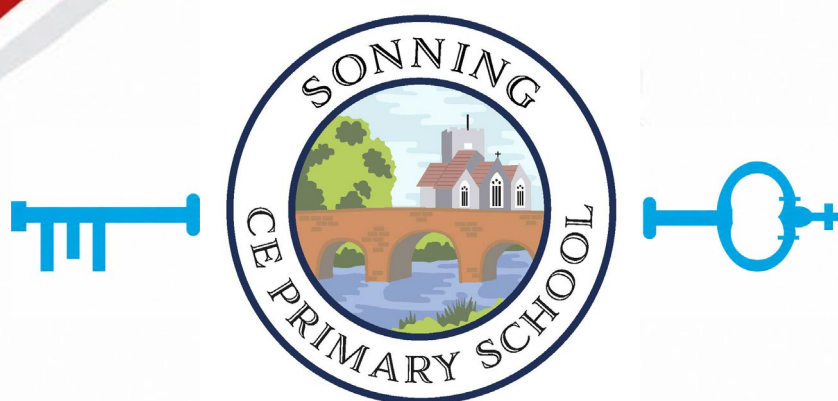




# EYFS Policy

A local school policy for Sonning CE Primary School



## Version control summary and overview details

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Local school policy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This is a policy which the Board of Trustees has delegated to the Local Governing Body to agree on and approve.</li><li>• LGBs have minuted that they have approved this policy.</li></ul> |                            |
| <b>Version control</b><br>V01 – update of a policy, in line with the school’s local practice and vision for EYFS.                                                                                                                                             |                            |
| <b>Reviewed by (School Lead)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Phil Sherwood, Headteacher |
| <b>Approved by LGB:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Sonning LGB                |
| <b>Date of approval:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Autumn 2026                |
| <b>Date of next review:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Autumn 2027                |

### TKAT vision

We are a family of distinctive schools at the heart of the diverse communities we serve. In line with our Christian ethos, we aspire to excellent learning and pastoral care for pupils and staff and are committed to being open and welcoming to all.

### School vision

At Sonning Church of England Primary School, we aim to equip our children with the skills they need to make positive choices in everything they do. Like the wise man who built his house upon the rock (Matthew 7:24-25), our vision is "building strong foundations for the years ahead". Guided by our Christian values and our school values of Love, Courage, Respect, Aspiration and Curiosity, we provide a happy, inclusive and encouraging environment where children, adults can flourish and develop as individuals. We offer a challenging, broad and relevant curriculum that enables all children (regardless of their background, faith, race, ability or gender) to do their best and achieve well.

### Key areas of note

Please note the following, which will be applicable throughout the policy:

- Any reference to ‘everyone’ to staff, trustees, local governors and pupils.
- Any reference to ‘we’ should be read as The Keys Academy Trust.
- Any reference to ‘parents’ should be read as ‘parents, carers and guardians’.

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## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the principles, expectations and approach that underpin the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision at Sonning CE Primary School. It outlines how we fulfil the statutory requirements of the EYFS framework while delivering a nurturing, ambitious and play-based curriculum that enables every child to develop, learn and thrive.
- 1.2 In line with our school vision of “Building strong foundations for the years ahead” (Matthew 7:24–25), we are committed to providing a secure, stimulating and inclusive environment where children develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will support their future learning and personal development. Through high-quality interactions, purposeful play and strong partnerships with families, we seek to ensure that every child experiences a positive start to their educational journey.

## 2. Aims

- 2.1 Through our EYFS provision, we aim to ensure the following:
- a) Provide every child with a warm, welcoming and inclusive start to school, where they feel safe, valued and confident.
  - b) Build strong, positive relationships with children and their families.
  - c) Recognise and celebrate every child's individuality, interests, strengths and starting points.
  - d) Provide a rich balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning experiences.
  - e) Develop children's curiosity, independence, resilience and enjoyment of learning.
  - f) Support children to become confident communicators and develop the language and vocabulary they need to express themselves and understand others.
  - g) Develop children's social skills, emotional wellbeing and ability to form positive relationships.
  - h) Provide opportunities for children to explore, investigate, create, problem-solve and make connections through purposeful play and first-hand experiences.
  - i) Identify and respond to children's individual needs, including where children may need additional support or challenge.
  - j) Embed the school's Christian vision, as well as the values of love, courage, respect, aspiration and curiosity throughout all aspects of EYFS practice.
  - k) Develop strong foundations in early reading, writing and mathematics alongside the wider areas of learning.
  - l) Foster children's physical development, independence and understanding of how to look after themselves and others.
  - m) Ensure that children develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need for a successful transition into year 1 and beyond.

## 3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all children receiving Early Years Foundation Stage provision at the school and to all staff involved in their education, care and wellbeing. It applies across all aspects of the EYFS, including the learning environment, curriculum, teaching and learning, play, assessment, relationships, personal care, safeguarding, inclusion and transition.

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- 3.2 The policy is relevant to all members of staff who work with or support children in the EYFS, as well as governors and other professionals involved in the provision. It also provides information for parents and carers about the principles and approach that underpin their child's experience in the EYFS. The policy should be read alongside the school's other relevant policies and procedures, including those relating to safeguarding, SEND, behaviour, assessment, equality, health and safety and educational visits.

## 4. A vision for EYFS

- 4.1 Our EYFS vision for EYFS is as follows:

**“** *An engaging EYFS environment where staff carefully observe and respond to each child's needs, promoting play-based learning, independence, strong relationships and meaningful skill development through a well-resourced and supportive setting.* **”**

### **A unique child**

- 4.2 Each child is recognised as an individual, with learning shaped around their interests, needs and next steps. Staff carefully observe development and respond sensitively, supporting children to grow in confidence, independence and resilience.

- 4.3 We are committed to inclusive practice, ensuring that all children – including those who are disadvantaged or have additional needs – receive targeted support to help them reach their full potential. Barriers to learning are identified early and addressed through tailored provision and high-quality interactions. Different learning styles are valued and planned for, and children's interests are nurtured and celebrated to ensure every child feels valued, included and able to succeed.

### **Positive relationships**

- 4.4 Kind, nurturing relationships are at the heart of practice, with staff building strong connections with children and working in close partnership with families. Meaningful interactions with high-quality dialogue support children's communication, wellbeing and emotional security. This is achieved through the ShREC approach - an evidence-informed framework designed for early years practitioners to improve children's communication and language development through four daily interaction strategies: Share attention, Respond, Expand, and Conversation.

- 4.5 Through these positive relationships, children are supported to develop warm and respectful connections with others, fostering a strong sense of belonging. Our school values of Love, Respect, Curiosity, Courage and Aspiration are explicitly taught and consistently modelled through daily interactions, ensuring all children feel valued, included and supported to thrive.

### **Enabling environments**

- 4.6 The environment is thoughtfully organised to be stimulating, inclusive and resource-rich, promoting exploration, independence and sustained play. Resources are accessible, purposeful and open-ended, enabling children to follow their interests and deepen their learning through exploration. A wide range of play experiences – including recreational, therapeutic and educational play – are recognised as essential to development.

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- 4.7 Children are encouraged to take increasing autonomy and responsibility, supporting confident and independent learning behaviours. Carefully planned opportunities for success ensure children feel emotionally safe and secure, enabling them to take risks, build resilience and extend their learning.

#### **Well-planned curriculum**

- 4.8 The curriculum is thoughtfully designed around children's interests and developmental needs, with a strong emphasis on play-based learning. It prioritises key skills such as communication, early writing, and mathematics, ensuring experiences are meaningful, engaging, and tailored to support each child's next steps. Learning is carefully planned to support children's successful achievement of the Early Learning Goals, as well as developing the Characteristics of Effective Learning, which will enable them to succeed and progress.
- 4.9 We use Read, Write, Inc. as our systematic phonics programme, providing a consistent and structured approach to developing children's phonological awareness, decoding and early reading skills. Drawing Club supports the development of early writing through engaging stories, vocabulary and imaginative contexts, giving children a meaningful purpose for developing their mark-making, composition and transcription skills. Mastering Number provides a structured approach to developing children's mathematical understanding, with a strong focus on number sense, subitising, counting and fluency.
- 4.10 Emphasis is placed on consistently high-quality teaching, both in structured and unstructured learning, with the recognition that all interactions with children are potential learning opportunities. Towards the end of EYFS, careful transition arrangements are considered to enable children to begin the National Curriculum smoothly. Home learning is set three times a year and celebrated with families in a termly showcase. Cultural capital is also considered, with key life experiences planned as non-negotiables for all children.

#### **Effective partnerships**

- 4.11 We believe that parents are at the heart of a child's early years journey, bringing invaluable knowledge, care and insight that helps shape a confident start at school. From the very beginning, we strive to create a warm, welcoming atmosphere where families feel comfortable, included and valued. We build relationships through formal and informal opportunities to meet and shared experiences to familiarise our children and parents with the environment and expectations of school life.
- 4.12 By working closely together, maintaining open communication and encouraging ongoing involvement, we aim to create a strong sense of partnership, supporting each child to feel secure, understood and ready to learn. Throughout the year, we nurture this connection with regular opportunities for collaboration, conversation and celebration with parents, ensuring that children experience a consistent and supportive link between home and school.
- 4.13 During the early weeks of the children's journey into EYFS, we aim to foster a culture of regular reading and enjoying stories. The wordless books are discussed and their importance explained at the Parents' Information Evening in September, phonics Speed Sound books are sent home for parents to support with early sound acquisition and a Parent Video Guide is shared to introduce the RWI phonics scheme and how parents can best support their child with blending phonemes to read words.

## **5. Assessment**

- 5.1 Assessment is an integral part of daily practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage. It enables practitioners to understand children's knowledge, skills, interests and needs, recognise progress and identify where

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additional support or challenge may be required. Assessment is used to inform teaching, provision and next steps.

#### **Formative assessment**

- 5.2 Practitioners use continuous observation, listening and responsive interactions to assess children's learning throughout the school day. This includes observing children during adult-led and child-initiated activities and using professional judgement to decide when to question, model, intervene, support or extend learning. 'In the moment' assessments are used to respond promptly to children's individual needs and to ensure that teaching and provision remain flexible and closely aligned to their development. Significant achievements and observations are recorded regularly, building an individual learning record for each child and informing subsequent planning and provision. Ongoing assessment is also used to identify children who may require additional support, targeted intervention or further assessment. Where appropriate, this information is shared with the SEND team and other relevant professionals.

#### **Summative assessment**

- 5.3 Summative assessment provides an overview of children's progress and development over time. In Reception, children's progress is formally reviewed termly against the school's identified areas of learning and recorded on our tracking platform, Sonar. Termly pupil progress meetings with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher support the analysis of assessment information and identify areas for further support, intervention or challenge. Assessment information is used to inform targets, provision and teaching, ensuring that children's individual needs are met.

#### **RBA**

- 5.4 On entry to Reception, children complete the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) in line with government guidance and within the first six weeks of starting school. This provides a starting point from which progress can be measured. At the end of Reception, children's attainment is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. Judgements are based on evidence gathered throughout the year and moderated with Reception staff, Year 1 colleagues and, where appropriate, colleagues from other schools to support consistency. End-of-Reception assessment outcomes are recorded and shared with parents and carers as part of the child's end-of-year written report.

## **6. Health and safety**

- 6.1 The school follows Department for Education (DfE) guidance on health and safety, ensuring that staff receive appropriate training to remain up to date with any changes. Our school Health and Safety policy outlines our commitment to identifying, then eliminating or controlling, any hazards encountered in the school or on the site. An Early Years risk assessment is also in place to minimise potential risks within the early years environment, and additional assessments may be carried out where needed for specific pupils or situations. Transition arrangements are carefully planned to support children's development, particularly as they build confidence and independence in accessing different areas and equipment across the wider school.

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