (effective 1 September 2026), Keeping Children Safe in Education and associated statutory guidance.

We ensure our EYFS maintains compliance without unnecessary workload, keeping documentation purposeful and proportionate.

Principles of Effective Early Years Practice

We are guided by principles that underpin high-quality EYFS education:

A Unique Child

Every child can be resilient, capable and self-assured when supported with sensitive care, appropriate challenge and secure relationships.

Positive Relationships

Warm, respectful and responsive interactions—between children, staff, parents and the wider community—drive learning and wellbeing.

Enabling Environments

Our indoor and outdoor spaces are thoughtfully designed to inspire curiosity, independence, collaboration and creativity.

Learning & Development

Young children learn through play, exploration, active engagement and critical thinking. Their learning journeys are developmental, not linear, and progress is celebrated in depth as well as breadth.

Aims

Our EYFS aims to ensure children:

- Develop **emotionally, socially, physically and cognitively**
- Communicate confidently and listen attentively
- Build early reading, phonics and mathematical foundations
- Form positive relationships and secure attachments
- Become independent, resilient and enthusiastic learners
- Experience a curriculum rich in play, purpose, language and outdoor learning
- Feel physically comfortable, safe and respected
- Benefit from strong partnerships between home and school

Curriculum & Pedagogy

Curriculum

We deliver a broad, ambitious curriculum that meets all statutory Early Learning Goals and is tailored to our rural context and mixed-age structure. The curriculum prioritises:

- **Prime Areas:**
  Communication & Language, Physical Development, Personal, Social & Emotional Development
- **Specific Areas:**
  Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts & Design

Foundational Knowledge and Skills

We prioritise the essential knowledge and skills that children need for future success. Particular emphasis is placed on communication and language, vocabulary development, phonological awareness, early reading, handwriting, sentence composition, number sense, counting, mathematical fluency, self-regulation and independence. These foundations are taught explicitly and revisited regularly to ensure children remember and can apply their learning.

All learning is rooted in purposeful play, quality interactions and well-planned continuous provision. Adults carefully monitor children's engagement and participation to ensure that important learning is not left to chance. Staff provide additional modelling, teaching and guided practice where required so that all children access the knowledge and experiences they need. When planning provision, staff begin by identifying what children need to learn, know, remember and be able to do. Activities are selected because they support these learning intentions rather than for engagement alone.

How Children Learn

We embed the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:

- **Playing and exploring** (engagement)
- **Active learning** (motivation)
- **Creating and thinking critically** (thinking)

Children learn through:

- Rich continuous provision
- Skilled adult modelling and interactions
- Guided learning sessions where appropriate
- Outdoor exploration daily
- Opportunities for independence, collaboration and problem-solving

We recognise that young children need frequent opportunities to revisit, practise and apply important knowledge and skills so that learning becomes secure and automatic.

Early Reading & Phonics

We follow **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised** as our SSP programme.

- Daily phonics sessions begin from Week 1 of Reception.
- Books taken home match the taught grapheme–phoneme correspondences.
- Daily story, poem and rhyme times strengthen language and cultural capital.
- Parent information supports Little Wandle routines and home practice.

Inclusion, SEND & Equity

We are an inclusive school committed to early identification, high expectations and removing barriers to learning.

- The **named SENCO is Sarah Humpleby**.
- We implement the graduated approach (assess–plan–do–review).
- We work closely with families and external agencies when needed.
- Adaptations are proactively made to the curriculum, environment and routines.
- All children access, participate in and succeed in our EYFS provision.

Safeguarding & Welfare

Safeguarding is embedded in everything we do. EYFS practice aligns with school safeguarding policies, including child protection, safer recruitment, online safety, attendance and health and safety.

Key commitments include:

- All EYFS staff read and understand **KCSIE Part 1**
- Safer recruitment, including obtaining references and suitability checks
- Robust procedures for monitoring attendance and following up absence
- Supervision, training and regular updates for staff
- Paediatric First Aid trained staff always available
- Updated procedures for safer eating, privacy in toileting, whistleblowing and staff conduct
- A strong culture of openness, accountability and professional curiosity

Screen use in Reception is limited, purposeful and age appropriate. Technology is used only where it supports learning, communication, assessment or accessibility and does not replace high-quality interaction, play, storytelling, physical activity or outdoor learning. Children do not access online content without appropriate adult supervision.

Mobile phones, cameras and digital devices are used in line with the school's safeguarding and online safety policies. Any digital content used with children is carefully selected and supervised.

All adults working with EYFS children are subject to appropriate safer recruitment and suitability checks in accordance with the EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The school complies with current legislation regarding prohibited dog breeds on school premises.

EYFS safeguarding requirements continue during school-run wraparound provision.

Physical Comfort, Safe Touch & Intimate Care

We recognise that **appropriate, child-led physical comfort** is often beneficial and developmentally appropriate.

Everyday comfort (appropriate and normal):

- A brief hug when a child seeks comfort
- Holding hands on a walk, during transitions or when upset
- Sitting close to share a story
- Gentle guidance to support safety

These interactions must always be:

- Child-led or consent-aware
- Time-limited
- Proportionate
- Respectful of boundaries and cultural considerations

Intimate Care

- Managed sensitively following the school's Intimate Care Policy
- Carried out with respect for privacy and dignity
- Logged appropriately
- Explained clearly to the child at each step

Physical Intervention (last resort)

Used only to prevent injury, serious damage, crime or significant disruption.

- Minimum force, shortest time, restore dignity immediately
- Recorded and reported to parents
- Reviewed and monitored by DSL/SENCO

Partnership with Parents & Carers

Parents are children's first educators. We work in close partnership through:

- An open-door approach
- Stay & Play sessions
- Little Wandle parent workshops
- Curriculum updates and termly learning information
- Regular, warm, informal communication
- Consultation meetings and written reports

We support parents to engage in story, play, language and early maths at home.

Organisation & Transition

Induction

We have strong relationships with **Flagg Nursery**, our main feeder setting, and other local providers.

Our transition process includes:

- Visits to Flagg Nursery and other early years settings
- Play-based induction sessions at school (morning, afternoon and lunch visits)
- Parent welcome meetings
- Opportunities to meet key staff and explore the EYFS environment
- Warm, gradual introduction to whole-school routines such as assemblies and playtimes

Mixed-Age Structure

Our EYFS children learn alongside Key Stage 1, benefiting from:

- Consistent relationships with the same teacher over multiple years
- Smooth transition into Year 1
- Older children as positive role models

Assessment

Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)

Completed within the first six weeks of school using the statutory digital assessment process (practitioner device + pupil touchscreen device).

Ongoing Assessment

- Embedded into daily practice
- Focused on what children can do and what they need next
- Not excessive or data-heavy

EYFS Profile (EYFSP)

Completed in the final summer term and shared with parents and Year 1 teachers. Data is submitted to the Local Authority as required.

Behaviour, Routines & Pastoral Care

We prioritise emotional safety, consistency and high expectations.

Children learn to:

- Follow simple routines
- Care for themselves and each other
- Build friendships and communicate feelings
- Demonstrate pro-social behaviour

Self-regulation is taught through co-regulation, modelled language, positive reinforcement and nurturing relationships. We support the development of executive function skills, including attention, working memory, impulse control, planning and persistence.

Environment, Health & Nutrition

Our learning environment:

- Is accessible, stimulating and well-organised

- Supports independence and wellbeing
- Includes outdoor learning every day in all seasons
- Features calm, cosy spaces for emotional regulation

We follow national nutrition guidance to ensure snacks and meals are healthy, balanced and nutritious.

Roles & Responsibilities

- **Headteacher / DSL:** overall leadership and safeguarding
- **SENCO: Sarah Humpleby**
- **All Staff:** uphold safeguarding duties, statutory expectations and this policy

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Monitoring & Evaluation

We continually evaluate our provision through:

- Review of curriculum implementation and environment
- Safeguarding and welfare audits
- Moderation and assessment reviews
- Analysis of children's engagement and progress
- Feedback from parents, staff and children

Findings inform our School Development Plan and continuous improvement.

Policy Availability

This policy is available:

- On the school website
- From the school office upon request
- As part of staff induction
- In formats accessible to families as needed