



Greenholm Primary School

Official Policy

Name of Policy: Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date Reviewed: October 2026



1 Purpose and vision

At Greenholm Primary School, we want every child to be happy, confident, motivated and ready for success. Our Reception provision gives children a secure and positive start to school through strong relationships, an ambitious curriculum, purposeful play and high-quality teaching. We value childhood in its own right while developing the knowledge, language, skills and dispositions children need for their next stage of education.

Our values of Responsibility, Kindness, Respect, Curiosity and Resilience shape daily interactions, routines and learning. We work in partnership with families, recognising the knowledge they bring about their children and the importance of a shared understanding of each child's needs.

This policy sets out the curriculum, teaching, assessment, inclusion and care expectations for Reception at Greenholm. It should be read alongside the school's curriculum and teaching, assessment and feedback, SEND, safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and medical needs policies. Associated procedures give the operational detail needed to implement these expectations.

2 Statutory framework and guiding principles

Our provision follows the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers effective from 1 September 2026. Relevant responsibilities also arise from the Childcare Act 2006, Equality Act 2010 and Children and Families Act 2014. Staff follow the current SEND Code of Practice, Keeping Children Safe in Education and statutory Reception assessment requirements. Development Matters is non-statutory guidance that can support professional judgement; it is not an assessment checklist.

The four overarching EYFS principles inform our work: each child is unique; positive relationships support learning and independence; enabling environments and adult support help children develop; and children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. Staff maintain high expectations while recognising different starting points and responding to individual needs.

The headteacher and leaders ensure that the safeguarding, welfare, learning and development, and assessment requirements are met. Whole-school policies apply to Reception and must address the relevant EYFS requirements.

3 Aims

We aim to provide a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment where every child is known and valued; develop secure foundations across all seven areas of learning; prioritise communication, early reading, mathematics and physical development; and build independence, self-regulation, curiosity and resilience.

We aim to identify barriers early, adapt teaching and provision precisely, and provide timely additional support. We work with families and other professionals to help children participate fully, make progress from their starting points and experience a successful transition into Reception and onwards to Year 1.



4 Curriculum and progression

The Reception curriculum is an integral part of Greenholm's curriculum from Reception to Year 6. It is broad, ambitious and deliberately sequenced. Planning identifies important knowledge, vocabulary and skills, how learning builds over time, and how Reception provides foundations for later learning. These connections inform planning without imposing a Key Stage 1 subject timetable on the EYFS.

The three prime areas are Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, and Physical Development. These underpin learning across the four specific areas: Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, and Expressive Arts and Design. All seven areas are valued and connected through purposeful experiences and teaching.

Long-term planning establishes the intended learning across Reception. Medium-term planning makes the sequence, vocabulary, experiences and adaptations clear. Weekly planning and provision respond to what children know and can do, their interests, and emerging needs, while maintaining the intended curriculum. Children have repeated opportunities to revisit, practise and apply learning in different contexts.

The Early Learning Goals are used for the statutory assessment at the end of the EYFS. They do not define or restrict our curriculum. Children experience learning beyond the goals, including rich work in shape, space and measures, expressive arts, understanding the world and personal development.

5 Teaching and purposeful provision

Teaching combines explicit instruction, adult-guided learning and child-initiated play. Staff select approaches according to the learning intended, children's development and their assessed needs. Play is a valuable means of exploration, practice and application, with adults supporting and extending learning sensitively.

The Greenholm Planning Model and Teaching Sequence inform Reception practice. Clear explanation, modelling, questioning, checks for understanding, guided practice and independent application are used in ways appropriate to young children. These may occur in a short teaching session, a small group or an interaction within provision. Staff do not apply a fixed lesson sequence to every play experience.

Continuous provision is planned to support learning and independence. Resources and experiences allow children to revisit taught knowledge, practise skills, explore ideas and develop their own interests. Enhancements have a clear purpose and are informed by the curriculum and assessment. Adults consider whether children can access the resources, sustain engagement and apply learning, and adjust provision when necessary.

All adults take an active role in learning. They observe, join play appropriately, model language and skills, provide support and challenge, and recognise when to allow children time to explore independently. Staff support the characteristics of effective learning: playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically.



6 Communication and adult interactions

Communication and language are priorities throughout Reception. Staff create frequent opportunities for purposeful talk through stories, songs, rhymes, role play, practical experiences and everyday conversation. Important vocabulary is selected, explained, modelled and revisited so children can increasingly understand and use it.

The ShREC approach provides a shared framework for adult interactions: Share attention, Respond, Expand and Conversation. Adults tune into children's interests and communication, respond sensitively, build on what children say and support sustained exchanges. Modelling, comments, prompts and carefully chosen questions extend language and thinking without turning play into repeated testing.

All children complete WellComm assessment, with targeted support where indicated. Staff use findings alongside family information, observation and wider assessment. Screening supports identification and planning; it does not replace professional assessment or establish a diagnosis. Where concerns persist, staff involve the SENCO and relevant specialists through the graduated approach.

Children who speak English as an additional language receive rich opportunities to develop English while their home languages and family experiences are valued. Staff consult families about communication in the home language and distinguish learning English from possible language delay or SEND. Statutory assessment of communication, language and literacy follows the framework's English-language requirements.

7 Early reading and literacy

Early reading is taught systematically through Little Wandle, with fidelity to the programme's sequence, teaching routines and assessment. Daily phonics develops phonemic awareness, knowledge of grapheme–phoneme correspondences, blending and segmenting. Reading practice and decodable books are matched to the phonics children have been taught and can use successfully.

Staff identify difficulties quickly through daily checks and scheduled phonics assessments, including half-termly assessment. Timely keep-up support helps children secure learning before gaps widen. Where needs require a different pathway, specialist support, including the Little Wandle SEND programme, is matched to the individual child and reviewed.

Alongside phonics, children hear and discuss high-quality stories, rhymes, poems and non-fiction. Repeated reading, conversation and purposeful book experiences build comprehension, vocabulary and enjoyment. Families receive guidance on phonics, shared reading and supporting reading at home.

Writing develops through communication, oral composition, purposeful mark-making, phonics, explicit modelling and practice. Staff support letter formation and the physical skills needed for writing. Children encounter meaningful reasons to write within taught sessions and provision, with support and challenge appropriate to their development.



8 Mathematics and physical development

Mathematics teaching develops secure understanding through explicit teaching, practical exploration, discussion and repeated application. Children develop counting, cardinality, subitising, comparison, composition of number and number relationships, alongside pattern, shape, space and measures. Concrete resources and representations help children understand concepts and explain their thinking.

Adults model mathematical language, check understanding and provide opportunities to apply learning in provision and everyday routines. Support responds to misconceptions, and children who are secure are challenged to reason and apply knowledge in new situations.

Physical development is supported indoors and outdoors. Children develop gross motor control, coordination, balance and strength alongside fine motor control and safe use of tools and materials. Experiences build the physical foundations for independence, self-care and writing. Adaptations enable children with physical or sensory needs to participate.

9 Relationships behaviour and independence

Warm relationships and clear expectations help children feel safe and ready to learn. Adults explicitly teach routines, model school values and support children to manage feelings, develop friendships, take turns and resolve difficulties. Expectations combine care with consistent boundaries, taking account of development, communication and individual need.

Accessible resources, visual prompts and predictable routines help children make choices and manage learning with increasing independence. Adults scaffold tasks and gradually reduce support when children are ready. Children are encouraged to persevere, seek help, reflect on their actions and recognise their progress.

Each child is assigned a key person, whose identity and role are shared with parents. The key person helps coordinate understanding of the child, relationships with the family and responses to individual needs. The Reception team works together so children benefit from continuity and familiar adults.

10 Inclusion and additional support

All teachers are teachers of SEND. Our starting point is access to the same ambitious curriculum and main provision alongside peers wherever possible. The Greenholm Inclusion 5 supports staff in understanding needs and selecting effective adaptations. Staff adapt explanations, communication, resources, routines, the environment and support while retaining high expectations.

Needs are identified through transition information, family dialogue, assessment and daily interaction. Teachers respond promptly through the assess-plan-do-review approach, involving the SENCO and external professionals where appropriate. Individual plans and any Education, Health and Care Plan inform support, with progress and participation reviewed with families.

Targeted intervention supplements high-quality teaching and is linked to classroom learning. Speech and language, communication, social-interaction and phonics support are provided according to need. Staff



consider the benefit of any withdrawal against the learning and social opportunities missed, and seek to maximise inclusion in everyday provision.

Leaders consider disadvantage and other vulnerabilities explicitly when reviewing learning, attendance and participation. Financial barriers must not prevent access to curriculum experiences. Children's cultures, languages and family circumstances are reflected respectfully in resources and teaching. Reasonable adjustments support children with disabilities to participate fully.

11 Learning environments and wider experiences

Indoor and outdoor environments offer purposeful opportunities for exploration, conversation, creativity, collaboration and physical development. Staff organise provision so resources are accessible and the intended learning is clear. Outdoor learning extends the curriculum through movement, investigation, nature and practical experiences.

The farm, forest school and wider school environment provide opportunities to develop understanding of living things, care, responsibility and the natural world. Visits and wider experiences are planned with suitable supervision, hygiene and risk controls. Staff ensure that opportunities are accessible to children with additional needs.

Reception contributes to the Greenholm Guarantee through age-appropriate enrichment. Experiences broaden children's knowledge, vocabulary and confidence and connect with planned learning. Leaders review access and participation so children benefit equitably.

Digital resources are selected for a clear educational purpose and used with adult guidance. Leaders and staff have regard to the current early-years screen-use guidance. Screen use must support learning and must not displace the interaction, practical activity, movement and play children need.

12 Assessment and feedback

Assessment helps staff understand starting points, identify needs and decide what to teach next.

Practitioners draw on interaction, observation, children's work, checks during teaching and information from families. Feedback is immediate, clear and appropriate to the child, helping them improve through modelling, encouragement and supported practice.

The statutory Reception Baseline Assessment is administered within the first six weeks of each child starting Reception, in accordance with current requirements, including permitted exceptions and adaptations. It is distinct from the school's broader assessment of starting points and does not replace knowledge of the child across all seven areas.

Ongoing assessment informs planning and adaptations. WellComm, phonics assessment and planned reviews contribute to this understanding. Teachers use the school's assessment system at agreed points and discuss progress, barriers and the impact of support in pupil-progress meetings. Assessment focuses on learning across the curriculum rather than repeatedly scoring children against the Early Learning Goals.



Recording is proportionate and purposeful. Staff are not required to collect written or photographic evidence for every judgement. Tapestry supports selected observations and family communication; recording must preserve time for teaching and interaction. Leaders avoid unnecessary duplication and excessive assessment paperwork.

The EYFS Profile is completed in accordance with current statutory requirements, normally by 30 June in the final term of Reception. Each of the 17 Early Learning Goals is assessed as expected or emerging. Teachers use their professional knowledge of the child, with appropriate adjustments and specialist advice where needed. Judgements are reviewed through professional dialogue and moderation. Results are shared with parents, with opportunities for discussion, and reported to the local authority as required. Year 1 teachers receive the Profile and wider information needed to plan appropriate learning and support.

13 Partnership with families and transition

Families are partners in their children's learning. Reception visits and home visits help establish relationships before entry. Staff seek information about strengths, interests, languages, health and additional needs and work with previous settings and professionals to support continuity. Additional transition planning is arranged where needed.

The first weeks prioritise security, relationships and routines alongside purposeful learning. Children are not expected to arrive with a prescribed set of academic skills. Staff recognise that children settle in different ways and work with families to support successful entry into school.

Communication includes face-to-face contact, ClassDojo, Tapestry, parents' meetings and curriculum workshops. Parents can contribute observations from home and discuss concerns. Staff share practical guidance on reading, communication, independence and wider learning in ways families can access.

Reception and Year 1 staff plan transition together. Handover includes curriculum coverage, attainment, communication, SEND, effective adaptations, wellbeing and safeguarding information shared appropriately. Year 1 planning builds on what children know and can do, with continuity of routines and support and timely attention to gaps.

14 Safeguarding welfare and attendance

Children's safety and welfare underpin provision. Staff follow the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures, complete required training and induction, and report concerns promptly to the DSL team through the agreed systems. Leaders maintain suitable recruitment, checks, staffing, supervision and staff support arrangements that meet current school and EYFS requirements.

Staffing and deployment must meet the applicable statutory requirements and support children's assessed needs. Appropriate paediatric first-aid cover is maintained on site and for outings. Indoor and outdoor provision, visitors, collection arrangements and activities are supervised and risk assessed appropriately.



Medical information, allergies and dietary needs are shared with relevant staff and reflected in individual healthcare plans where required. Procedures cover medicines, safe eating, hygiene, accidents and emergency responses. Children receive sensitive support for toileting and personal care in accordance with intimate-care procedures; toileting needs are not a barrier to admission or participation. Oral health is promoted through age-appropriate learning and routines. Where a child needs to sleep or rest, staff follow current safer-sleep requirements and the school's procedures.

Staff follow the school's requirements for devices, photography, online safety and secure use of Tapestry and ClassDojo. Images and personal information are handled in accordance with data-protection requirements and school procedures.

Regular attendance supports learning, relationships and wellbeing. Staff work with families to promote attendance and follow up absence promptly through the Attendance Policy. Arrangements take account of compulsory school age and any agreed attendance entitlement. Reduced timetables for compulsory-school-age children are exceptional, agreed, time-limited and regularly reviewed, with safeguarding arrangements and a planned return to full-time education. They must never be used simply to manage behaviour.

15 Leadership professional development and review

Governors oversee statutory compliance and the quality of provision. The headteacher retains overall responsibility, supported by the curriculum and EYFS leaders, the Deputy Headteacher and SENCO. Reception teachers are responsible for planning, teaching, assessment and knowing the needs of their pupils; teaching assistants contribute actively to learning, assessment and care under teacher direction.

Leaders review implementation through learning walks, observation of adult interactions and provision, professional reflection, assessment information, family feedback and pupil-progress discussions. Curriculum and subject leaders work with Reception staff to understand the foundations children are developing and how these connect with later learning.

Professional development, coaching and external expertise support improvement. Particular attention is given to the consistency and precision of adult interactions, responsive assessment and adaptation. Leaders evaluate whether changes improve children's learning, participation, independence and wellbeing, while considering staff workload.

Concerns should be raised with the class teacher or relevant leader and addressed through the school's complaints procedures. Those procedures must meet the EYFS requirements for written complaints, including investigation and notification of the outcome within 28 days. Parents are provided with information about contacting Ofsted where they believe EYFS requirements are not being met.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier where statutory requirements or school practice change. Approval and review dates will be recorded following the school's policy approval process.



Reference documents

EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers effective September 2026

Current Reception Baseline Assessment and EYFS Profile requirements and guidance

Development Matters non-statutory curriculum guidance

SEND Code of Practice and current Keeping Children Safe in Education

EEF ShREC guidance on high-quality adult interactions

Greenholm agreed Self Evaluation Form September 2026 and associated school policies