

FLEETVILLE INFANT & NURSERY SCHOOL



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date policy last reviewed: May 2026
Date of next review: May 2029

Signed by:

Headteacher

Date: May 2026

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Chair of governors

Date: May 2026

‘Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five 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 together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.’

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021 The Foundation Stage takes children through the first six terms of their school life. These important, formative years are vital in laying the foundations of a successful and enjoyable school career.

At Fleetville we acknowledge the important role that parents and carers have in the education of their children and believe that children learn best when there is a supportive partnership between home and school. We see parents and carers as partners in our children’s learning. We value their opinions and the information they can give us, and

we involve them whenever possible. EYFS is where children begin their learning journey at school so it is essential that it fires children's love of learning. We provide a curriculum rich in knowledge and practical experiences, steeped in reading and stories and full of talk and vocabulary so that children can do and remember more, can express and discuss their ideas confidently and start to see the awe and wonder of the world. In response to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021) and Development Matters (2020), we have developed a school EYFS Curriculum (September 2021).

Our Aims

To create a welcoming, secure and stimulating environment in which our children have the opportunity to become independent learners, try new things and develop at their own pace.

To develop warm relationships with every child as well as open and positive relationships with parents and families so that they feel part of the child's learning.

To regard every child as an individual and ensure equal access to the curriculum, giving consideration to the child's cultural background, home language and any special educational needs.

To enable every child to reach their potential, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.

To ensure that all our children feel included, secure and valued.

To provide opportunities for social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth in a safe, fun and non-threatening setting.

To discover and celebrate every child's unique strengths and talents.

To provide purposeful play and first hand learning experiences within a broad and balanced curriculum, which inspires and excites children.

To provide language-rich experiences that encourage the children to become confident and articulate speakers

To enrich the overall development of each child, encouraging them to make their own choices about their learning and develop independence whilst feeling safe and secure.

To enable children to develop confidence and a sense of achievement, to cope with fears and anxieties and to express their feelings appropriately.

To promote a 'can do' culture for children and adults.

The Curriculum

We use the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021), the non-statutory guidance material in Development Matters (2020) and also consider the needs of the children at our school to plan our EYFS Curriculum. We know what we want the children in our early years classes to learn. The curriculum is ambitious for our children, ensuring they can do and remember more as a result of their time with us and are well prepared for when they move on to the National Curriculum in KS1. There is an urgent and clear emphasis on supporting children to develop their language so that they can feel confident to express their curiosity and voice their ideas. We are careful to balance our curriculum led learning with following the needs and interests of the children and make sure we are flexible to vary books, themes and experiences based on their growing interests and enthusiasms. This will include:

- Provision that is carefully planned, delivering a broad range of learning and experiences that will result in them knowing, doing and remembering more as well as being relevant to each child's individual needs and interests, building on what they already know and can do.
- Provision of opportunities for teaching and learning both indoors and outdoors. Provision of opportunities for children to engage in activities planned or initiated by themselves as well as those planned by adults.
- In Reception children will typically take part in three hours of whole class learning (Phonics, English, Maths, Handwriting, Topic) and two hours of child initiated learning.

- Planned provision that will ensure all children will be well prepared with the knowledge and skills to prepare them for Key Stage One.

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is split into seven areas of Learning and Development all of which are important and inter-connected. There are three 'Prime' areas and four 'Specific' areas that shape the educational programmes in early years (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021) and Development Matters (2021)) with outcomes integrated into our whole school progression documents:

The Three Prime Areas

Communication and language. The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers, throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation,, story-telling and role-play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Physical development. This is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults, By creating games and providing opportunities for play, both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence

Personal, social and emotional development. Children's personal, social and emotional development is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development, Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

The Four Specific Areas

Literacy It is crucial for children to develop and life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of the familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing)

Mathematics Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding

of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding – such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting – children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, ‘have a go’, talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes. Reviewed July 2021

Understanding the world. This involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children’s personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums, to meeting important members of society, such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children’s vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

Expressive arts and design. The development of children’s artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

It also covers the three **characteristics of effective teaching and learning:**

- 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 develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

At Fleetville, we believe that all areas of learning and development are important and interconnected and need to be planned for in order to support a rounded approach to child development. As well as following a carefully planned and sequenced curriculum, we consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for them in all of the areas of learning and development. Throughout the early years, if a child’s progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, we will discuss this with the child’s parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child.

In planning our curriculum we take the following principles into consideration:

- Each child will feel included, secure and valued.
- No child will be excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture, home language, family background, special educational needs, gender or ability.
- Experiences offered to the children will build on what they can already do, their interests and experiences.
- There will be a balance between activities directed by the teacher, and those initiated by the child.
- Adult intervention will be sensitive and constructive, with an atmosphere of trust built up so that children feel confident enough to ask questions and use the staff as a learning resource.
- All learners, but young children in particular, need to repeat activities if they are to assimilate properly what they have learned and move on to develop new concepts. Opportunities will be given to do so.
- Staff will encourage a positive attitude and disposition to learn.
- Children will be allowed time to become engrossed, work in depth and complete activities to their individual satisfaction.
- Varied appropriate interventions by staff will engage children and help extend their learning.

- The knowledge and expertise of parents and other family adults will be used to support the learning opportunities provided by the setting.
- Parents of children with English as an Additional Language may need bilingual home/school liaison support to help and encourage them in the education of their children.
- The learning environment will continually provide the structure for children to explore, experience, plan and make decisions for themselves, thus enabling them to learn, develop and make good progress.

Observation, Assessment and Record Keeping

Foundation Stage staff carefully observe children and these observations are used to inform planning for the next steps, to assess a child's progress and are summarised at the end of the Foundation Stage using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. We welcome information from home that will help us to build a full picture of the child's needs and interests in order to plan for their learning and development. At Fleetville we use 'Seesaw' to record the child's learning progress using photographs, observations and the child's work from home and school. Staff use Seesaw to keep Parents and Carers up to date with the current learning that is taking place each week. Children will also have writing and maths books to record their Literacy and Maths work. Staff regularly share Seesaw Journals with the children so they can reflect on their experiences and progress as well as being encouraged to talk about their own next steps.

Our Learning Environment

The Reception classes share one outdoor learning environment, and each have their own classroom inside. Nursery is open plan and have their own Nursery garden. Typically, the children have free flow access indoors and outdoors during child initiated learning time between their classroom and their outdoor area. Children are encouraged to use the outdoor area for learning in all areas of the curriculum and in all weathers. It is expected that parents provide suitable clothing (and spares) for all types of weather.

English as an Additional Language

For children whose home language is not English, we aim to provide opportunities to develop and use both their home language and English in play and learning. This will help support their language development at home. Teachers will also ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1. In Foundation Stage, communication, language and literacy skills are assessed in English.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

We aim to identify children with special educational needs as early in their school life as possible. The child may have a SEN Support Plan written for them outlining targets set and the action being taken to help the child meet those targets. For children whose needs are outside the expertise of the teaching team, external advice may be taken from other professionals and reflected in the child's plan. Parents' input into the child's plan is valued highly and we aim to keep parents and carers informed of their child's needs and the provision being given at all times.

Admissions

Details of admissions can be found in our admission policies on the school website.

Mobile Phones

At Fleetville we accept that mobile phones are a part of everyday life for parents, carers and for staff. As part of the school's wider commitment to safeguarding the welfare of children, our policy is that use of mobile phones in and around the Foundation Stage setting is inappropriate and distracts adults from paying full attention to the children in their care. Communication between children and adults and between staff and parents/carers at drop off and pick

up times is an essential part of a child's day at school, helping them to settle in at the start and then celebrate their achievements at the end of the session. It is really important that people coming to drop off and pick up children from the Foundation Stage setting are not using their mobile phones. This applies both to members of staff, parents and carers and other visitors to the school. In the light of this, we will ensure that:

- Foundation Stage Staff do not use mobile phones in and around the setting until at least 3:45 and/or when no child is present. Members of staff will store them out of sight and reach of children.
- Parents, carers and other adult visitors to the setting are not using mobile phones while they are dropping off and collecting their children.

Cameras and camera phones

With the written consent of parents (on behalf of pupils) and staff, the school permits the appropriate taking of images by staff and pupils with school equipment. One of the key ways that Foundation Stage staff support children's development and communicate to parents about their children's learning is through photographs that record their activities and achievements. On a child's entry to the school, all parents/carers will be asked to give permission to use their child's work/photos. This consent form is valid for the entire period that the child attends this school unless there is a change in the child's circumstances where consent could be an issue (e.g. divorce of parents, custody issues, etc.). Parents/carers may withdraw permission, in writing, at any time. For further information relating to issues associated with School websites and the safe use of images in Hertfordshire schools, see the school website. School staff will only take photos of the children on a school camera which remains in school the whole time. The photos will only be used to upload to online journals or as part of the teaching curriculum within the school day.

Sun Protection Policy

The damaging effects of exposure to the sun on young skin are well documented. We will work in partnership with parents, to ensure that the children are protected.

Parents will need to:

- Apply sun cream suitable for their child (high factor) before school starts
- Provide a Sun hat (preferably a legionnaires hat to protect the neck)

We will ensure that children wear sunhats that parents have provided. School staff are unable to apply sun cream to the children and we suggest a daily sun cream with a high factor is applied before school. We will also encourage the children to drink water regularly to prevent dehydration.

Teaching Staff and Daily Routine

The Reception classes are each taught by a class teacher and a Teaching Assistant. Children enter the classroom at 8.45 – 9:00am, and complete planned welcome activities which focus on the development of fine motor skills. There are a minimum of four adult directed sessions throughout the day, including daily phonics, plus periods of child initiated learning. Nursery is taught by a class teacher and support staff. Nursery hours depend on which option your child is following.

Key Adults

During their time in Fleetville each child is assigned a key person. The child's key person will be their class teacher. The key person will:

- help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs,
- help the child become familiar with the setting,
- offer a settled relationship for the child
- build a relationship with their parents.

Transition from Nursery to Reception

Parents are invited to a new parents meeting before the start of nursery and reception. This provides them with an opportunity to meet with the head teacher and reception staff, and find out more about school and classroom routines and expectations. We also provide other opportunities for parents to meet their new teacher(s), other school staff and other families that will be in that class.

Behaviour Management

We believe that good behaviour is too important to be left to chance – it must be carefully taught. Children learn best when they are clear about what they are supposed to do and when they are continually and consistently encouraged to do it. In keeping with the whole school Behaviour Policy, we aim to establish clear boundaries according to the child's level of understanding and support children to become aware of the setting's routines and procedures and know what is expected of them. Our language of 'The 4Bees' is consistently used for all children by all adults.

Food and Drink

At Fleetville, we have snack time daily where the children can access healthy and nutritious snacks and drinks during the session. Snacks are usually a fruit or vegetable and there is milk available to drink for those who order it. Fresh drinking water is available and accessible at all times. From time to time, the children take part in cooking activities as part of their learning experience and will then be able to taste the foods that they prepare. Before children start at the school we will ask parents and carers for information about any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that the child has, and any special health requirements.

Accident and Injury

Our staff are trained to deal with illness and injury and there is a first aid box accessible at all times with appropriate content for use with children. We keep a written record of accidents or injuries and first aid treatment given and will also inform parents and carers of any accident or injury sustained by their child on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable, and of any first aid treatment given. In addition, a daily risk assessment is carried out outside to reduce the likelihood of any accidents and injuries occurring.

The Foundation Stage as part of the whole school and wider community

Over the course of the year, the children will begin to join in with assemblies which are appropriate to their ages and take part in performances and whole school events at Christmas. To ensure continuity into Key Stage One, there is a transition plan in place which details actions to be taken across the school year to ensure a smooth move through the key stages. Teachers handing over and teachers receiving children, meet during the summer term to discuss academic and pastoral information and to set relevant targets for the autumn term as part of a "Transition Plan" as well as sharing each child's EYFS profile. Foundation Stage teachers and staff seek out opportunities for children to become more aware of their local environment and the community that they belong to. This includes regular visits into the community (shops, woodlands etc.) and to local places of interest, as well as inviting members of the community in to speak with the children.

At Fleetville we value the early years of learning very highly, believing that if we can maximise the potential of our children, they will receive a secure grounding, which will stand them in good stead for the rest of their years in education.