



Making a difference for every child.

Foundation Stage Policy

Owning Committee: Curriculum
 Owning Governor: Fran Griffiths
 Owning School Rep: Emily Leney
 Date of Approval: September 2026
 Date of next review: September 2028

AIM OF DOCUMENT: To ensure we provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that ensures all children reach their potential, setting the foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.

IN EVENT OF CONCERN/QUESTIONS: Contact the owning governor, contact details available through the school administrator.

HOW DOES THIS DOCUMENT HELP THE CHILDREN? Making clear what the expectations for the Foundation Stage are and making sure these are achieved.

REVISION HISTORY:

	Update details	<i>Date of approval</i>
V1		<i>April 2007</i>
V2	Approved	<i>May 2012</i>
V3	New Curriculum and monitoring plan added	May 2015
V4	Update of routines	May 2018
V5	Update – additions; tapestry, balanced obs, transition routine	May 2020
V6	Align to new curriculum	July 2022
V7	Update R/1 paragraph	Sep 2022
V8	Updates across whole policy to align with developments	Nov 2025
V9	Updated to September 2026 EYFS statutory framework; assessment, safeguarding/welfare, safer eating and screen-use requirements updated.	Oct 2026

At each full governors meeting where any policy is reviewed, both the owner of this document and the associated monitoring governor will ensure that the procedure has been followed one of these governors must have approved the document for final approval to be given.

Sheet Primary School

Foundation Stage Policy

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for group and school-based providers, dated 13 July 2026 and effective from 1 September 2026.

Here at Sheet, we believe that 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 development.

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. The EYFS applies to children from birth until 31 August after their fifth birthday. All children join Sheet Primary School at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. Our PAN is 16.

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years settings.

These are:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured

- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates

3. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the learning and development requirements outlined in the EYFS statutory framework effective from 1 September 2026. Sheet has a 'Reception Curriculum Goals' map to align with the framework and our school aspirations.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

4. Planning and Teaching

The EYFS is deeply rooted in play. We know that children learn best while processing their world through play and therefore the EYFS environment is focused on allowing children to access real and imaginary world experiences at every opportunity. The 'Rooted in Play' iceberg analogy reflects this well and can be seen in the illustration below:



Learning and development is informed by the best available evidence on how children learn and reflect and the broad range of skills, knowledge and attitudes children need as foundations for good future progress. We guide the development of children's capabilities with a view to ensure that children at Sheet complete the EYFS ready to benefit fully from the opportunities ahead of them. Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable

children to develop and learn effectively and in different ways. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas which are important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. Communication and Language, Physical development and Personal, social and emotional development. We also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. The EYFS environment at Sheet is incredibly inclusive, allowing all children to access the curriculum at their level. We follow the Ordinarily Available Provision guidance, making sure that all children, including those with SEND needs, feel able to relax and access learning with whichever classroom resources they feel they need to support this. This includes, but is not limited to headphones, fidgets, wobble cushions etc. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

We aim to deliver enjoyable and challenging educational programmes. In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners reflect on the different rates at which children develop and adjust their practice appropriately. Children are supported to play and explore, learn actively, and create and think critically.

If staff are concerned about a child's progress in any prime area, they will discuss this with parents and/or carers and agree how best to support the child. Staff will consider whether additional or specialist support may be needed, including where a child may have SEND.

For children whose home language is not English, we value and support opportunities to use their home language while ensuring sufficient opportunities to learn and develop a good standard of English. Where there are concerns about language development, staff will work with parents and/or carers to understand the child's skills in their home language as well as English.

Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive, quality interactions.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

5. Assessment

At Sheet, assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing formative assessment is an integral part of our learning and development process. It involves us knowing children's level of achievement and interests, and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge.

'While the adult is waiting, they are planning how, or if, to respond. The best practitioner will be observing the children and thinking and what they see and hear. This means they are assessing. From this, they decide how to proceed – This is planning... Adults who work with young children know them "inside out" as unique individuals. The adults are therefore able to tailor their response to that particular child. They can spot the unique "teachable moment". This is ultimate differentiation. The adult will respond in a way that will help the child make progress.' (Ephgrave, A. 2016. Planning in the Moment with Young Children. Routledge. Oxon.)

Staff use their day-to-day knowledge of children, including observations made through interactions and information shared by parents and/or carers, to shape teaching and learning. Assessment should not create long breaks from interaction with children or excessive paperwork. There is no requirement to collect physical, written or photographic evidence to prove judgements, and we keep recorded evidence proportionate.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). The RBA assesses a child in early mathematics, literacy, communication and language. The purpose of the RBA is to form the starting point for the cohort-level school progress measures. Data from the RBA is compared to key stage 2 outcome 7 years later to form the overall progress measure of the school.

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The Profile reflects practitioners' knowledge of the child and their expert professional judgement. Recorded, written or photographic evidence is not required. The results of the Profile are shared with parents and/or carers.

EYFS Profile judgements are made using the statutory Early Learning Goals and practitioners' professional knowledge of each child. Development Matters may support curriculum design

but is non-statutory and is not used as a statutory moderation standard. EYFS Profile data is submitted to the local authority as required.

We share the results of the profile with parents and carers by writing a school report for each child in the summer term. If a child moves to a new school during the academic year, we will send their assessment of the child's level of development against the early learning goals to the relevant school within 15 days of receiving a request. If a child moves during the summer term, we will work with the new school to complete the Profile.

6. Working with parents

It is important for us to have a strong and respectful relationship with parents. This sets the scene for our children to thrive in the early years.

We listen regularly to parents and give parents clear information about their children's progress by:

- Delivering a range of transition opportunities before the child and family start at school including: our 'footsteps' visits,
- one to one meetings with the Early Years teacher (at the child's home or at school),
- personal letters to the children and welcome packs,
- Allocation of a Year 6 'buddy' - to help them settle, feel safe and form an important friendship
- Sharing termly overviews on the website
- Daily interactions with parents during drop off and pick up times
- Communicating school reading encounters in the child's reading journal
- Parents evenings
- E-mail communication/dojo messages with the class teacher
- Curriculum information evenings

September - Home visits

In the first week of school, teachers and (if staffing numbers allow,) an LSA will visit children in their home setting. This is an opportunity for parents to share their knowledge about their children, staff to ask questions about particular needs children may have and for the children to share their interests with the staff.

When children join the school in September the following procedures will apply:

- During the first week, children will attend the morning session.
- On the Friday of the first week the children are invited to stay for lunch.

- During the second week children will attend full time, unless a part time timetable has been agreed between the school and family (in situations where a child is a young summer birth, or perhaps never having gone to a pre-school setting).

End of Year R

In the summer term of year R, the children will have the opportunity to have sessions with the staff they will have for year 1. They will have a whole day in July called transition day in which they will experience what it will be like to be Year 1 in that classroom. Each year we welcome 16 children into Reception however, the law states there must be no more than 30 children in an infant class (i.e. classes containing reception, year 1 and year 2). So they cannot all move across to the year 1/2 class.

We organise our teaching in mixed age classes across the school and as such, year 1 is split between Year R and Year 1/2. The head teacher advises parents of this at induction and staff discuss each child's progress throughout the year and advise them where their child will be best placed for their Year 1 learning.

7. Good Health

We promote children's good health, including oral health. Children are provided with free fruit or vegetables for their morning snack and may receive free milk while under five; parents can choose to pay for milk once their child is five. Fresh drinking water is available and accessible throughout the day. Meals, snacks and drinks provided by the school are healthy, balanced and nutritious. We obtain and keep up-to-date information about dietary requirements, food allergies, intolerances and health needs, and relevant information is shared with staff. Where a child has a known allergy, we work with parents/carers and, where appropriate, health professionals to maintain an allergy action plan. Staff involved in preparing and handling food receive appropriate food-hygiene training. Children are always within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating and a member of staff with a current full paediatric first-aid certificate is present in the room. Staff actively supervise eating to reduce choking, food-sharing and allergy risks. School dinners are free to children in infant education, including Reception, and parents may instead provide a healthy packed lunch.

8. Children's Screen Use

From September 2026, the EYFS statutory framework requires providers to have regard to Department for Education guidance on children's screen use. In Robins/Sparrows, screen use is limited, purposeful and carefully planned. We prioritise play, talk, movement, outdoor learning, stories, creativity and direct interaction with adults and other children.

Screens are used only where there is a clear learning or development purpose and where they add something that cannot be achieved as effectively through a screen-free experience. Use is for short

periods, with an adult co-engaging with children through discussion, questioning, prediction and response. Children are not given unsupervised access to screens; screens are not left on in the background and are not used to occupy, calm or manage children's behaviour or routinely during mealtimes.

Digital content is checked in advance to ensure it is safe, age-appropriate, slow-paced and suitable for young children. We avoid advert-led, autoplay, scrolling or algorithm-driven content and do not use AI tools or AI-enabled toys directly with children. Screen-based assistive technology may be used where it supports a child with SEND or communication needs, based on professional judgement and individual need. We work with parents and carers to share our approach and support healthy screen habits at home and school.

9. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

The EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements are met through our whole-school policies and procedures, including safeguarding and child protection, attendance, whistleblowing, staff conduct, medicines, first aid, health and safety, intimate care, behaviour, online safety and the use of mobile phones, cameras and electronic devices.

Schools do not need separate EYFS policies where the statutory requirements are already met through existing school policies. The Designated Safeguarding Lead has lead responsibility for safeguarding. Staff follow up unexplained or prolonged absence promptly in line with the school attendance and safeguarding procedures. For further information or support, please contact the school office, Headteacher/DSL or class teacher.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by The Curriculum Committee every 2 years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.