



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy 2026-27

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Governor approval:

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Intent

At Holbrook Primary School, we are committed to providing a high-quality Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that ensures all children are given the best possible start to their education. In line with our school vision, we work together so that all children achieve the **BEST**, promoting positive attitudes to learning and supporting every child to reach their full potential.

Our EYFS curriculum is underpinned by the belief that all children are competent, curious and capable learners. We provide a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment in which children develop the confidence to **believe in themselves**, show pride in who they are, respect others and value diversity, celebrating their own heritage and that of others within the school and wider community.

We are committed to fostering a love of learning by ensuring children are **enthusiastic** and actively engaged in their experiences. Through carefully planned, play-based and adult-guided learning opportunities, children are encouraged to explore, investigate, communicate and collaborate, sharing their ideas and experiences with peers and adults both in school and beyond.

The development of **stickability** is central to our EYFS provision. We support children to build resilience, independence and perseverance, enabling them to approach new challenges with confidence and determination. Children are encouraged to take risks, learn from mistakes and develop the attitudes and behaviours necessary for effective lifelong learning.

Our intent is that all children develop high aspirations and clear **targets for life** from the earliest stages. We support children to take ownership of their learning, begin to understand their own strengths and next steps, and develop the skills and motivation to work towards achievable goals.

The EYFS curriculum is delivered in line with the statutory framework and promotes the prime and specific areas of learning alongside the Characteristics of Effective Learning. Indoor and outdoor learning environments are carefully planned to meet the needs and interests of all children, ensuring equality of access to high-quality learning opportunities. Strong partnerships with parents and carers are valued and actively promoted to support learning and development both at school and at home.

Through this approach, we aim to develop confident, resilient, enthusiastic learners who are well prepared for the next stage of their education and future life beyond Holbrook Primary School.

1. Aims

This policy ensures that:

- All children access a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum that enables them to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning.
- Teaching and learning are consistent, high quality and responsive, so every child makes progress and no child is left behind.
- Strong partnerships with parents and carers are at the heart of early years practice.
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice underpins all provision.
- Children feel safe, secure, confident and ready to transition successfully into Year 1 and beyond.

2. Legislative and Statutory Framework

This policy is underpinned by and complies with the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers**, effective from **1 September 2025**.

The EYFS statutory framework:

- Sets standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five.
- Ensures children are safeguarded and promoted in health and wellbeing.
- Specifies statutory assessment arrangements, including the Reception Baseline Assessment and EYFS Profile.

This policy also takes account of:

- *Development Matters* (non-statutory guidance)
- EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements (2025 update)
- Getting Children Ready for Reception (DfE, April 2026)
- Excellence in Reception Teaching Framework (DfE, June 2026)

3. Structure of EYFS Provision at Holbrook Primary

Our Early Years provision includes:

- A **26-place Nursery** for children aged 3–4, open termtime from **8:40am–11:40am**, with a dedicated classroom and outdoor learning space.
- **Two Reception classes** (30 places per class), sharing two indoor classroom areas and a large, purposefully designed outdoor provision.

The EYFS applies from entry into Nursery through to the end of Reception and is viewed as a single, continuous phase of learning.

4. Curriculum and Learning & Development

Our curriculum follows the EYFS statutory framework and recognises that children learn best through purposeful play, exploration and positive relationships.

Areas of Learning

There are **seven areas of learning**, all equally important and interconnected:

Prime areas:

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

Specific areas:

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

A strong emphasis is placed on the prime areas to ensure children develop secure foundations that enable success across all areas of learning and support readiness for Year 1.

The EYFS learning journey is documented in a comprehensive document and followed by the team and informs planning. A copy is available [here](#)

5. Literacy, Writing and Phonics

Writing in the EYFS

Writing development is planned in accordance with the EYFS statutory framework and *Development Matters*. We recognise that writing is a developmental process that is built upon children's skills in communication, physical development and early reading.

Children are supported to develop writing skills through:

- Mark-making opportunities across continuous provision (indoors and outdoors)
- Development of fine and gross motor strength, control and hand–eye coordination
- Oral language development, vocabulary building and sentence formation
- Adult modelling of writing for a range of purposes (labels, lists, captions, messages)
- Opportunities to write meaningfully in play and real-life contexts

Staff place emphasis on the **process of writing**, valuing early marks, drawings and emergent writing, and encouraging children to give meaning to their marks. Expectations are developmentally appropriate and reflect the EYFS Early Learning Goals for Writing.

Writing teaching is supported by

- Story Dough
- Drawing Club
- Letter Join

Phonics and Early Reading

Phonics is taught systematically in EYFS through the **Sounds-Write** phonics programme.

Sounds-Write is a structured, cumulative approach that:

- Teaches children that words are made up of sounds (phonemes)
- Explicitly teaches sound-to-symbol correspondences (phonics)
- Develops segmenting and blending skills for reading and spelling
- Uses age-appropriate terminology and consistent routines

In Nursery, children are prepared for phonics learning through Phase 1-style provision, focusing on:

- Listening skills
- Environmental and instrumental sounds
- Rhyme and rhythm
- Alliteration
- Oral blending and segmenting through play and stories
- Summer term children are exposed to lesson 1 content from Sounds Write Programme

Phonics teaching is supported by:

- Daily, discrete phonics sessions in Reception
- Application of phonics knowledge within continuous provision
- Closely matched, decodable reading books to support early reading
- Regular assessment to ensure gaps are identified early and addressed promptly

6. Maths

Nursery are taught maths through the Master the Curriculum Nursery Maths Scheme provides a progressive, play-based approach grounded in EYFS guidelines. It emphasizes building deep fluency, reasoning, and problem-solving skills through practical, hands-on activities, number songs, and structured 'small steps' to progression.

Autumn Term: Pre-Counting & Foundations

The focus is on active exploration and getting to know the basic building blocks of mathematical language

- Sorting & Matching: Grouping objects by colour, size, or shape.
- Comparison: Using language and gestures to compare size (bigger/smaller) and quantity.
- Pattern: Seeing, copying, and creating simple, repeating patterns.
- Shape & Space: Identifying 2D shapes (circles, triangles) and using positional language (on, under, behind)

Spring Term: Numbers & Cardinality

Children develop a deep understanding of numbers, quantities, and their composition.

- Subitising: Recognising small quantities (like dot patterns on a dice) without counting.
- Cardinality: Knowing that the last number counted represents the total amount in a group.
- Composition: Exploring how smaller numbers are made up (e.g., separating a group of 3 or 4 objects).
- Counting Skills: Practising saying one number for each item, eventually counting up to 5 and beyond.

Summer Term: Measure, Shape, & Advanced Counting

Expanding on concepts by applying number and spatial awareness to real-world scenarios

- Alive in 5: Securing a deep understanding of quantities up to 5 and introducing numbers to 10.
- Mass & Capacity: Comparing weight (heavier/lighter) and volume (full/empty) using practical activities.
- Length, Height, & Time: Comparing lengths (longer/shorter) and understanding daily routines and sequencing.
- Advanced Shapes: Exploring 3D shapes (spheres, cylinders, cubes) and talking about their properties.

Reception

Maths taught follows the NCETM curriculum supplemented with White Rose Maths. There are also regular fluency sessions planned in.

Mastering Number: Overview of content – Reception

Strand/ Half-term	Subitising	Cardinality, ordinality and counting	Composition	Comparison
1 Children will:	- perceptually subitise within 3 - identify sub-groups in larger arrangements - create their own patterns for numbers within 4 - practise using their fingers to represent quantities which they can subitise - experience subitising in a range of contexts, including temporal patterns made by sounds.	- relate the counting sequence to cardinality, seeing that the last number spoken gives the number in the entire set - have a wide range of opportunities to develop their knowledge of the counting sequence, including through rhyme and song - have a wide range of opportunities to develop 1:1 correspondence, including by coordinating movement and counting - have opportunities to develop an understanding that anything can be counted, including actions and sounds - explore a range of strategies which support accurate counting.	- see that all numbers can be made of 1s - compose their own collections within 4.	- understand that sets can be compared according to a range of attributes, including by their numerosity - use the language of comparison, including 'more than' and 'fewer than' - compare sets 'just by looking'.
2 Children will:	continue from first half-term subitise within 5, perceptually and conceptually, depending on the arrangements.	- continue to develop their counting skills - explore the cardinality of 5, linking this to dice patterns and 5 fingers on 1 hand - begin to count beyond 5 - begin to recognise numerals, relating these to quantities they can subitise and count.	- explore the concept of 'wholes' and 'parts' by looking at a range of objects that are composed of parts, some of which can be taken apart and some of which cannot - explore the composition of numbers within 5.	- compare sets using a variety of strategies, including 'just by looking', by subitising and by matching - compare sets by matching, seeing that when every object in a set can be matched to one in the other set, they contain the same number and are equal amounts.
3 Children will:	increase confidence in subitising by continuing to explore patterns within 5, including structured and random arrangements	- continue to develop verbal counting to 20 and beyond - continue to develop object counting skills, using a range of strategies to develop accuracy	continue to explore the composition of 5 and practise recalling 'missing' or 'hidden' parts for 5	continue to compare sets using the language of comparison, and play games which involve comparing sets

	- explore a range of patterns made by some numbers greater than 5, including structured patterns in which 5 is a clear part - experience patterns which show a small group and '1 more' - continue to match arrangements to finger patterns.	- continue to link counting to cardinality, including using their fingers to represent quantities between 5 and 10 - order numbers, linking cardinal and ordinal representations of number.	- explore the composition of 6, linking this to familiar patterns, including symmetrical patterns - begin to see that numbers within 10 can be composed of '5 and a bit'.	- continue to compare sets by matching, identifying when sets are equal - explore ways of making unequal sets equal.
4 Children will:	explore symmetrical patterns, in which each side is a familiar pattern, linking this to 'doubles'.	- continue to consolidate their understanding of cardinality, working with larger numbers within 10 - become more familiar with the counting pattern beyond 20.	- explore the composition of odd and even numbers, looking at the 'shape' of these numbers - begin to link even numbers to doubles - begin to explore the composition of numbers within 10.	compare numbers, reasoning about which is more, using both an understanding of the 'howmany-ness' of a number, and its position in the number system.
5 Children will:	- continue to practise increasingly familiar subitising arrangements, including those which expose '1 more' or 'doubles' patterns - use subitising skills to enable them to identify when patterns show the same number but in a different arrangement, or when patterns are similar but have a different number subitise structured and unstructured patterns, including those which show numbers within 10, in relation to 5 and 10 - be encouraged to identify when it is appropriate to count and when groups can be subitised.	- continue to develop verbal counting to 20 and beyond, including counting from different starting numbers - continue to develop confidence and accuracy in both verbal and object counting.	explore the composition of 10.	order sets of objects, linking this to their understanding of the ordinal number system.
6	In this half-term, the children will consolidate their understanding of concepts previously taught through working in a variety of contexts and with different numbers.			

7. Assessment

Assessment in the EYFS is observational, holistic and ongoing.

The following Statutory assessments are completed in Reception:

- Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA):** Completed within the first six weeks of starting Reception, in line with statutory requirements.

- **EYFS Profile:** Completed at the end of Reception against the 17 Early Learning Goals, indicating whether children are emerging or meeting expected levels.
- EYFS Profile data is submitted to the Local Authority as required.

Assessment in Nursery and Reception is used for :

- Informing planning, teaching and interventions
- Tracks progress in 17 areas of learning
- Is shared regularly with parents and carers
- Is moderated internally and with partner schools

8. Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers

We recognise parents and carers as children's first and most enduring educators.

We strengthen partnerships through:

- Open, respectful communication
- Curriculum and phonics information meetings
- Guidance on supporting early reading, writing maths at home
- Workshops to support Reception readiness and activities to help developing children's wider skills and creativity
- Access to Learning in EYFS via class Dojo

Each Nursery child is allocated a **key person** who supports wellbeing, learning and transition.

9. Transition into Reception (and similarly Nursery)

Transition into a phase in EYFS is viewed as a **process, not a single event**.

In line with DfE guidance, transition includes:

- Early engagement with families following Offer Day
- Collaboration with feeder early years settings where possible
- workshops, stay-and-play sessions and information sharing meeting (should a parent request a home visit this will be accommodated)
- Avoiding prolonged part-time or staggered starts that may create a 'double transition'

Support focuses on emotional security, independence, communication and early literacy skills.

10. Safeguarding and Welfare

Children's safety and wellbeing are paramount.

We:

- Promote clear boundaries and positive behaviour
- Support children's physical and emotional health
- Follow updated EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements, including safer recruitment, attendance monitoring, whistleblowing and intimate care procedures
- Conduct a welfare audit provided by LA

We follow statutory framework for ratios

3.53 For children aged three and over in maintained nursery schools and nursery classes in maintained schools

- There must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children.
- At least one member of staff must be a school teacher as defined by section 122 of the Education Act 2002⁴⁴.
- At least one other member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification⁴⁵, or have received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status.

3.54 Reception classes in maintained schools and academies are subject to infant class size legislation, which is limited to 30 pupils per school teacher (subject to permitted exceptions) while an ordinary teaching session is conducted. 'School teachers' do not include teaching assistants, higher level teaching assistants, or other support staff. Consequently, in an ordinary teaching session, a school must employ sufficient school teachers to enable it to teach its infant classes in groups of no more than 30 per school teacher

Full details are outlined in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the statutory Framework for further information.

Paediatric First Aid

We follow the requirements of the statutory framework :

3.36 At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate must be on the premises and available at all times when children are present and must accompany children on outings. The certificate must be for a full course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A. PFA training²⁶ must be renewed every three years and be relevant for people caring for young children and babies.

3.37 Providers should take into account the number of children, staff, and layout of premises to ensure that a paediatric first aider is able to respond to emergencies quickly.

3.38 All staff who obtained a level 2 and/or level 3 qualification since 30 June 2016 must obtain a PFA qualification within three months of starting work in order to be included in

11. SEND

At Holbrook Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that all children, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), are fully included in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and are supported to achieve the best possible outcomes.

We recognise that children develop at different rates and that early identification of additional needs is crucial in enabling effective support. Practitioners work closely with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo) to identify children who may require additional help, using ongoing observational assessment, professional judgement and information shared by parents and previous settings.

For further detail on identification, provision and statutory responsibilities, please refer to the school's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy, which should be read in conjunction with this EYFS policy.

12. Monitoring and Review

This policy:

- Is reviewed every **two years** by the Early Years Lead
- Reflects statutory updates and national guidance
- Is shared with the Governing Board at each review cycle

This policy reflects current statutory requirements and best practice, ensuring a coherent approach to early writing, phonics and literacy development within the EYFS.