



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

April 2026

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Review Term: Summer 2028

Introduction and Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Fielding Primary School provides the essential building blocks for children's learning, wellbeing and long-term outcomes. Evidence from early brain development highlights that children's progression during Early Years education, coincides with rapid neural growth, when children's experiences strongly shape their language, self-regulation, executive function and early cognition. Longitudinal studies such as EPPSE and SEED show sustained positive effects of high-quality early education on academic and social outcomes, with the greatest benefit for disadvantaged pupils. These studies also emphasise that *quality* matters more than quantity of provision.

These findings reinforce the need for intentional, equity driven practice in early years. Without targeted early action, gaps evident on entry to school in language, early maths, attention and self-regulation tend to widen over time. High-quality early years leadership ensures that curriculum, pedagogy and assessment align with how young children learn best, securing strong foundations for future practice.

This policy sets out Fielding's EYFS approach, reflecting statutory requirements, current national expectations and best practice guidance.

Statutory Framework

Our provision follows the statutory EYFS Framework (2021), ensuring that all children learn and develop well, are kept healthy and safe, and are given the broad range of knowledge and skills needed to provide the right foundation for good future through school and life.

We uphold the guiding principles of the EYFS:

- Every child is a unique child.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments.
- Children develop and learn at different rates, including those with SEND.

Our Aims

Fielding Primary School aims to ensure that every child becomes:

- a successful and reflective learner

- a confident individual able to lead a safe, healthy and fulfilling life
- a responsible citizen who makes a positive contribution to society

We provide:

- quality and consistency for all children
- secure foundations through well-planned learning opportunities.
- strong partnerships with parents
- equality of opportunity and inclusive practice

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy Statement

At Fielding, our Early Years provision is built on high-quality interactions, evidence-informed practice and a carefully sequenced curriculum that enables every child to thrive. Our approach combines the ShREC framework, the Seven Key Features of Effective Practice (Development Matters, 2021), and current research from EPPSE, SEED, EEF, NCETM and Ofsted's Strong Foundations to ensure children develop secure knowledge, self-regulation, language and communication skills during their time in Nursery to Reception.

High-Quality Adult–Child Interactions

We prioritise warm, purposeful and responsive interactions, guided by the ShREC framework (Share, Respond, Expand, Conversation). These interactions:

- nurture children's thinking and language
- build confidence and emotional security
- strengthen self-regulation and executive function
- support sustained shared thinking through play and guided learning

Practitioners model vocabulary, extend ideas and create opportunities for meaningful conversation that deepen learning across all areas.

Self-Regulation and Executive Function

Developing children's capacity to focus attention, hold information in mind and regulate behaviour is central to our practice. We support this through:

- consistent routines and modelling
- pretend play and guided learning
- explicit teaching using Colour Monster and Zones of Regulation
- RSHE/Inner Curriculum sessions
- targeted small-group interventions such as Bucket Time and Lego Therapy.

Language is central to self-regulation; children learn to use talk to guide actions, persist, problem-solve and manage emotions.

Pedagogy: Helping Children Learn

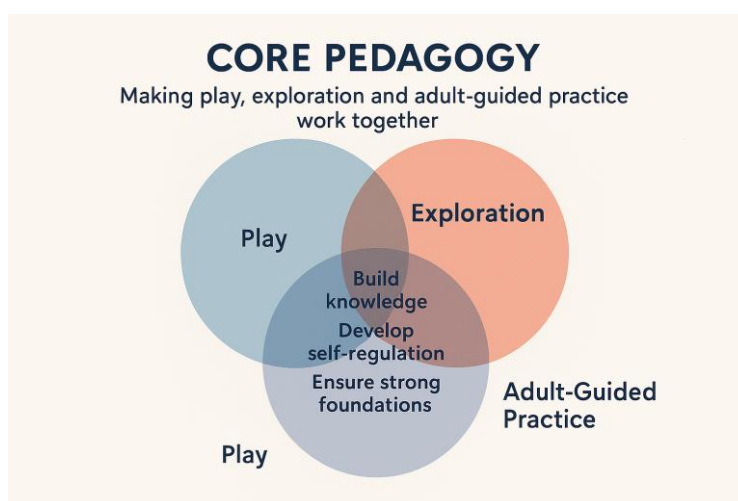
We recognise children as powerful learners, and our pedagogy in the EYFS is intentionally balanced to ensure every child makes progress and develops as a curious, motivated learner. High-quality play in enabling environments, alongside opportunities for children to initiate and invent their own play, nurtures curiosity, independence and active learning. Through sustained shared interactions, this exploratory play deepens children's thinking and language, and for

children with communication, language or personal, social and emotional development needs, sensory-rich experiences within this play offer vital pathways for regulation, engagement and early communication.

Adult modelling, demonstration and guided learning sit alongside direct teaching where appropriate, providing purposeful opportunities to introduce, model and rehearse key concepts and skills. Sensitive practitioner involvement extends children's ideas and supports co-regulation, while sensory-based strategies, such as tactile resources, movement breaks and multi-sensory cues are used flexibly to help children remain regulated, focused and ready to interact. Structured group work and carefully planned indoor and outdoor provision ensure all children, including those who benefit from sensory scaffolding, encounter new ideas, practise them with guidance and apply them independently.

Within continuous provision, each area has clear learning intentions and expectations, and adults play an active role in noticing, interacting and extending learning. Practitioners observe children's play closely, introducing rich vocabulary, prompting problem-solving and modelling skills specific to each area. Throughout this, sensory opportunities are intentionally embedded, whether using textured materials to support communication in the sand and role-play areas, offering calming sensory tools to aid social interaction, or incorporating movement and tactile exploration to reinforce language and emotional development. This ensures continuous provision remains purposeful, progressive and responsive to children's diverse needs.

Together, these elements form a coherent cycle in which play, exploration, sensory-supported engagement and adult-guided practice work in harmony to support children's holistic development.



Outdoor Learning as Core Pedagogy

Outdoor learning is a core part of our EYFS curriculum. Each year group has a purpose-designed outdoor space, including large sand pits, climbing and balancing areas, open movement zones and resources that build both fine- and gross-motor skills. These spaces enable children to take safe risks, strengthen physical development and explore through hands-on, sensory experiences. Nursery and Reception also attend weekly Forest School sessions, which provide further opportunities for outdoor exploration, problem-solving, teamwork and connection with the natural environment.

Sand pits offer daily opportunities for sensory play, collaboration and mathematical and language development through digging, transporting and building. Climbing structures and movement areas support strength, balance, coordination and risk management. Exploration zones with natural

materials encourage curiosity, scientific thinking and a deeper understanding of the natural world. Across all areas, adults extend vocabulary, prompt problem-solving and enrich play through responsive interaction.

Outdoor provision is planned with the same intention and ambition as indoor learning, ensuring that physical development, language, self-regulation and exploration are embedded throughout the day.

Assessment

Assessment in the EYFS is purposeful, accurate and embedded in play. Practitioners:

- observe what children can do and know
- identify progress and emerging gaps
- recognise when additional support or SEND assessment may be needed
- use assessments to challenge children appropriately

To support this, we draw on a range of assessment tools across the prime and specific areas of learning. These include:

- NELI and language screening tools to identify early speech, language and communication needs
- Focused tasks and small-group/1:1 adult-guided sessions to closely observe children's knowledge and application of skills
- Phonics checks to monitor early reading and sound recognition
- Story-retelling activities to assess comprehension, sequencing and narrative skills
- Observations during continuous provision to capture learning as it naturally unfolds

We also use the Visible Learning tool, "Percy Progress", in Reception, which helps children reflect on their achievements and identify next steps in accessible, age-appropriate ways.

Effective Transitions and Getting to Know the Child

We recognise that strong relationships and deep knowledge of each child are vital for successful transitions. To support this, we:

- conduct home visits to build trust, gather key information from families and understand children within their familiar environment
- hold transition meetings with parents, SEND teams and previous settings (where applicable) to ensure continuity and early support
- use the information gathered to plan provision, identify early needs and create a welcoming, secure start to Nursery and Reception

These processes ensure we meet children where they are, enabling them to settle quickly and thrive from day one.

The Best for Every Child

We are committed to equity and inclusion. High-quality early education benefits all children but is especially transformative for those experiencing disadvantage. We ensure:

- early identification of needs
- responsive provision
- timely additional help
- high expectations for every learner

All children deserve the opportunity to succeed and flourish.

Partnership with Parents

We value respectful, trusting relationships with families. Children thrive when school and home work together. We engage parents through:

- home visits and transition meetings
- drop-ins, workshops and consultation meetings
- home learning opportunities
- “Wow” notes contributing to assessments
- regular year-group updates and communication
- clear, accessible channels for discussing concerns

Parents are partners in the learning journey, supporting children’s well-being, confidence and progress.

Curriculum Intent

Our curriculum is designed to build secure foundational knowledge, particularly in language, early reading, writing and mathematics, so that children enter Key Stage 1 ready for future learning. Research emphasises prioritising depth over breadth and ensuring knowledge builds cumulatively over time.

Curriculum intent is:

- progressive from Nursery to Reception
- sequenced so key concepts are revisited and deepened
- rooted in language, vocabulary, early reading and maths
- inclusive, ensuring all children - including vulnerable pupils, access high-quality learning
- play based, with purposeful adult interaction at the centre
- aligned with Rosenshine’s principles: *I do* → *We do* → *You do*

Nursery and Reception Curriculum

Prime and specific areas

We teach all seven areas of learning, ensuring that Prime Areas (Communication & Language, Physical Development, Personal, Social & Emotional Development) underpin all curriculum experiences, and that Specific Areas (Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts and Design) grow from these foundations.

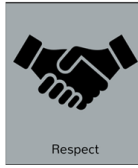
The Characteristics of Effective Learning, which move through all areas of learning, are:

- Playing and exploring - Finding out and exploring; Playing with what they know; Being willing to ‘have a go’
- Active learning - Being involved and concentrating; Keeping trying; Enjoying achieving what they set out to do
- Creating and thinking critically - Having their own ideas; Making links; Choosing ways to do Things

These characteristics of learning underpin teaching and learning in the EYFS and form part of the skills and attributes that children need to acquire by the end of their learning journey in the Foundation Stage.

Fielding's EYFS curriculum

Core values:



Children will:

Pupils' learning is centred on their locality, community and by first-hand experience.

Develop their communication and language skills. Listening, understanding and speaking effectively to express their needs, ideas and interests	Develop their fine and gross motor skills through their physical development. They will learn how to stay safe and healthy	Learn how to understand themselves and manage their emotions, understanding others better. They will develop a positive sense of themselves	Learn how to read and write, both through listening to others read and being encouraged to read and write independently	Become mathematicians, practising their skills in number and calculations and exploring shape, space and measure	Make sense of the physical world and their community. They will explore, observe people, cultures, places and the environment	Explore and play with a range of media and materials. Expressing their ideas and feelings through art, music, dance, role play and design and technology	Children will be active, compete in competitions and work with others in a team, learning how to be a humble winner and a resilient when they do not win	Children will learn how to live sustainably, understanding global environmental issues
Children will all have the opportunity to do this through:	Accessing high-quality English and Mathematics lessons and reading a rich selection of books	Nursery & Reception RHSE, Values, MindUp and exploring religious figures	Reception Religious Education, French, Cooking, Gardening	Play based approach driven by pupils interests	Focused child observations. Focused child tasks	Music, art and other opportunities to perform	High quality Phonic sessions taught systematically following Read, Write, Inc. programme	Forest School
In addition to the drivers, the golden threads woven through the curriculum are:	Good health	Climate	Infrastructure	Democracy	Equality	Innovation		

Nursery

Nursery provides high quality, developmentally appropriate experiences that develop language, executive function, attention, and vocabulary.

Provision includes:

- NELI (preschool) language programme
- ShREC informed interactions
- progressive PIAP model: Planning, Interaction, Assessment, Progress
- explicit teaching of listening skills and early executive function
- adult led small groups for maths, RSHE and fine motor development.
- early maths through White Rose and Maths Hub approaches
- oral composition through call and response, stem sentences, and storytelling.

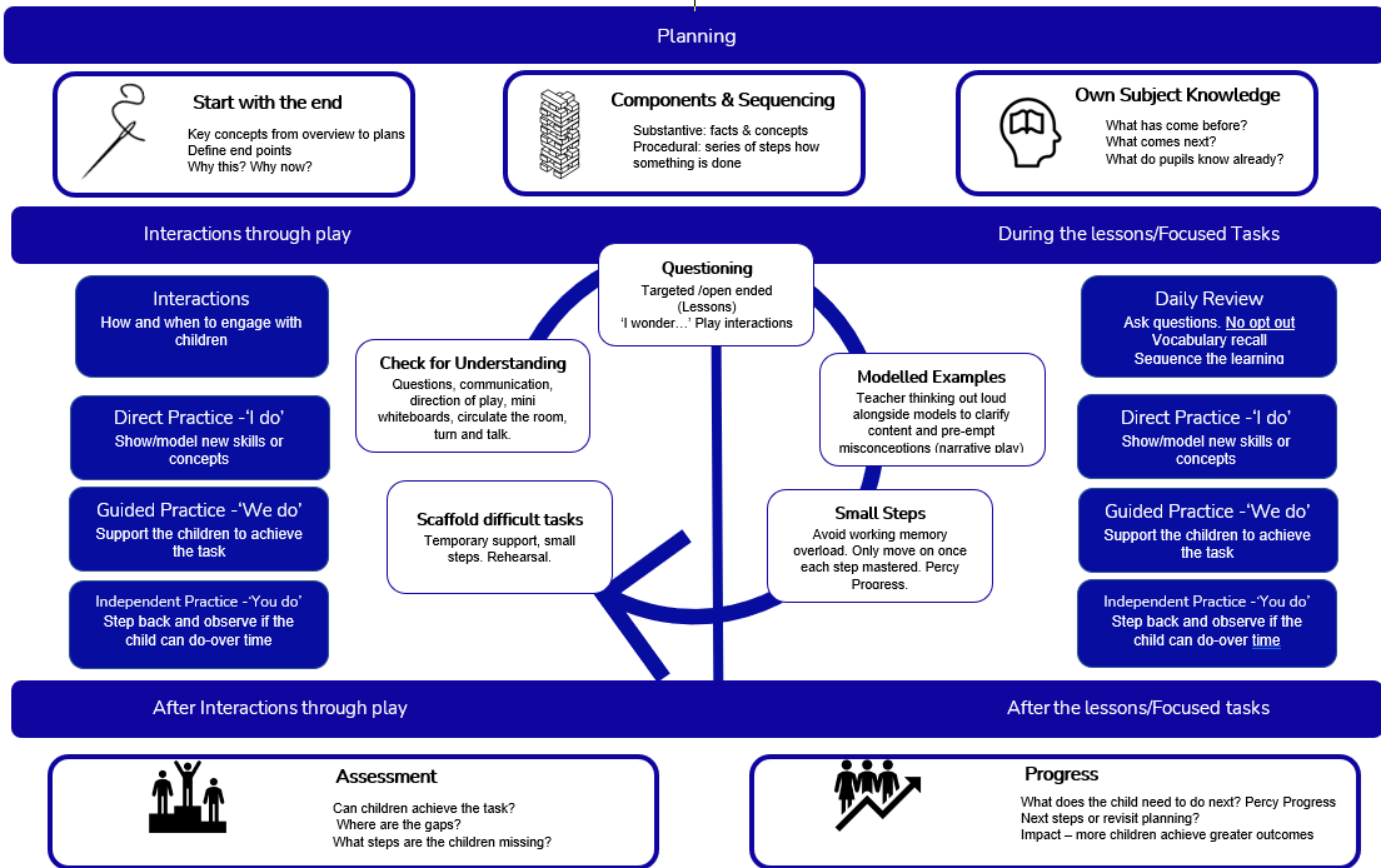


<h2>Planning</h2>			
	<p>What has come before and what will come <u>next</u></p>	<p>What is the end point for the children?</p>	<p>Check subject knowledge.</p>
<h2>Interaction</h2>	<p>How and when to engage with the children.</p>	<p>New material in small steps</p> <p>Break concepts and procedures into small steps</p>	<p>I do... Show/model new skills or concepts.</p> <p>We do... Support the children to achieve the task.</p> <p>You do... Step back and observe if the children can do-over <u>time</u></p>
<h2>Assessment</h2>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the children achieve the task? • Where are the gaps in their understanding? • What steps are the children missing? 	
<h2>Progress</h2>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the child need to do next? • Next steps or revisit in planning. • Impact- More children achieve greater outcomes. 	

Reception

Reception builds upon Nursery through:

- systematic synthetic phonics (Read Write Inc)
- "I Am a Clever Writer" writing pathway
- NELI intervention for children identified as below expected language levels
- progressive early maths through White Rose and Maths Mastery
- talk rich teaching across all subjects
- explicit teaching of routines, memory, attention and learning behaviours
- continuous provision linked carefully to carpet inputs
- Reception Teaching and Learning framework (Rosenshine Principles)
- narrative and roleplay to strengthen language and reasoning skills.



Cultural, Community and Real-World Experiences

Stories, celebrations, community links, trips and family experiences are intentionally planned across Nursery and Reception to enrich children’s understanding of the world, build cultural awareness, deepen language, and create meaningful connections to learning. Across the EYFS, we recognise and acknowledge a diverse range of festivals and significant cultural events through our curriculum, enabling children to learn about their own heritage as well as the traditions of others. This is further strengthened through our RHSE and Inner Curriculum lessons, where children explore identity, belonging and community.

In both Nursery and Reception, the curriculum includes challenges that encourage children to reflect on themselves, their families, and their wider community. Organised Cultural, Community and Real-World Experiences are woven throughout the year. Reception visits the local park to explore seasonal change and visits a church within the community to support their developing understanding of different places, people and traditions. Children also take part in experiences such as visits from animals, and Reception hatch chicks, providing hands-on opportunities that spark curiosity, develop scientific enquiry and introduce early knowledge of lifecycles. These experiences broaden children’s horizons, strengthen vocabulary, and link learning directly to the real world, supporting children to develop an informed, respectful and inclusive understanding of the diverse society they are growing up in.

Language Rich Environment

Oral language is the foundation for later reading, writing and broader learning, and differences in children’s language exposure before starting school can create early gaps that persist unless

addressed intentionally. In Nursery and Reception, we prioritise rich, purposeful talk throughout the day, with adults modelling ambitious vocabulary and embedding planned opportunities for high-quality dialogue, open questioning and sustained shared thinking. Storytelling, oral rehearsal and Helicopter Stories further strengthen children's narrative skills, while explicit vocabulary teaching, such as introducing "special words" and practising stem sentences, helps pupils internalise key language structures. Daily rehearsal of sentences in small groups supports the development of spoken grammar and confidence, and shared school gestures are used to encourage children to express agreement or disagreement clearly. Targeted NELI (Nuffield Early Language Intervention) sessions provide structured support for identified children, focusing on vocabulary, listening and narrative skills. Alongside this, children access independent writing opportunities, such as Busy Books in Reception, enabling them to apply and extend their developing language in meaningful ways.

Early Mathematics

Mathematics in the early years is taught through daily whole-class and small-group sessions, giving children regular opportunities to practise key skills and progress from their individual starting points. Early mathematics provides a critical foundation for later attainment, so our high-quality provision focuses on number sense, quantity, comparison, pattern and composition, rather than rushing into formal written methods.

At Fielding we:

- teach maths through whole-class and small-group sessions
- follow White Rose, Maths Mastery and NCETM principles
- embed maths throughout continuous provision and daily routines
- emphasise depth of understanding through subitising, composition and number relationships
- model precise mathematical language (e.g. more, fewer, equal, altogether)
- support children with limited early maths experience through targeted small-steps teaching, the Percy Progress tools and deliberate revisiting of key concepts

Assessment and Early Intervention

Assessment is used **diagnostically**, not as a data collection exercise.

We use:

- baseline assessments on entry to Nursery and Reception
- NELI language screens
- ongoing observation and professional dialogue
- Percy Progress tools to break learning into small steps
- moderation within year/phase groups
- targeted interventions for speech and language, maths, and self-regulation
- vulnerable pupil tracking documents to ensure equity.

Early identification and intervention, especially for SLCN, self-regulation needs and early maths gaps are central to our equity approach.

Equity and Targeted Support

Equity is achieved through intentional, evidence informed action. Vulnerable pupils benefit most from high-quality interactions, targeted language support, and strong routines.

We ensure:

- precise assessment of starting points
- targeted support for disadvantaged children.
- adapted teaching and interactions
- explicit vocabulary and sentence building.
- additional opportunities for children with poor attendance or missed learning
- partnership with families, including modelling strategies for home.

Staff in the EYFS use specifically designed teaching and learning frameworks. The PIAP model used in Nursery and the Teaching and Learning Framework in Reception support practitioners when planning, interacting, assessing, and understanding how the children make progress in relation to their next steps.

Attendance, Belonging and Family Partnerships

Regular attendance in Early Years strongly predicts long-term learning and wellbeing. Attendance is treated as both a safeguarding and curriculum priority.

We:

- create belonging through warm relationships, predictable routines, Inner Curriculum and RSHE lessons and opportunities to explore identity and community
- use a soft start approach in Reception (8.45am–9.00am) to reduce morning anxiety
- communicate early with families to address barriers
- provide additional opportunities to revisit missed learning
- offer workshops, home visits, transition events, and open-door communication

Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Inclusion

Safeguarding in EYFS aligns with Fielding's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Staff identify children who may need early help, prevent impairment to health or development, and ensure children have the best outcomes.

Additional statutory areas including:

- first aid arrangements
- snack times and healthy school expectations
- medical needs and allergies
- toileting procedures
- risk assessments
- inclusive practice for all children, including those with SEND, EAL, vulnerabilities or disabilities

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned to ensure continuity of learning and to support each child's wellbeing. At every transition point, we acknowledge individual needs and build effective partnerships with families, staff and any other settings involved.

To support smooth transitions, we provide:

- **Home visits and induction** for Nursery and Reception to gather information about children's interests, routines, and experiences.
- **"All About Me" booklets**, completed prior to starting Reception, to help staff understand each child's personality, interests, and needs.
- **Move Up Day sessions** so children can develop familiarity with their new environment and meet staff.
- **Handover meetings** between Nursery, Reception and Year 1 teachers, focusing on children's development, progress towards the Early Learning Goals and agreed next steps.
- **A gradual shift in pedagogy** from EYFS approaches towards more formal KS1 expectations, ensuring children adapt confidently to the changes in routine and structure.

In the final term, **Nursery teachers meet with Reception teachers**, and **Reception teachers meet with Year 1 teachers**, to share detailed information about each child. These discussions include progress against the Early Learning Goals (where appropriate), individual strengths, areas for support and any additional needs. This ensures that teachers can plan an effective, responsive, and appropriate curriculum that meets the needs of all children as they move into the next stage of their learning.

Monitoring and Review

Leadership monitors EYFS provision through:

- lesson visits and learning walks
- review of children's outcomes
- views from children
- discussions during PPA
- moderation and assessment reviews
- governor monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually by EYFS leaders and the Leadership Team to ensure alignment with best practice and national expectations.