Children First Learning Partnership

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

September 2026

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The EYFS Policy in respect of the Marlfields Primary School has been discussed and adopted by the Local Advisory Board in October 2026

Chair of Board: Mrs K Stanesby

Responsible Officer: *Headteacher – Mrs C Sleath*

Agreed and ratified by the Local Advisory Board on: 14/10/26

To be reviewed: *September 2028*

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Health & Safety Policy and our Safeguarding policy.

Intent

Through our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), we intend to provide children with the best possible start to their school life, providing the foundations upon which their education can be built to enable them to fulfil their potential.

Our Aims:

- To develop a positive attitude and a deep love of learning.
- To provide a safe, caring, and inclusive learning environment where all children feel valued.
- To nurture the children's imagination, language, and curiosity.
- To encourage independence, self-motivation, and confidence.
- To provide children with early reading, writing and maths skills through purposeful teaching and provision.
- To bring learning opportunities to life with enriched, real, and purposeful opportunities through play.
- To build relationships within the local community, and experience cultures around the wider world.
- To work together in partnership with parents and carers, valuing the role that they play.
- To ensure all children make excellent progress in their learning and reach their full potential.

We prioritise the foundational knowledge, language and the learning behaviours and habits that children need to be successful throughout Key Stage 1 and beyond, ensuring that every child secures the strongest possible start to their education.

Implementation

Curriculum

We recognise that the knowledge, vocabulary, behaviours and dispositions developed in the early years underpin future success. Our curriculum therefore prioritises what matters most, enabling children to secure the foundations needed for successful learning across Key Stage 1 and beyond.

Our EYFS curriculum has been thoughtfully designed to suit the needs of our children, providing them with a wide variety of opportunities and experiences to learn through play. The curriculum has been split into half termly topics to engage children, building upon prior experiences. We do however recognise that whilst topics provide meaningful contexts for learning, staff maintain a clear focus on the essential knowledge, vocabulary and skills that all children need to learn and remember over time.

The EYFS curriculum is based upon four guiding principles: -

-A unique child
-Positive relationships
-Enabling environments
-Learning and development

The Nursery and Reception classes follow the curriculum as outlined in the following Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) documents.

The EYFS framework 2026

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2

Non-statutory curriculum guidance for the early years foundation stage

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/development-matters--2

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development all of which are important and inter connected.

Prime areas are fundamental, work together, and move through to support development in all other areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Through our curriculum, each of these areas of learning are explicitly planned for throughout each of the half termly topics.

Our curriculum is enhanced through literature that has been carefully chosen to introduce new concepts, build upon and embed learning, introduce vocabulary and to excite and engage a love of reading and literature. The thematic books are carefully selected to respond not only the next steps of the children but are also based on the children's interests.

Recognising the importance of communication and language as the foundation for future learning, staff explicitly teach and revisit ambitious vocabulary, ensuring that children have frequent opportunities to hear, practise and apply new language in meaningful contexts.

We strive to provide a broad and progressive curriculum that offer opportunities for every child to achieve and demonstrate talents. EYFS staff work closely with subject leaders across the school to ensure progression from Early Years acts as a scaffold and is built upon when children move into their following year groups. Staff ensure that children value the importance of the broad curriculum we offer through facilitation of interaction and achievements. Children are encouraged to access all areas of the curriculum through the 'Rainbow Challenge', where children are rewarded for their engagement towards all areas of learning.

To support and develop children's learning across the curriculum, continuous provision, and enhancements to this are carefully planned out to ensure that provision meets the needs of the children and feeds into their natural curiosity and inquisitiveness, encouraging children to ask questions and explore independently. Continuous provision is designed to enable children to revisit, apply and deepen previously taught knowledge and skills, promoting increasingly secure and fluent learning.

Inclusion

Children with SEND access the EYFS curriculum through a graduated response. High-quality inclusive practice forms our universal offer, with targeted and specialist support implemented where required. Staff work closely with parents, the school SENDCo and external professionals including Speech and Language Therapy, Early Years SEND Advisory Teachers and Early Years Forum to ensure needs are identified early and barriers to learning are reduced. Further information can be found in the SEND Policy and SEND Information Report.

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

The EYFS also includes the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning. These are regularly observed, planned for, and implemented across our EYFS curriculum.

The three characteristics are:

Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'
Active Learning – children concentrate and keep 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.

We engage children in **playing and exploring** using open-ended resources and encouraging children to think of ideas for play themselves. Promoting and planning for role-play enables our children to re-enact situations, activities, and conversations to make sense of the world and we also provide a secure and safe environment for children to take risks.

To ensure our children are **creative and think critically** we provide them with opportunities for child-initiated play allowing children to take play and learning in their own direction. Staff work alongside the child and use open ended questions to develop problem-solving, sharing their ideas and thinking. Children are encouraged to make links and talk through their learning process.

To encourage **active learning** the timetable has been carefully planned to give children time to become deeply involved in their play and give them the opportunity to find a solution to their problems. Staff offer children praise when they reach a goal and lots of encouragement when they need to persevere with something.

Teaching Strategies

Staff carefully balance child-initiated learning with direct teaching to ensure that all children access the most important knowledge, skills and experiences, particularly those who may require additional practice or support.

Adults are actively involved in children's learning throughout the day. This may be in the form of adult-led sessions or as an active facilitator to children's play; challenging and questioning children to embed and extend their learning. We believe that during child led activities the adults' role and interaction with the children is essential to build the children's understanding and guide new learning.

Within the enabling environment, staff ensure that children are given the opportunity to put their new skills into practice on their own and have a go for themselves. Their confidence and independence grow through opportunities to try new things, test ideas and make choices through a safe and supportive environment. We firmly believe that one of the most powerful things we can teach our children is to become independent learners.

Early Reading and Phonics

In the Early Years we believe that reading is an essential life skill and of vital importance. We aim to develop pupils reading through the teaching of systematic and synthetic phonics, shared reading, home reading, individual reading, and library access.

Children in the Early Years participate in daily phonics sessions following the Little Wandle phonics scheme. Phonics sessions are well matched and suited to the child's ages and stages and equip them with crucial early reading skills. Each child will progress through the phonic phases in lessons as well as accessing independent mastery activities through the enabling environment.

Reading at home is encouraged from the beginning of Nursery. Children access our school library each week to share a story and choose a book to take home to read with their family. Nursery parents/carers are expected to share this book with their child at least once over the course of the week, noting this in their child's home/school reading diary.

Children in Reception also take home a reading book from the reading scheme to share and read with their parents/carers. This book is changed weekly and children are expected to read at least 3 times at home. As phonics teaching and learning takes place, the reading book sent home is in line with the child's phonic ability to promote the application of skills and encourage fluency.

Children in Reception read in small groups or individually to an adult at least three times per week. This book is a copy of the text use in reading practise sessions in school.

At the end of each day, in both Nursery and Reception, children have story time where they listen to a variety of books. They also have a 'love of reading' session daily. These sessions are planned and books include poetry, fictional classics, and non-fiction texts. They ensure pupils engage with a range of texts at a deeper level to promote writing, drama, and role play, develop repetition and language and foster a love of favourite authors. This time is also used to encourage and develop speaking and listening skills through active listening, questioning, discussion and rhyme.

For further information on early reading and phonics in EYFS, please see the English policy.

Foundations for phonics in Nursery

Using the Little Wandle Foundation scheme, we provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and language' and 'Literacy'. These include:

- sharing high-quality stories and poems
- learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
- activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
- attention to high-quality language.

We ensure Nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

For further information on early reading and phonics in EYFS, please see the Early Reading and Phonics policy on our school website.

Learning through Play

Learning through play is an important and integral part of the Early Years curriculum and classroom. We believe that children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own developing the characteristics of learning.

The Acquisition of Early Language

We believe that the importance of planning for and providing opportunities, time and space for children to talk, listen and understand is paramount. Through careful planning we have created a broad and rich language environment. We ensure the use of talk partners and that time is given to discussion and the sharing of children's ideas. Children are exposed to read aloud sessions daily. Adults facilitate role-play and small word play to extend children's language. Adults skilfully interact with children to model, scaffold language, and ensure the use of open-ended questioning to promote discussion. By developing pupils speaking and listening skills, we enable them to access more areas of learning and communicate with adults and other children.

Use of Interactive Screens, digital devices and Ipads

Screen use in our setting is limited, carefully considered and clearly linked to intended learning aims.

We teach our children about our technological diverse world by talking to them in an age appropriate way about different types of technology, including how to use them safely.

We use a variety of different types of activities within our environment and we recognise that where technology is used, the most successful outcomes are gained where adults co-engage with children during use of such devices.

Classroom Organisation

Our Early Years indoor and outdoor environment are organised and accessible for all children through clearly defined areas that children are encouraged to access independently and safely. Opportunities for outdoor learning are valued and exploited. Being outdoors provides children with more freedom to learn and the ability to take risks, to explore and to become independent. Our classrooms have been designed with clearly defined areas of provision including reading, writing, maths, role-play, creative, investigation and physical opportunities. A rich set of resources, offering a wide variety of possibilities, are organised using easily accessible open shelving to promote children's independence and enable open-ended learning. Risk assessments are carried out frequently to ensure our learning environments are safe and secure.

Welfare Requirements

At Marlfields Primary School, the welfare of every child is paramount. In line with the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework and our safeguarding responsibilities, we are committed to creating a secure, inclusive, and nurturing environment where children can thrive physically, emotionally, and socially. To demonstrate a commitment to our adherence to the Welfare Requirements, Leaders ensure the annual completion of the CFLP EYFS Welfare Requirement Audit and respond to findings via an action plan in a timely manner.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

- All staff receive regular safeguarding training and are familiar with the school's Child Protection Policy and other related policies such as whistleblowing, child on child abuse including sexual violence and sexual harassment, Attendance policy, Intimate care and hygiene policy, RPI, PREVENT, Mobile Phone and smart device policies. All policies can be found on the school website.
- Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) are clearly identified and accessible to staff, children, and families. Further information on our Safeguarding leads can be found on our school website.
- Concerns about a child's welfare are acted upon swiftly and in accordance with statutory guidance and school procedures.
- We promote a culture of vigilance, where children's voices are heard and respected.
- The school will notify Ofsted of any allegation of harm or abuse by anyone living, working or looking after children at the premises, whether the alleged incident occurred on the premises or elsewhere. Ofsted will also be informed of the action taken in response. Notification will be made as soon as reasonably practicable and, in all cases, within 14 days of the allegation being made.
- We operate a 'no dogs' on site policy at our school. In particular, banned dog breeds (listed in dangerous dogs act 1991, including XL Bully type) must not be on the premises at any time.

Health and Safety

The EYFS follows the school Health and Safety Policy which can be found on the school website. The EYFS environment is risk assessed daily to ensure it remains safe, clean, and suitable for learning and play. Children are taught to manage risks through supervised exploration and age-appropriate challenges. Staff are trained in paediatric first aid and respond promptly to any incidents or injuries and follow the schools policies for Allergy Safety, Administering Medication, Asthma and Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs.

Suitable People

- All adults working with children in EYFS (including volunteers) undergo enhanced DBS checks, staff suitability declarations and rigorous recruitment procedures. Please refer to the CFLP Safer Recruitment Policy. Volunteers and Visitors to our school will be subject to a robust risk assessment as part of the vetting process.
- All appointed staff and volunteers undergo a thorough and relevant induction program to ensure they have the skills, understanding and knowledge to adhere to all relevant policies.
- Staff are supported through ongoing professional development to maintain high standards of care and education.
- Ratios are maintained in accordance with Statutory EYFS Framework, ensuring that children always receive appropriate supervision and support from appropriately qualified staff to promote safety, engagement, and high-quality learning experiences.

Premises and Equipment

Our indoor and outdoor learning spaces are designed to be accessible, stimulating, and safe. Resources are age-appropriate, well-maintained, and support children's development across all areas of learning.

Medicines and Health

We follow clear procedures for administering medication, with parental consent and accurate record-keeping. All medications are signed in out daily and stored in the school office apart from inhalers which are kept within classrooms. Children with medical needs are supported through individual care plans (including those with allergies) which are developed in partnership with families and health professionals.

Behaviour and Emotional Wellbeing

Positive behaviour is promoted through consistent routines, clear expectations, and nurturing relationships. Staff model respectful interactions and support children in developing self-regulation and empathy. Emotional wellbeing is prioritised through initiatives such 'Characteristics of learning characters' which celebrate resilience, enthusiasm, and risk-taking.

Equality and Inclusion

We actively challenge discrimination and promote equality of opportunity for all children. Provision is adapted to meet individual needs, ensuring every child feels valued and included. Children with SEND are supported through ongoing assessment, observation and review. Provision follows a graduated approach and may involve consultation with specialist services where appropriate.

Intimate care

Please refer to Intimate Care and Hygiene Policy which can be found on the school website

Intimate care is delivered with dignity, sensitivity, and respect for the child's privacy. It encompasses support with personal hygiene, toileting, and changing, and is carried out in a way that promotes each child's independence and emotional security.

Toileting routines are handled discreetly and supportively, with staff responding to individual needs and developmental stages. Children are encouraged to develop self-care skills, with gentle guidance and reassurance. Procedures are carried out by known and trusted adults, following agreed protocols and with parental consent. (Arbor). This includes the completion of an Individual Intimate Care Plan (IICP) when ongoing needs are identified. Where appropriate, a risk assessment may be completed to support this process and to identify any additional risks and required support measures. A partnership with parents and carers is a priority for us to enable the intimate care needs of their child to be identified and met. Communication in the form of face to face interactions and the provision of written records of intimate care provided will be central to this. Staff follow hygiene best practices, including the use of appropriate protective equipment and thorough handwashing. Facilities are clean, age-appropriate, and accessible, ensuring children feel safe and confident. Any concerns arising during intimate care are recorded and reported in line with safeguarding procedures.

Safe Eating

Mealtimes are calm, social experiences that support children's independence and wellbeing. Staff are trained to supervise eating safely, including awareness of allergies, choking risks, and dietary needs. Within our Early Years curriculum pupils are taught how to eat safely and correctly. Children are encouraged to try new foods in a supportive environment, with respect for cultural and individual preferences. All food provided meets nutritional standards and is prepared in accordance with food hygiene regulations. Pupils with allergies are recorded on our school system, Arbor and within class folders to ensure all staff are aware of known allergies.

Parents as Partners

We value the role that parents, and carers play in the life of their child. We look for opportunities to work with families to support learning at home and to involve parents/carers in their child's school life. We therefore make it our aim to work very closely with parents. We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the families of the children in our care. We do this through:

· Providing parents with a handbook of information about our EYFS settings and school readiness information.
· Meeting with parents before their children start school at induction meetings and visits to the classrooms with their children.
· Inviting parents to attend informal workshops about the curriculum, such a phonics, reading, maths.
· Holding and inviting parents to 1:1 meetings to talk about how their child has settled into the school environment and to talk about their child's progress.
· Sending written reports home about children's attainment and progress.
· Sending home observations of the children's learning via the Evidence Me App.
· Publishing curriculum topic information on school website.
· Regular contact through Arbor, newsletters, and home school planners.
· Offering a range of activities throughout the school year – assemblies, workshops, Christmas productions and sports days.

Induction

It is important to us that you and your child feel happy, comfortable and safe when you join our school family whether it be for Nursery or Reception.

We have developed a robust Induction Programme for our new Nursery & Reception children. It is designed to ensure that both our children and our parents are familiar and comfortable with both the school and the staff before your child even begins school. This means that when your child officially joins our school family they can settle quickly and feel happy in their new school environment.

Details of our Induction Programme

During the Summer Term, prior to starting school the following September, there are several parts of Induction that take place. These are detailed below:

· Parents are invited to attend an 'Induction Meeting' at school to meet the EYFS leader and the teaching staff.

· Foundation Stage staff visit pre-school settings to meet the children and their Key Workers.

· Children and parents are invited to 'Stay and Play' times in school.

· Children attend an 'Induction session' on their own towards the end of the academic year.

· Our induction policy is flexible and therefore we can adapt our policy if needed to meet the needs of the children and families.

In September, the children have a swift introduction to school. All children start in Reception full time. If needed this can be adapted to suit individual needs. It is important to say that if you have any questions, queries, or concerns at any point you are most welcome to contact school.

Transition

We have several transitions throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage that we manage with care. Transitions are times within your child's school journey when they move within our school to their next year group.

The first transition that occurs during Early Years is the transition from Nursery to Reception and we aim to ensure that transition is as smooth and comfortable as possible. In order to do this, parents are invited to a 'Welcome to Reception' meeting during the summer term to provide information about the school, the curriculum, teaching staff and the day-to-day life in Reception. There is also the opportunity to talk about other general information, such as school dinners, uniform and any questions or queries. It is also an opportunity to meet the child's new class teacher and members of the EYFS team.

The children's transition takes place in the whole school transition week in July. During this week all children move into their new Reception class to familiarise themselves with their new classrooms and staff. Early Years staff will also meet in the summer term to share information about each child's development and any key information about each child (e.g., medical, SEN, EAL, etc.).

The second transition is that from Reception to Year 1. During this transition, the children attend transition days as part of the whole school transition week in July. During these days, the children may begin their new topic, complete exciting artwork & displays and spend more time with their new classroom staff to familiarise themselves. Reception teachers continue to support Year 1 for the first Autumn term to ensure a smooth transition, adapting the timetable and classroom environment to suit the needs of the children as they move from the Early Years curriculum to the National curriculum. Through close collaboration between Reception and Year 1 staff, we ensure that the foundational knowledge, vocabulary, routines and learning behaviours developed within EYFS continue to be built upon systematically as children move through Key Stage 1.

Impact

Observations, Assessment and Learning Journeys

On entry to Nursery or Reception the teacher carries out a rigorous baseline assessment using the Children First Learning Partnership Baseline Toolkit, these assessments allow us to identify the child's attainment, their important next steps in learning, and any significant barriers to learning. The curriculum is then tailored accordingly for each individual child. As a team, we discuss each child regularly throughout the academic year and reinforce our judgements using the Evidence Me assessment tracking system.

Children in Reception also complete the Reception Baseline (RBA) with a familiar adult, within the first few weeks of starting, in line with Government expectations.

At the end of Reception each child is assessed against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG). They are assessed as either emerging or expected for each of the 17 areas of learning and a report is given to parents informing them about their child's learning and progress in each of the areas of learning. This information is also given to the Year 1 teachers to aide transition.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects children's identified needs. Through the regular monitoring of children's progress, we can initiate early action and support. We work closely with parents, carers, and external agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make progress.

Assessment is used to identify precisely what children know and can do, enabling staff to provide timely teaching, practice and support so that gaps do not widen over time. This supports the early identification of SEND and informs the planning, delivery and review of appropriate support.

Assessment in the EYFS primarily takes the form of observations, this involves practitioners observing and questioning children to identify their achievements, interests, and next steps for learning. Evidence collection is kept to the minimum required and is used to aide professional discussion or quality assure judgements.

This evidence may include images, videos, and observations. This happens throughout the day when children are embedding and extending any previous learning. Observations and assessments are recorded using an online assessment tool, Evidence Me.

As well as an electronic learning journey each child has their own writing journal to evidence and celebrate writing achievements. We are then able to share these experiences with the children's parents sending each child's observation home electronically through Evidence Me and sharing writing journals at parent's evenings. Parents are also informed of their child's progress through termly reports and parents' evenings.

Moderation

In-school moderation takes place termly. Judgements and evidence from all staff for children from both Nursery and Reception are discussed as a team. Evidence is quality assured and standardised across the unit with a focus on a range of Prime and Specific areas over the year. Inter-school moderation will also take place between the Children First Learning Partnership schools twice per year.

Role of the EYFS Lead

Our EYFS lead is committed to raising standards and ensuring each child has the best start on the school journey. We aim to:

· Plan an effective and varied schedule of monitoring so that we know the Quality of Education within Early Years is effectively implemented and embedded.

· Respond quickly and supportively to all barriers preventing outstanding implementation and impact.

· Use monitoring and assessment information to provide effective CPD and challenge.

· Provide clear updates to the Local Advisory Board, Headteacher and SLT.

Version	Review Date	Changes Made
V2	16.01.2022	Characteristics of Learning- updated in line with EYFS reforms 2021
V3	16.01.2022	Early Reading & Phonics – Nursery and Reception procedures for reading added.
V4	16.01.2022	Observation & Assessment- RBA procedures added, Evidence Me online assessment tool and writing journals.
V5	22.09.2025	Impact- assessment, intervention and role of the leader added. Amendments to wording where required e.g the name of the phonics and reading schemes. Updated curriculum implementation.
V6	22.09.2025	Included welfare requirement sections to align with updated KCSIE 2025/EYFS Framework 2025 Included a link to the new EYFS Framework 2025
V7	29.09.26	Updated inline with EY Framework 2026 and KCSIE 2026 requirements.