



FAIRFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

2025/2026

<i>At the time of publishing the following roles were held:</i>	
EYFS Lead	Mrs Sophie Johnston
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr Jordan Gale
Headteacher	Mr Chris Steele
Head of School	Mr Jordan Gale
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Mr Chris Steele, Mrs Hannah Birkett, Mrs Sophie Johnston & Mrs Lisa Fisher
Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)	Mrs Hannah Birkett

Approved by ¹	
Name:	J. Gale
Position:	Head of School
Date:	1 st October 2025
Review date ² :	1 st October 2026

At Fairfield Primary School, we are committed to providing the highest quality Early Years education and care to ensure every child has the best possible start to their school life. We provide an environment which nurtures, supports and celebrates each child, recognising that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. This policy outlines our approach to meeting the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DFE, 2025) and reflects our school's vision and mission for all children.

Aims

Our Aims

We put the development of our pupils at the heart of everything we do. We will do this through an exciting and challenging curriculum using courageous and innovative teaching practices both in and outside of the classroom. We will support our pupils every step of the way to help them achieve more than they ever thought possible.

We will grow confident learners providing our pupils with a range of skills that enable them to adapt and succeed both inside and outside the classroom. By laying firm foundations pupils will be equipped with a full range of practical and emotional abilities, ultimately creating confident and inquisitive individuals with a life-long love for learning.

We use our unique location on the edge of the Lake District to our full advantage, developing pupils who love the outdoors, are knowledgeable about the environment and become engaged with their community.

Our Vision

With a sense of belonging, children will embark on a journey of discovery embedded in a school that is holistic, forward thinking, research informed and where all staff are committed to maintaining high expectations equipping all children to excel and thrive in a rapidly evolving world.

Our Mission

We provide an inclusive and nurturing learning environment where a high-quality curriculum, diverse enrichment opportunities, and personalised development empowers every child to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

The Four Principles of EYFS

The four principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) underpin our curriculum and teaching within the Early Years at Fairfield Primary School.

- 1. A Unique Child** – We aim to develop resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals. We use praise and celebration to develop a positive attitude to learning. Our approach is sensitive and adaptive to the needs of the individual child, including children with additional needs.
- 2. Positive Relationships** – We support children in becoming strong and independent learners. We develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children to support their development.
- 3. Enabling Environments** – We ensure we respond to the individual needs of the children, developing an inspiring environment, inside and outside, through challenging and achievable activities that allow children build their learning over time.

- 4. Learning and Developing** – Learning opportunities are provided through adult-led group learning, as well as freedom to explore their own child-led learning in the provision. We understand that children develop and learn at different rates.

We follow a balanced curriculum that includes child-initiated and adult-led activities, tailored to the interests and development of the children.

Early Years Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected. Throughout our curriculum, the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning are embedded throughout.

These 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.

The characteristics of effective learning describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner.

Further detail on the planning and delivery of our Early Years curriculum can be found on our school website.

The Prime Areas:

The prime areas are particularly important for learning and forming relationships. They build a foundation for children to thrive and provide the basis for learning in all areas.

Prime Areas	Sub-Area
Communication and Language	Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking
Physical Development	Gross Motor Skills and Fine Motor Skills
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Self-Regulation, Managing Self and Building Relationships

The Specific Areas:

The specific areas help strengthen and develop the three prime areas, and ignite children's curiosity and enthusiasm.

Specific Areas	Sub-Area
Literacy	Comprehension, Word Reading and Writing
Mathematics	Numbers and Numerical Patterns

Understanding the World	Past and Present, People, Culture and Communities and The Natural World
Expressive Arts and Design	Creating with Materials and Being Imaginative and Expressive

Learning Environment

We provide a high-quality, inclusive indoor and outdoor learning environment that:

- Encourages independence, curiosity and exploration.
- Is accessible to all children, including those with SEND.
- Is organised to promote child-led learning through continuous provision.
- Is safe, clean and stimulating.

Teaching Strategies

The Early Years classrooms consist of one Nursery room, two parallel Reception rooms and outdoor classrooms.

Throughout Early Years, staff plan experiences in the form of structured adult-led teaching sessions. These are gradually built up in Nursery which helps to introduce and develop vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher and peers and taking turns to answer. Once in Reception, adult-led focus activities increase with a focus on Phonics, Literacy, Maths, Physical Education, Understanding the World and Creative activities scheduled into the timetable. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge.

In Nursery and Reception, there is a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities across the day. By the Summer term in Reception, children will experience many more adult directed tasks as they prepare for their transition to Year 1.

Learning through play is a vital part of Early Years learning. Stimulating, purposeful activities and experiences are planned to interest and inspire the children. Through high-quality continuous provision and enhancements, children are provided with opportunities to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise, revisit and build upon prior learning to consolidate their knowledge, skills and understanding. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play through enhancements and high-quality questioning. Getting the balance right between child-initiated play, which is controlled, and adult-led activities is very important.

In addition, reading plays an important part of learning in Early Years. Throughout their time with us, children are exposed to a bank of high-quality stories which they know well. In Reception, children will take home a weekly reading book, linked to their Phonics development, which they have read in school during group reading sessions. In addition, to promote a love of learning, children in Reception also take home a Library book to share with an adult at home.

We recognise the importance of the Reception year in building the foundations for writing. At Fairfield Primary School, the 'Pathways to Write' approach is used to lead learning in Literacy in Reception. Throughout the year, children are exposed to a range of writing styles, genres and high-quality texts.

Prior to introducing explicit handwriting sessions, staff understand the importance of developing children's fine motor skills from Nursery into Reception. Developing these fine motor skills involve the coordination of small muscles, particularly in the hands and fingers, to perform precise movements e.g. holding a pencil, using scissors, buttoning a shirt etc... Once children have these fundamental fine motor skills, children are then introduced to daily handwriting sessions.

Children in Early Years are taught Maths through the Mastering Number approach. From Reception, children engage in daily Mastering Number sessions, designed to build a strong foundation of number sense for Reception to Year 2 children. It uses structured, engaging sessions that focus on developing fluency with number facts, particularly addition and subtraction within 10, through concrete resources, and the use of the Numberblocks animations.

Oracy—the ability to express oneself clearly and communicate effectively through spoken language—is a vital part of learning in Early Years settings. Developing strong oracy skills helps young children build confidence, think critically, and engage meaningfully with others. Through talk, children learn to explore ideas, ask questions, negotiate, and make sense of their experiences. High-quality interactions with adults and peers also support language development, which is closely linked to later literacy and academic success. By prioritising oracy in the Early Years, we aim to create a rich language environment that nurtures social, emotional, and cognitive growth, laying the foundation for lifelong learning and communication.

Throughout the duration of Early Years learning, we welcome visitors, parents, families and community groups into school to support our learning by sharing their knowledge and skills with the children. In Reception, parents and family members are encouraged to come and share a story as a "Mystery Reader" to the children which promotes a love of reading and an excitement about engaging with a range of books and stories. As well as visitors in school, children in Early Years are provided with a wide range of opportunities to learn outside the classroom through enrichment trips and visits to enhance their learning and understanding of the world around them. Nursery and Reception are included in all whole school enrichment experiences, such as World Book Day celebrations, themed curriculum days and fundraising events.

Phonics and Early Reading – Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised

At Fairfield Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that every child becomes a confident, fluent reader. We follow the **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised** programme for the systematic teaching of phonics.

We are incredibly proud that we are a **Little Wandle Champion School**. This means our school has met 16 Standards of Excellence in the teaching of early reading and phonics and places us in the top 0.4% of schools across the country who are using the programme.

Our Approach:

- Starting in Nursery, children develop the **Foundations for Phonics** through language development, sound/listening games, rhymes and sharing high-quality stories and poems.
- **Daily phonics lessons** are taught to all children in Reception, beginning in the first full week of the autumn term.
- Lessons are taught using a **clear progression**, which is followed rigorously to ensure consistency and cumulative learning.
- Each lesson builds on prior learning, revisiting previously taught sounds and words to ensure that knowledge is **embedded and retained**.
- We teach **phoneme-grapheme correspondences (GPCs)** and blending and segmenting skills through a structured routine that supports all learners.

Phonics in Practice:

- Children are taught **Phase 2 and Phase 3** in Reception, and move into **Phase 4** later in the year once confident.
- **Regular assessments** help identify children who need additional support. These children receive **daily keep-up sessions** that are short, focused, and matched to their specific gaps.
- Reading books are **closely matched to each child's secure phonic knowledge** to ensure success and build reading confidence.
- Children read **fully decodable books** three times a week in small group reading sessions. These focus on:
 - **Decoding**
 - **Prosody** (reading with expression)
 - **Comprehension**
- The same book is then sent home to be read for fluency and confidence with parents/carers.

Impact:

Through our consistent use of the Little Wandle programme, children at Fairfield Primary School:

- Develop strong decoding skills.
- Become confident, enthusiastic readers.
- Are well-prepared to meet or exceed the expected standard in the **Year 1 Phonics Screening Check**.

For more information, see our school's **Phonics and Early Reading Policy** and our dedicated phonics section on the school website - <https://fairfieldprimary.co.uk/subjects/phonics-reading>.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

Prior to your child starting in Early Years at Fairfield Primary School, we hold information sessions in which parents/carers will be invited into school to meet the staff in Early Years, visit the classroom environments and share information regarding on what to expect during your child's induction and during their time in Early Years.

We recognise parents and carers as children's first and most important educators. We strive to build strong partnerships by:

- Hosting events throughout the year in which we will invite you into school *e.g. Christmas performances, Sports Day etc...*
- Sharing photographs of weekly learning through our online platform, Class Dojo.
- Offer regular progress meetings and open communication with your child's Key Worker.

- Provide support for home learning and transitions.

School Admissions

Entry to Nursery

A part-time Nursery place will be funded by the Government for every child from the start of the school term after their third birthday. All 3- and 4-year-olds are eligible for up to 15 hours a week of free nursery provision from the term after their 3rd birthday and some children may be entitled to an additional 15 hours of full nursery education.

Children born between **1 September 2021** and **31 December 2021** can receive their free 15 hours a week from **January 2025**.

Children born between **1 January 2022** and **31 March 2022** can receive their free 15 hours a week from **April 2025**.

Children born between **1 April 2022** and **31 August 2022** can receive their free 15 hours a week from **September 2025**.

Children born between **1 September 2022** and **31 December 2022** can receive their free 15 hours a week from **January 2026**.

Children born between **1 January 2023** and **31 March 2023** can receive their free 15 hours a week from **April 2026**.

Entry into our Nursery will be given on a first come, first served basis. A place in our Nursery does not guarantee a place in Reception.

For more information regarding applying for free Nursery provision, please visit the GOV.UK website in which you can create a childcare account and get an eligibility code. The 15 hours of free childcare for 3 and 4-year-olds is for all families, while the additional 15 hours (making 30 total) is for eligible working parents. For the 15 hours, your child is eligible from the term after their third birthday. For the 30-hour option, you must apply online and provide the resulting code to our admin team.

Entry to Reception

Children who were born between 1 September 2020 and 31 August 2021 will be offered the opportunity to enter full time education from September 2025, but must apply for a place even if they currently attend out Nursery. Admission to Fairfield Primary School Nursery does not influence admission into the Reception unit, however the school believes that children who do attend our Nursery settle quickly into their full time education, and are familiar with the environment and adults within the school and feel confident and secure in the school setting.

For more information on applying for a Nursery or Reception place for your child, please read our Admissions Policy or visit our website for more information.

Transitions

We ensure that transitions into Nursery and Reception are smooth and supportive for you and your child. During the first weeks, children have an opportunity to get to know his or her teachers, their fellow pupils and begin to learn new routines and expectations.

Prior to your child starting in Early Years at Fairfield Primary School, all children and parents/carers are invited to a 'Stay and Play' session. This supports their transitions as it allows the children to visit their classroom and meet some of the children and adults who will be in their new class.

In addition, to aid transition from other settings, staff collaborate with other nurseries and pre-schools to complete thorough handovers.

At the end of your child's time in Nursery or Reception, staff will support your child to prepare for the next stage of their academic journey. We ensure that children are gradually prepared for their next stage of their education through move-up sessions, classroom visits and time spent with their new teacher(s). Staff recognise that some children may need additional support with transitioning to a new environment and will work with those individuals and their families to support them in preparation for this through.

Key Workers

At Fairfield Primary School, key worker groups are made up of class teachers and, in some cases, Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs). Each key worker plays a vital role in supporting the learning and development of the children within their group. They are responsible for monitoring individual progress and maintaining regular communication with parents or carers to ensure a strong home-school partnership. By fostering positive relationships and providing targeted support, key workers help to create a nurturing and effective learning environment tailored to each child's needs.

Observations, Assessment and Profiles

Assessment in the EYFS is ongoing and based on observations, conversations and children's work. This informs planning and supports each child's progress. At the end of Reception, we use the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) to summarise each child's development against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

Key assessment procedures in place across Early Years:

- **Baseline Assessment:** Within the 6 weeks of entry to Reception
- **Ongoing Formative Assessment:** Throughout the year.
- **Summative Assessments:** Key points in the year.
- **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFSP):** Completed at the end of the academic year.

Staff ensure that all children are encouraged to experience all areas of provision throughout the week. Staff will observe and assess the children in order to develop and understanding of their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. Staff then use these observations to shape learning experiences for each child to support their next steps of development. During termly reports, "Next Steps" are shared with parents and carers.

At Fairfield Primary School, we use Class Dojo to share class experiences. Parents/Carers are able to view their child's "Dojo Portfolio" where staff can record more specific learning through photographs and notes. Families are encouraged to add their own photos and observations too so a picture of the whole child is built by school and family in partnership. This allows recognition and celebration of successes outside school, as well as identifying where children are making links between their school and home experiences.

Throughout the Early Years, assessment tracking data is used to show each child's development across the seven areas of learning and reviewed regularly by staff and the Early Years Lead Teacher (Mrs. S. Johnston). This allows staff to respond quickly to children's developing needs and identify where further intervention may be important to sustain a good level of development. When children may not be making age-related expected progress, staff will work with parents/carers and in some cases, other professionals, to support your child.

At the end of Reception, children are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) to determine whether their development within each ELG is either “on track” or “not on track”. This information is called the Foundation Stage Profile and is communicated to parents and carers in each child’s end of year report, reported nationally and also to the local Authority by request.

Health & Safety

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We teach children to develop an understanding of risk and to manage physical risks, in their play and in their daily lives.

All accidents are taken seriously, treated by staff who are all trained in Paediatric First Aid. If your child has an accident in school, details of the incident are logged and parents/carers are informed.

We work with external agencies to ensure that all children are supported in making progress, including in terms of their health as well as their development and learning. This includes linking with the Health Service checks (auditory, weight & height, eyesight) Early Helps, Speech & Language Support and other specialist services, as and when required.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is of the highest priority at Fairfield Primary School. In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025), the Early Years team follow school’s policies and guidance in relation to safeguarding which ensures that:

- All staff are DBS-checked and receive regular safeguarding training.
- Staff are paediatric first aid trained.
- Risk assessments are carried out regularly.
- The EYFS statutory requirements for staff: child ratios are met.
- Children’s attendance and absences are followed up for unexplained or prolonged periods.
- Children are supervised by staff when eating who are paediatric first aid trained.

Staff, including students on extended placements, complete regular safeguarding training in school. The Early Years Lead teacher (Mrs. S. Johnston) is a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) team member within Fairfield Primary School and reports to Mr J Gale, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) regularly.

Staff do not use their mobile phones, or personal handset devices, in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. However, staff do use school equipment to take photographs to share and celebrate learning. These photographs are shared on our Class Dojo platform, in class displays and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child’s image to be used in this way through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

Early Years staff adhere to all Fairfield Primary School policies including specifically whole school policies and procedures and policies for Admissions and Induction, Behaviour, Administration of Medicines, Health and Safety legislation (including fire safety and hygiene requirements) Risk Assessments (including outings) and Complaints.

For more information, please refer to our school's Safeguarding Policy which can be found on our school website at <https://fairfieldprimary.co.uk/safeguarding>.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Fairfield Primary School is committed to inclusion and meeting the needs of all learners.

We:

- Provide early identification and support for children with SEND.
- Work closely with families and external agencies to support children and families.
- Ensure all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, language, religion, or ability, feel included and respected.
- Celebrate diversity through a range of resources, stories, and activities.

Toileting

At Fairfield Primary School, we encourage all children to start school without nappies, but appreciate that some children will still need support with this. Acknowledgement is made that young children often will have 'accidents' and, as a result, we encourage parents/carers to send their child some spare clothes/underwear into school. We do have stocks of spare clothes and change children according to our intimate care procedures. Where children continue to need changed regularly an 'Intimate Care Plan' is put in place in partnership with the parent/ carer to support the child.

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. For any child who requires intimate care, they are treated with respect at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

For those children who do have an Intimate Care Plan in place, staff will work in close partnership with parents and other professionals to share information and provide continuity of care. Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents on a regular basis and recorded on the child's care plan. The needs and wishes of the children and parents will also be taken into account wherever possible and reviewed throughout the year.