

FERNDALE PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL



Early Year's Policy

Ratified by Governing Body:
Reviewed Date: September 2025
Next Review Date: September 2026

This policy outlines how Ferndale Primary and Nursery School implements the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). It is intended to provide parents and carers with a clear understanding of how we support children's care, learning and development in accordance with national standards.

We are committed to ensuring that every child in our care receives high-quality early years provision, enabling them to develop the skills and knowledge required to achieve their full potential and to make a smooth transition into statutory education.

Aims and Objectives

Through the EYFS, we aim to:

- Provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment in which children can thrive.
- Deliver a broad, balanced and progressive curriculum, consistent with the EYFS statutory requirements.
- Establish strong partnerships with parents and carers to support children's learning and well-being.
- Ensure that equality of opportunity and inclusion underpin all aspects of provision.
- Ensure that every child has a happy and positive start to their academic career.
- Ensure that all children receive the teaching, encouragement, and opportunities they need to reach the Early Learning Goals outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.
- Promote the growth of independence in a comfortable and secure environment.
- Support children in forming relationships by helping them acquire social skills like sharing and cooperation.
- Develop a love of learning and create lasting memories by providing real purposes for learning and supporting children to develop essential life skills.
- Provide real life, hands-on experiences and encourage children to take safe risks to develop their knowledge and understanding.
- Provide language enriched learning enabling children to understand and share their knowledge confidently.
- Celebrate the various characteristics that make each person unique and encourage mutual respect.
- Identify the learning needs of all children and make adaptations to support them appropriately
- Encourage children to feel motivated, confident and in control of their learning.

EYFS Principles

Our practice is guided by the four overarching principles of the EYFS framework:



1. A Unique Child – Every child is recognised as an individual with rights, capabilities, and potential.
2. Positive Relationships – We foster respectful and supportive relationships between children, staff, parents and carers.
3. Enabling Environments – We provide rich and varied learning environments, both indoors and outdoors, which support development across all areas of learning.
4. Learning and Development – We deliver personalised learning opportunities that recognise different learning styles, abilities, and rates of progress.

Vision

At Ferndale Primary and Nursery School our curriculum is progressive to ensure children’s learning builds skills step by step. We follow guidance from the ‘Development Matters’ document to support this. We encourage children to have agency over their own learning and respond to children’s interest and ideas. Alongside this, we open the children’s eyes to new topics and themes, which enables them to learn about the world around them in a familiar context and allow them to make connections and links. A key emphasis to our curriculum is to ensure it is:

- Language rich, developing oracy skills and vocabulary.
- Provide hands on real experiences
- Deepen learning from prior knowledge
- Develop life skills and independence.

Learning takes place through play-based activities, which are carefully planned and structured to create opportunities for children to develop in all areas of learning. The activities allow the children to develop socially, emotionally, physically, creatively, and intellectually. We allow space for both planned and spontaneous play, in both indoor and outdoor play and use our outdoor garden throughout the day.

We believe that Early Years is the perfect environment to develop a love for learning and encourage children to use a positive attitude to persevere, be resilient and have a go.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning underpin our EYFS ethos and curriculum and inform the opportunities we create for our children. The characteristics we develop are:

- **playing and exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’
- **active learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Through play, in a secure and stimulating environment, children can:

- develop and expand their language and engagement with peers and adults.
- explore, grow, and construct educational experiences that assist them in making sense of their surroundings.
- practise and experiment with concepts and learning behaviours
- learn school rules and social norms.
- learn independence, the value in co-operating with others and sharing experiences with others.
- be willing to take chances and accept that mistakes happen.
- use your imagination to create narratives
- practise interacting with others and navigating how to solve problems with peers,

Teaching and Learning

The EYFS curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning and development.

Areas of Learning and Development			
Prime Areas			
Personal, Social and Emotional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making Relationships • Self-confidence and Self-awareness • Managing Feelings and Behaviour 	Physical Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving and Handling • Health and Self-care 	Communication and Language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening and Attention • Understanding • Speaking 	
Specific Areas			
Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing 	Mathematics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers • Shape, Space and Measures 	Understanding the World <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and Communities • The World • Technology 	Expressive Arts and Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring and Using Materials and Media • Being Imaginative

Communication and Language

The development of children’s spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Language is developed and built on through whole class sessions, story-telling, circle time, conversations, role play as well as being modelled throughout the day. Children are encouraged daily to engage actively with stories, rhymes and poems. Children are given extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of context. Teachers model a range of vocabulary and language structures and echo back what the children are saying with new vocabulary to extend children’s language effectively. Children are supported to develop their speaking and listening skills and are taught to listen to others. They are encouraged to ask questions to find out more information. Children engage with songs, rhymes and stories daily to support language development.

Children with English as an Additional Language are supported by creating a welcoming environment that values their home language, using visual aids, simplifying communication,

and by working with parents. We understand that the home language is crucial for a child's identity and self-esteem and is a strong foundation for developing English. We advise parents to continue speaking their home language with their child, as this builds a solid foundation for learning English. We employ visual timetables, pictures, and objects to help children understand routines, instructions, and new concepts without needing full English comprehension. We speak in shorter sentences, one-or two-word utterances, and use exaggerated tones and gestures to aid understanding. Targeted Language Plans are used to support the development of English understanding and speaking.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

At Ferndale, children are provided with strong, warm and supportive relationships. Adults help children learn to understand and manage their own emotions and those of others around them. Through modelling and discussions, children are supported to resolve problems and to create good relationships with their peers. Through supported practise and positive feedback, children develop a positive self-image and self-esteem. With guidance and modelling, they learn how to take care of themselves; looking after their bodies and eat healthy. We support children to identify their own needs as well as the need of others.

Physical Development

Physical activity is crucial to children's development and helps them to become happy, healthy and active. At Ferndale, children are regularly encouraged to participate in physical activities both inside and outdoors, during focused PE sessions and through activities provided through continuous play or whole class teaching. Children are supported to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Fine motor skills are developed through playing with small world activities, puzzles and using small tools such as peg boards and threading beads. Children are encouraged to develop a tripod pencil grip and to print letters.

Reading and Writing

Children are encouraged to develop a love of reading through daily story times and through sharing, borrowing and discussing books. Through a range of reading opportunities, children are supported to develop their comprehension skills and their knowledge of print. Through discrete phonic sessions and individual reading, children learn how to recognise and blend phonemes to read words. Children take part in regular writing activities and are taught how to print letters. At Ferndale, we use the Bug Club Scheme to support daily phonics.

Mathematics

Children are taught to count, sort, match and make connections when working with numbers, shapes, space and measures. Through a broad range of every day contexts and practical activities, children develop their knowledge of number. Children are encouraged to make links and look for patterns and relationships.

Understanding of the World

Through discussions and a range of experiences such as visiting the forest, church and meeting important people including fire officers and police officers, children will develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of the world around them. Children's cultural, social and technological understanding are developed through role-play, whole class teaching and through listening to stories. Through exploring and investigating, observing and

questioning, children discover more about the world around them and are supported to acquire language and develop a broad vocabulary.

Expressive Arts and Design

At Ferndale, children's imagination and creativity is developed through art, music, dance, drama and role-play activities. Children are encouraged to share their own thought and feelings openly. Children are given regular opportunities to explore and play with a range of media and mediums to communicate and express themselves.

Assessment and Record Keeping

On-entry assessment

It is essential that a child's attainment is assessed initially upon starting school so we can build a clear picture of each child's current level of development and set appropriate targets to ensure that all children make progress towards the Early Learning Goals. We do this by:

- Meeting parents and/or nurseries to gather information on each child through home visits and attending a child's current nursery.
- Baseline assessment are completed to find out children's knowledge and skills in the 7 areas of learning and allows us to plan next steps.
- In FS2, each child is assessed using the 'Reception Baseline Assessment'. This is a short assessment taken in the first six weeks of school. The assessment assesses the children's early mathematics, literacy, communication and language skills.

Progress Check at Age Two

Children between the age of two and three will have a Two-Year-Old assessment completed on the three prime areas.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, social and Emotional Development.

Parents will be given a written summary highlighting areas in which a child is progressing well in, any areas in which additional support might be needed and how they will be supported. At the end of the academic year, staff will report on the impact of the actions taken to support progress. We will work closely with parents where there are concerns that a child may have development delay or special educational needs. We may invite parents to Early Help meetings and with agreement from the parents, may refer to other professionals for advice and support.

Ongoing assessments

Ongoing assessments are essential to ensure that children are reaching their full potential. It involves staff knowing what children know and can do and shaping teaching and learning experiences to enable progress. A range of assessments are completed to support the children's development. These include:

- Continuous informal observation and assessment are used to assess progress, inform planning and to identify next steps in learning.
- Adult led activities: either written (recorded in individual books) or practical (recorded in floor book where possible)
- Phonic assessments.
- Writing assessments: moderate between classes and across the Blue Kite Trust to ensure accurate assessment.
- Parents are provided with regular feedback on their child's progress through the use of tapestry, which will show individual, group or whole class learning experiences and achievements, parent evenings (twice a year), and an annual written report.

Following any assessments, any children who are identified as being at risk of not meeting the expected level of development in a particular area will receive targeted support either through extra time developing skills in provision or through intervention groups to support their needs (these intervention groups change across the year in line with the identified needs of the children).

At the end of FS2, children's learning will be assessed against the Early Learning Goals using a range of information gathered across the year including the teacher's own knowledge. Children will be assessed as 'expected' if they have met all the Early Learning Goals or as 'emerging' if not yet confident in some of the areas. This information will be reported to parents and shared with year 1 teachers.

Tapestry

Tapestry is a secure, online learning journal. It is used to share your child's learning experiences and progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

How is Tapestry used in EYFS?

- Recording learning – capturing special moments of play. This may be individual, as a group or as a class. Photos can be shared and discussed with your child at home.
- Two-Way Communication – We often communicate any messages to parents via Tapestry.
- Parents can share and celebrate children's achievements from home by posting photos and comments on their child's page.

All Parents will be given a personal log in to access Tapestry. You can log in to Tapestry on a phone, tablet or computer.

Safeguarding and Welfare

We adhere strictly to the statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the EYFS. These include:

- Recruitment and vetting procedures for staff and volunteers.
- Maintaining appropriate staff-to-child ratios.

- Conducting regular risk assessments of the environment and activities.
- Promoting healthy eating, physical well-being, and good hygiene practices.
- Ensuring procedures are in place for managing behaviour, administering medication, and responding to accidents or concerns.

Safer Eating

Whilst at breakfast Club, snack time, lunch time or after school club, staff will adhere to the following criteria:

- There will always be a member of staff in the room that is paediatric first aid trained.
- Staff will be aware of allergies and intolerances for individual children.
- Food will be prepared in a way to prevent choking e.g., slicing foods into batons, rather than circular, chopping small rounds fruits into halves/quarters.
- Children will be sat whilst eating.
- Children will always be in sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating. Staff will be alert to choking and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We recognise parents and carers as children's primary educators and work in partnership with families by:

- Providing regular updates on progress and development.
- Offering opportunities for participation in workshops, meetings, and events.
- Encouraging ongoing dialogue regarding children's needs, achievements, and home learning.
- Providing home visits allowing parents to share and exchange information about their child.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We are committed to ensuring equal access to learning opportunities for all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, gender, language, religion, ability or socio-economic background. Provision is adapted to meet individual needs, with additional support provided where appropriate.

Induction Process

Induction to Nursery

New children will be offered three induction sessions. Children's induction times will be staggered so that small groups attend nursery at set times. This will allow staff time to support the children to settle successfully. The benefits for small group sessions are:

- There is more time for staff/child interaction to get to know each other and build positive relationships
- Staff will quickly get to know each child's development stage through observation and informal assessment and learn about each child's interests, needs and care required

- Additional support can be given to support the children's emotional wellbeing

The three induction sessions will be as follows:

Session 1 – 1 hour

Session 2 – 2 hours

Session 3 – whole morning/afternoon session (possibly including lunch)

If children need further staggered induction times to ensure they are happy and thriving in the setting then this will be discussed on a personal one to one basis between nursery staff and parents. Together an agreed personalised induction period will be put in place. This induction will need to be reviewed at least fortnightly.

Induction to School (FS2)

Ferndale has a strong belief that happy and settled children thrive in a primary setting and understand that transitions into higher key stages need structure, support and care.

The children who attend our pre-school have numerous opportunities to visit the primary school. These include, library trips, assemblies, walks around the school, trips to FS2 classrooms and the use of the school playgrounds, utilising the adventure zone and trim trails. As the children become more familiar with the school setting, they are able to visualise their new classroom, teachers and surrounding areas with little or no concerns.

During the summer term, there are opportunities for FS2 teachers to integrate themselves with the nursery children, giving a sense of familiarity for both teacher and child. Often, the teacher(s) will visit all nursery settings and meet the child/ren, play together and speak with nursery staff to get to know the child/ren. This also allows the teacher(s) to observe each child in their familiar setting ready for transition into school.

Open Days/ Stay and Play Sessions

Prior to each new academic year, Open Days and Stay and Play sessions are available for prospective parents and children to attend, view the classrooms and meet with the teachers and teaching assistants. These sessions are also available to parents wishing to view the Nursery.

Home Visits

Home visits are offered to families before starting nursery and/or school. This home visit allows parents to share information about their child, as well as, for teachers to meet the child, where they feel most comfortable, at home.

Staggered Induction Process

Initially, children will attend FS2 on a staggered basis prior to attending full time, usually part time within the first two weeks of starting school. This is usually in smaller groups. A staggered induction into school has a range of benefits for both children and adults. The benefits for children are:

- Gentler transition – starting school can be overwhelming; shorter days and smaller groups help children adjust to their new environment, routines and expectations without overload.

- Stronger relationships – Teachers can get to know each child more personally, helping children feel noticed, safe and valued from the start.
- Reduced anxiety – Smaller groups make it easier for shy or nervous children to settle and build confidence.
- Faster Familiarity – Children can explore the classroom, playground, and routines at a manageable pace.
- Boosts independence – children can learn routines (lining up, toileting, tidying, snack time) in less hectic conditions, supporting a smoother adjustment into school life.

Benefits for adults are:

- Parents see their child supported in a caring, thoughtful way, which reassures them.
- More opportunities to talk between parent and teacher and ask/answer questions.
- Teachers can focus on each child's needs, strengths, and areas for support in smaller groups.
- Teaching routines like lunch time, cloakroom use and tidying up is more effective when fewer children are learning at once.
- Staff can manage behaviour, support emotions, and provide care more calmly.

Transition from FS2 to KS1

During the summer term, teachers from year 1 (KS1) will begin to interact with their new class in FS2. These interactions are short visits that allow the children to become familiar with their new teacher. Classroom swaps also take place allowing children to become familiar with their classroom as well as their new teacher.

Before children from FS2 start their new year in Year 1, the teachers, old and new, will meet to discuss each child using the school's transition document. They will discuss:

- Behavioural concerns
- Dietary requirements, allergies, vegetarian, vegan, halal
- Learning needs including learning plans
- EAL needs
- Phonic/maths and writing levels.
- Medical information/concerns.
- Interventions

Year 1 teachers will plan lessons accordingly, considering the transition discussions taken place and gaps in learning. This ensures that the transition into KS1 goes smoothly and each child feels settled, supported, safe and happy.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required, to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and best practice guidance. Parents and carers will be notified of any significant changes.