



SILCHESTER CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Compassion, Courage & Respect

Early Years Policy

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision for Silchester is for **everyone to flourish**.

Our school is a place of love, of belonging and family.

We have a heart for people, inspiring everyone to be the best version of themselves: for themselves, for others, for our community and for our world.

With our roots deeply embedded and nourished by our Christian values, we will **thrive together**.

We will reach out to each other, our community and the wider world with *Compassion* in our hearts.

We will live bravely, showing *Courage* to keep going when facing challenge.

We will *Respect* ourselves and others, embracing everyone's unique gifts, and value the contribution that we can all bring to God's world.

Last reviewed :- June 2026

Date of Next Review :- June 2028

Aims of the EYFS

1. To provide quality learning experiences for all the children. Learning will be through practical and play activities, which are structured, balanced, relevant to the child and related to the real world.
2. To provide a curriculum which takes account of, and responds to, the children's developmental needs and allows them to make progress related to their differing abilities.
3. To ensure the children have positive experiences of success at their own levels in order to give them confidence and motivation for learning in the future.
4. To provide a curriculum which promotes the 'Early Learning Goals' identified by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and which dovetails with the National Curriculum.
5. To provide a curriculum which provides equal learning and development opportunities for all the children.
6. To create a partnership with parents to support and enhance the development of the children.
7. To promote and encourage independence in our learners.
8. To develop the importance of 'how' we learn using the characteristics of effective learning.

The Curriculum

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) we aim to provide a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum which addresses the children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, moral and cultural development within a safe, secure, stimulating environment.

Our curriculum enables the child to learn and develop skills, attitudes and understanding in the following areas of learning:

The **prime areas** being:

- Personal, Emotional and Social Development. (PSED)
- Communication and Language. (CL)
- Physical development

The **specific areas** are:

- Mathematics.
- Literacy.
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Art and Design

Throughout the EYFS we plan activities to give children learning experiences and opportunities to work towards the Early Learning Goals and prepare them for the National Curriculum. Teaching and learning will take place within the classroom and outside areas. Within these areas children will participate in a variety of activities, both with an adult and independently.

Play

At Silchester we believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is the fundamental way in which young children learn. Play can be enjoyed and challenging. When playing, children behave in different ways. Sometimes, their play will be boisterous, sometimes they will describe and discuss what they are doing, and sometimes they will be quiet and reflective as they play. Through play, children will be developing skills across all the Prime and Specific areas of learning, working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.

In a secure environment with effective adult support, children will be able to:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world
- Practise and build up concepts, ideas and skills
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules
- Be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk to rehearse their feelings
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems
- Express fears to relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

Adults in the setting will support play by:

- Planning and resourcing a stimulating environment
- Supporting children's learning through planned play
- Extending and supporting children's spontaneous play
- Extending and developing children's language and communication in their play
- Listening to all forms of children's communication and their ideas and taking these into account when developing play and planning
- Narrating children's play

- Asking questions about children's play.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The Characteristics of Effective Learning and the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning and Development are all interconnected. The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

The Characteristics of Effective learning support the development of the Unique Child in **how** children are learning.

Characteristics of Effective Learning are outlined below:

1. Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

2. Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

3. Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

Children are encouraged to lead their own learning (child-initiated). The provision is set up to be of interest to the children to encourage them to direct their own learning, making their own choice of what they would like to play with. This way, the adults can then easily question to develop their plan, encourage maths by asking them to count how many they have, or even discretely get them to write a menu for their mud café. Children are still having their own ideas and choosing new ways to do things but this way, our teachers are supporting their learning at the same time.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

In the EYFS, there will be key topics that are planned to be taught or experienced at Silchester. We have created Aspirations which do change year to year to suit the cohort, but ultimately, the planning will follow the child's interests. Our Aspirations have been planned to ensure that each Prime and Specific Areas of Development are covered. Planning takes place weekly to ensure it is matching the needs of the cohort and to plan in suitable experiences and activities.

Adult focused and independent activities are planned on a weekly basis. Children have the opportunity to work in each of the learning areas within the classroom and outdoors. Whole class, group and individual activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum, as appropriate.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed at the end of the Reception year. Staff completing the profile will attend annual moderation meetings. Assessment is carried out through a mixture of informal

observations, interaction with the child and regular formal and informal discussions with all staff. We observe the children working independently both indoors and outdoors.

Information gained through observation and work will be shared with parents, other school staff and outside agencies as appropriate. Parents' evenings are held twice a year. Parents' evenings are an opportunity for parents to discuss their child's progress. Parents can contact the staff at any time to request information about their child's learning and progress. Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey by adding comments to journals.

Transition

Please see the table below for information about transition to Silchester C of E Primary School.

Month	Transition
October	Hold open morning
December	Pre-schools invited to Nativity performance
April	Parents and schools find out Year R places
	Transition events letter to go out to parents
May	Year R New Parents Welcome meeting
	Start visits with feeder pre-schools
June	Year R staff to contact pre schools
	Staff and pre-schools to arrange transition meetings with parents for children who may require more support
	Afternoon stay and play
	Children who need more transition to visit Year R from pre-schools
July	Afternoon stay and play
	Teddy bears picnic
September	Home visits for all children
	Welcome to Year R Parents Meeting
	Harvest assembly
October	Parents evening, focus on settling in
	Parents phonics session

Policy Reviewed – June 2026

Next Review – June 2028