Falkland Primary School

EYFS Policy

Safeguarding Statement

The school is committed to safeguarding children and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Status	Date Approved	Next Review
Statutory	13 July 2026	July 2028

Early Years Foundation Stage

"All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential."

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, September 2025

Early childhood is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives. At Falkland we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. We believe it is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education. All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the role of the practitioners working in Reception to take on the task of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents/carers, support staff and the Reception team work effectively together to support children's learning and development. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school, all children join us, full time, at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

The EYFS is based upon four guiding principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

A Unique Child

At Falkland School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards linked to our Falkland Values, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against anyone because of 'differences'. All children at Falkland School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school community and we believe that all children matter. We give every child equal opportunities to achieve their best, taking account of their range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In Reception we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Safeguarding and Welfare

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe, secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the people caring for them."

At Falkland Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with safeguarding and welfare requirements as stated in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers 2025 (Section 3).

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop the important life skill of self-regulation. We understand the children should be allowed to take risks, but recognise the need to teach them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children (see School Safeguarding Statement).

Positive Relationships

At Falkland Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating their children. We do this through:

- visits to children's pre-schools.
- offering to visit all children in their home setting prior to them starting school.
- inviting all children and parents to 'Stay and Play' transition sessions at school with their teacher and peers during the Summer term before starting school.
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the Summer term before their child starts school, which is usually carried out during one of the 'Stay and Play' transition sessions.
- providing an 'open door' policy each morning for parents to share any information that is important for that day.

- providing formal meetings for parents during the Autumn and Spring terms, at which children's progress is discussed.
- providing parents with a formal written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year.
- providing parents with updates of observations on their child's development through Tapestry.
- providing parents with the opportunity to respond to and add to observations on their child's development through Tapestry.
- providing access to planning overviews on the school website.
- inviting all parents to workshops about phonics, reading and writing.
- suggesting a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents.

All staff working in Reception aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school, the Reception teachers act as the 'Key Person' to all children in their class, supported by the Nursery Nurses and Teaching Assistants.

Transition from Pre-School to School

We have good links with many pre-school settings. Visits are usually undertaken by the Reception staff to discuss new intake children and observe them playing with their peers.

Enabling Environments

At Falkland Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging and engaging activities and experiences to extend the children's learning, curiosity and exploration.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

All of the Reception staff are responsible for making observations of all children across both classes, recording the learning which children demonstrate spontaneously, independently and consistently in a range of contexts. These observations are recorded on Tapestry, which allows practitioners to record children's learning journeys through annotated photographic and video evidence.

Assessment in Reception primarily takes the form of observation undertaken by the teachers, Nursery Nurses and Teaching Assistants. Daily assessments of children's learning are made and used to ensure that weekly and other future planning reflects identified needs. Progress is formally assessed four times a year; the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) on-entry, against our progression document at the end of the Autumn and Spring terms and the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) at the end of the year. Discussions are held twice yearly with class teachers and SLT members to discuss data. The final judgement is made against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs), stating whether a child is emerging or expected in each Area of Learning. Children are defined as having reached a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the EYFS if they have achieved the expected level for the ELGs in the Prime Areas of Learning and the Specific Areas of Mathematics and Literacy.

At the end of the Reception year, a written summary of children's attainment is produced for parents, reporting their progress against the ELGs and whether they have met GLD. On-entry and final ELGs data is submitted to West Berkshire Local Authority.

Reception teachers use weekly planning as a guide for EYFS curriculum delivery and will alter any plans in response to the needs (achievements and next steps) of the children. Weekly themes in Reception are based around the world calendar to promote diversity within our curriculum. They are introduced through a different high quality text each week (Super Six Books) which is read to the children daily. Across a half term, there will be a book from each of the following categories to ensure the children are being exposed to a broad variety of texts:

- Quality Text
- Rhyming/Repeated Refrain Book
- Diversity Book
- Traditional Tale
- Wellbeing/Growth Mindset Book
- Teachers Choice

Phonics planning follows the DFE validated Monster Phonics programme. Monster Phonics is a systematic synthetic phonics scheme that makes learning more memorable and engaging by using a multisensory approach to teaching. In Reception, children are introduced to the sounds that individual letters make, which are referred to as 'Black Cat' sounds. They are then slowly introduced to the other monsters which represent long vowel sounds, silent letters and tricky letters, through videos, fairy tales and daily opportunities to read and write using the sounds they have learnt. Monster Phonics uses monster sound cues and consistent colour coding to support learning, which is then cleverly phased out, creating confident, independent readers. However, it's not just about the colours; the monsters themselves each represent a sound; this brings phonics to life, creates engagement and speeds up the learning process for everyone.

Mathematics planning combines the NCETM Mastering Number programme and White Rose programme. Each session begins with a quick fluency activity, taken from Mastering Number, which aims to secure firm foundations in the development of good number sense whilst focusing on counting, ordinality, cardinality, subitising, composition and comparison. The main part of the session is based around the White Rose sequence of learning, which is broken down from blocks into easy, logical steps. Through the use of books, games, rhymes, songs, colourful graphics and real world examples of maths in action, we nurture an enjoyment of the subject at an early age, letting children explore mathematical concepts with curiosity and without a fear of making mistakes.

Our Daily Routine

A typical day in Reception has a combination of teacher taught sessions and child initiated learning through play. Children come into school in the morning and put their things away, before beginning their morning jobs – five independent activities they rotate around throughout the week. They then come to the carpet for a teacher taught session, including a morning song and the daily phonics lesson. After that, they are allowed to explore inside and outside for a sustained period of time, whilst the adults support their learning through play and encourage them to engage with challenges. Before lunch, there is another teacher taught session, including the daily maths lesson and reading our weekly Super Six book. We all eat lunch together in the school hall (packed lunches and school dinners) and have an outdoor playtime. The afternoon begins with a third teacher taught session which links to our theme for that week, before the children are allowed to explore inside and outside for the rest of the afternoon. At the end of the day we have a book vote where the children can vote for the story they want to hear as a class before home time.

The Learning Environment

The Reception department is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning bays, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Reception department has its own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive impact on the children's development, providing opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. Outdoor activities are planned and resourced to facilitate development in all areas of learning. All staff support children in their use of these areas, encouraging them to be independent, but also ask for what they need to enhance their learning.

Learning and Development

At Falkland Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter-connected.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. Features of teaching and learning that relate to Reception are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- the understanding that teachers have of child development and how this influences teaching pedagogy
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, clear explanations, appropriate interventions and extend and develop exploration and communication
- the encouragement of children to communicate and talk about their learning, develop independence and self-management
- the provision of activities that build on and extend children's interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities
- the identification of 'next step' requirements through observations which are shared with parents
- the building of relationships between school and pre-school settings

Areas of Learning

Teaching in the Reception setting at Falkland Primary School is delivered in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers 2025. This document promotes teaching and learning that ensures children's school readiness and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

There are seven Areas of Learning and Development that set out what providers must teach the children in their setting. The three 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.

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

Providers must also support children in four Specific Areas, which help strengthen and develop the three Prime Areas, and ignite children's curiosity and enthusiasm.

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

These Areas of Learning and Development address children's physical, cogitative, linguistic, social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all Areas of Learning and Development are important and inter-connected. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum.

Play and Active Learning

Play is recognised as so important to children's well-being and development that the right to play is set down in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Play is therefore a fundamental commitment within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

In planning and guiding children's activities, teachers reflect on the different ways that children learn. They reflect these in their own practice and give due diligence to the 'three characteristics of effective teaching and learning':

1. **Playing and Exploring**
- finding out and exploring, playing with what they know, being willing to 'have a go'
2. **Active Learning**
- being involved, concentrating, keeping on trying, enjoying achieving what they set out to do
3. **Creative and Critical Thinking**
- having their own ideas, making links, choosing ways to do things

At Falkland Primary School we recognise that children:

- are not passive learners
- are hands-on, brains-on learners
- are highly motivated, intelligent learners, who actively seek interactions with those around them
- learn as both individuals and social beings
- have built in exploratory tendencies
- engage all of their senses to investigate and master tools and resources to develop their skills and to build their knowledge and understanding of the world
- actively drive their own learning and development by; the choices they make, the interests they develop, the questions they ask, the knowledge they seek and their motivation to act more competently

- learn about themselves and their social and cultural worlds by working and playing with other people
- develop positive dispositions which lay the foundations for becoming lifelong successful learners through; collaborative, caring relationships with other people, managing and taking risks, having a go, experiencing success, developing resilience, and developing 'mastery' or 'can-do' attitudes
- develop flexible pathways of thinking and learning when provided with the freedom to explore through play
- use controlled and safe situations to learn how to control themselves, understand the need for rules, think creatively alongside other children, communicate effectively with others, investigate, solve problems, express fears or re-live anxious experiences

In response to this at Falkland we:

- provide children with opportunities to develop as individuals through interactive play experiences
- provide exciting play activities which stimulate curiosity and imagination
- provide opportunities for social interaction, collaborative learning and the exploration, broadening and developing of relationships
- use play in supporting the gaining of skills in all curriculum areas

During the day the children are given opportunities to engage in a variety of different play experiences. These are both planned and developed thorough children's own interests. Children are able to engage in play alone, with another child or group of children. Play experiences include:

Role Play and Imaginative Play: There is a rolling programme throughout the year to bring everyday situations into the classroom to enhance and extend the learning process. Drama and dance sessions within the planned curriculum give additional opportunities for children to express their feelings whilst developing their imagination and creativity. Role play, including Small World and Home Corner play, provides opportunities for children to interact with their peers in working through problems, trying out different roles. Role play clothes are carefully chosen to give a wide variety of experience in manipulating buttons, zips, laces and buckles, which help the children's fine motor skills and independence in dressing.

Physical Play: Physical play provides opportunities for exploring movement, sharing, manoeuvring, steering, turning and experiencing speed. Whilst playing together, the children learn about acceptance of rules, cooperation and the need to be aware of others, developing skills in self-control, negotiation and problem solving. Well-resourced and varied opportunities are available for supervised, free and structured activity. Two large halls give scope for running games, team games and imaginative free play. A variety of wheeled toys are used to support gross motor skills, as well as for free play. The children have access to a climbing frame enabling risk taking and physical activities.

Creative Play (including; art, craft, music, dance and technology): Through creative activities children learn about listening and interpreting instructions, observing, assessing and copying. They are encouraged to use problem solving skills and to be aware of the need to look after resources. Physical development is enhanced, with the development of hand/eye coordination and the strengthening of fine motor control. The children have access to a variety of learning areas that are specifically designed to facilitate creative play, including; junk modelling area with materials to explore and experiment in making patterns, mixing colour and investigating texture and shape, and an outdoor music box with a wide variety of instruments.

Investigative Play (including; sand, water, construction and building apparatus): All activities which encourage investigative play require children to select and sort appropriate tools and materials which will enable them to accomplish a task. Skills such as sorting, matching, counting and estimating are all critical in developing good mathematical and scientific skills of questioning and reasoning. In constructional situations, children learn about the joys of achieving success and how to accept failure as a tool for achieving success. They are able to develop skills in manipulating and responding to the demands and constraints of different materials. Our designated investigative play areas help children to develop concentration skills, fine muscle control and tactile awareness in a controlled and flexible environment that is responsive to the developmental needs.

Social Play: Skills developed in play situations become central and integral to the child as a social individual, accepting of rules and confident in the use of their skills. Many of the skills learned during play are common to the child's developing skills. This core life skill is therefore fundamental in helping children to develop into confident, resilient, successful people. Children are encouraged to cooperate, interact with other children and adults, take turns, communicate ideas and be sensitive to the needs of others. They are also encouraged to persevere with tasks, asking for adult help when necessary and learning to adapt and incorporate the ideas of others into their own alternative strategies.

The Role of the Adult in Early Years

Nursery Nurses and Teaching Assistants are expected to:

- contribute to a weekly/fortnightly phase meeting discussing individual children, planning, observations and areas of development
- deliver small group interventions including fine motor skills, phonics and maths
- collect evidence of children's learning journeys through recorded observations
- contribute to discussion regarding the completion of children's EYFS Profile
- support individual children, small groups of children and whole class groups in their learning
- encourage independence in all children both personally and intellectually

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the Reception teachers and staff to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for Reception. This governor will discuss Reception practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. The Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, and Reception Leader will carry out monitoring in the Reception as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.