

Vigo Primary School



EYFS Policy

**This policy has been adopted by the Governing Body in September 2026
and will be reviewed in September 2027.**

Signed: *Marty Johnson* (CoG)

Introduction

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Vigo Primary School, we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. The final year of the EYFS is referred to as the reception year. All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning.

It is the privilege of the practitioners working in Early Years Foundation Stage to take on the task of building upon that prior learning and experience. The Vigo Early Years Foundation Stage team work effectively together to support children's learning and development.

This document outlines the philosophy, aims and principles of early years teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Year Reception (R)) at Vigo Primary School. The document underpins practice in all areas of provision.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

The EYFS sets the standards that all early year’s providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children’s ‘school readiness’ and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.” (Department for Education (DfE), 2024)

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- The Unique Child;
- Positive Relationships;
- Enabling Environments;
- Learning and Development.

The Unique Child: At Vigo Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Positive Relationships: At Vigo Primary School we recognise that children learn to be independent confident learners from secure relationships with their peers and adults. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Enabling Environments: Additionally we believe that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

We also plan and consider the Learning Environment. The Year R area is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas of the environment where the children can be active, as well as areas where the children can be quiet and rest. The environment is set up in learning zones, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Learning and Development: The early learning goals and the educational programmes are set out in the "Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage" document (DFE, 2025).

The seven areas of learning and development are:

Prime:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED);
- Communication and Language (CL);
- Physical Development (PD). Specific:
- Mathematics (M);
- Literacy;
- Understanding of the World (UW);
- Express Arts and Design (EAD).

At Vigo Primary School, we focus on building strong foundations first. Once children are secure in their Prime areas of learning, they are fully prepared and confident to succeed in the Specific areas.

All areas are important to ensure the development of the 'whole child'. We aim to deliver all the areas through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. The balance of these activities changes as the year develops and children's concentration skills grow.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Assessment and the EYFS Profile

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. At Vigo Primary School, practitioners use ongoing formative assessment through high-quality interactions, observations of children's learning and professional knowledge of each child to inform teaching, planning and next steps.

Assessment is based on practitioners' knowledge of what children know, understand and can do, informed by observations, discussions with children, examples of work and

information shared by parents and carers. Assessment is used to identify strengths, address gaps in learning and ensure that provision meets the needs of all children. During the final term of Reception, practitioners complete the **Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)** for each child. The EYFSP provides a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities at the end of the EYFS.

The EYFS Profile assesses children against the **17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs)** across the seven areas of learning and development. For each ELG, practitioners make a judgement as to whether a child is:

- **Expected:** meeting the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS; or
- **Emerging:** not yet reaching the expected level.

These judgements are based on practitioners' professional knowledge of the child and evidence gathered throughout the Reception year.

The EYFS Profile outcomes are shared with parents and carers and are reported to the local authority in accordance with statutory requirements. EYFS Profile information is also used to support a smooth transition to Year 1, enabling teachers to plan an appropriate curriculum that builds on each child's achievements and next steps in learning.

Alongside the EYFS Profile, practitioners consider children's **Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:**

- Playing and Exploring;
- Active Learning;
- Creating and Thinking Critically.

These characteristics help practitioners understand how children learn and support the development of effective lifelong learners.

Staffing and Organisation:

At Vigo Primary School, we have three reception classes that can admit up to 30 children per class. Each classroom has the equivalent of a full time Learning Support Assistant as well as a class teacher providing staffing arrangements that meet or exceed statutory EYFS requirements and ensure children's safety, wellbeing and effective learning.

Children have their own classroom base, but they enjoy free-flow access between the indoor and outdoor learning environments throughout each day.

Learning through play:

“Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.” (“Early Years Foundation Stage”, DfE, 2025).

At Vigo Primary School we support children’s learning through planned play activities, and decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities.

We believe that the best learning happens when adults join in the fun. By asking meaningful questions and modelling by example, our team gently guides children to discover new ideas as they play.

Induction to Early Years:

During the summer term, children who will be starting school in September are invited to a range of transition events including stay and plays, teddy bears picnic lunches and visits to their classroom.

Parents/guardians are given a pack which outlines the reception curriculum and school routines, along with other necessary documentation.

Transfer records from pre-school settings inform reception practitioners about the new intake. Where possible, visits to other local pre-school settings are made in order to aid the induction process further.

In July, children are also visited in their home setting by two members of reception team. Upon starting school, children are welcome to attend full-time immediately; however, parents are given the flexibility to opt for a part-time transition if they feel it best suits their child's needs.

The aims of this transition are to:

- Allow the children to adjust and feel secure in their new environment;
- Allow the practitioners to get to know the children individually and establish good relationships with both children's and parents/carers;
- Allow the reception teacher to carry out initial assessments.

During the first weeks of the autumn term, parent workshops are held by the EYFS Leader/Subject Leaders to introduce parents/guardians to school and reception procedures.

These sessions communicate the school's expectations and routines, while suggesting practical ways parents can support their child's learning at home. Information is further reinforced through regular, newsletters.

Early Years to Year 1 Transition:

EYFS and Year 1 teachers have worked together to make the transition from the EYFS to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible.

At Vigo Primary School:

- Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the reception year.
- EYFS practitioners plan longer more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer term; encouraging less dependence on adult support.
- EYFS children meet Year 1 teachers during assemblies and other whole school activities during the reception year.
- EYFS Profile outcomes, including judgements against the Early Learning Goals and information about the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning, are shared and discussed with Year 1 staff to support effective transition planning.

- EYFS and Year 1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July.
- EYFS children visit their new Year 1 class and teacher for a whole day in July as well as the Year 1 teachers visiting the reception classrooms.
- Year 1 classrooms include learning areas similar to the reception classrooms: e.g. role-play, writing table.

Provision in Year 1 is made for those children who have been assessed as 'emerging' in one or more of the Early Learning Goals.

Home/School Links:

We recognise that parents/guardians are the child's first and most enduring educators.

When parents/guardians and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

We aim to develop this by:

- EYFS Website Page providing ongoing updates and information about school life as it becomes relevant throughout the year.
- We hold further curriculum workshops to guide parents in supporting their child's learning at home.
- Operating an "open door" policy, whereby parents/guardians can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner.
- Encouraging parents/guardians to listen to their child read each night and to comment on reading progress in a home/school reading diary.
- Discussing children's individual learning and development with parents/guardians' at parents' evenings two times a year.