# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

*Statement of intent:*

*At Burley Oaks Primary School, we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Burley Oaks Primary School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.*

*The main priority is to prevent an emergency from occurring in the setting; however, this is sometimes, unfortunately, out of the hands of the school. In an emergency, staff members at Burley Oaks Primary School will endeavour to take all reasonable actions in order to ensure the safety of pupils.*

*The procedures outlined in this policy aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all pupils, staff members and visitors.*

December 2024 – to be reviewed by the Full Board of Governors December 2027

Chair of Governors Christine A Smith Date 10 December 2024

Headteacher Date 10 December 2024

**EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY**

***Introduction***

At Burley Oaks**,** we greatly value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development. This policy outlines the provision we offer to all our pupils aged four to five years. Children within this age range are taught in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in reception class.

***Legislation***

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2024 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS) and DfE (2021) 'Early years foundation stage profile: 2024 handbook' which promote the principles of the EYFS Statutory Framework alongside using the non-statutory Development Matters guidance.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early year's providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure 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.

The EYFS seeks to ensure:

- quality and consistency in all early years settings so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- a secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly.
- partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

***The Development Matters*** in the Early Years Foundation Stage Guidance provides guidance on observing what children are learning at different age phases, plus examples of what practitioners might do or provide to support children's learning across each aspect of each area. It offers a top-level view of how children develop and learn. It guides, but does not replace, professional judgement. The guidance can also help practitioners to meet the requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Development Matters sets out the pathways of children's development in broad ages and stages. The main purpose of these pathways is therefore to help you assess each child's level of development. Accurate assessment helps practitioners to make informed decisions about what a child needs to learn and be able to do next.

***Our Intent - Aims and Objectives***

At Burley Oaks, we are committed to providing all children with the best possible start to their educational journey, supporting their emotional, intellectual, and physical development to help them reach their full potential. We prioritise the well-being of every child, ensuring they feel happy, safe, and secure. Our Foundation Stage fosters a love of learning through play and exploration, active learning experiences, and the development of creative and critical thinking skills, nurturing lifelong learners who are confident, curious, and ready for the next steps in their education.

We are dedicated to supporting each child's welfare, learning, and developmental needs by:

- Recognising the uniqueness and special qualities of every child.
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates—physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially, and emotionally.
- Creating a safe, secure, and nurturing environment where children feel happy, valued, and cared for by the practitioners who support them and want the very best.
- Fostering and building children's self-confidence and self-esteem by helping them develop a sense of their own identity and role within the community.
- Teaching children to express their needs and manage their emotions in appropriate and constructive ways to support their overall wellbeing and support positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Encouraging independence and decision-making, empowering children to learn from their mistakes and persevere to achieve success.
- Providing a curriculum centered around language-rich interactions and learning experiences to support the development of language and communication skills.
- Cultivating children's understanding of social skills and the values necessary for working together in harmony.
- Supporting children in caring for and respecting others, appreciating differences in beliefs, cultures, and opinions.
- Providing engaging and motivating active learning experiences through play that reflect children's personal interests and encourage exploration.
- Using observation and assessment to guide planning and tailor learning experiences.
- Offering opportunities that build upon children's existing knowledge, skills, and understanding, while challenging and stimulating further development.
- Creating effective learning opportunities through both indoor and outdoor provisions.
- Promoting the development of creative and critical thinking skills.
- Supporting and promoting good mental health and well-being, ensuring children feel emotionally secure and resilient in their learning journey.

Ultimately, we aim for every child to leave the EYFS with a love of learning and a strong desire to continue their educational journey.

***Implementation - Principles of Early Years Foundation Stage***

*We are committed to underpinning our provision with the four themes of the Early Years Foundation Stage in our reception classes.*

***The Unique Child***- At Burley Oaks, the principle of *The Unique Child* is central to our approach, ensuring that all children are treated as individuals throughout their journey from Reception to Year 6. We recognise that every child learns and develops at their own pace and in their own unique way. The characteristics of effective learning play a key role in motivating our children to become independent and confident learners. Through play and exploration, children are encouraged to take risks, have a go, and persevere, developing resilience and a sense of achievement. Active learning experiences help children to make connections, explore ideas, and develop problem-solving strategies, fostering creative and critical thinking. Our practitioners support children by engaging in their learning, playing alongside them, and providing appropriate scaffolding when needed to enhance their development. Every child is treated with fairness, respect, and inclusivity, ensuring

that they feel safe, valued, and welcomed into our setting. This approach enables all children to flourish and develop to their full potential.

**Positive Relationships**- We believe all individuals flourish and learn when they experience positive relationships with others. At Burley Oaks, we foster positive relationships among children, staff, parents, and the wider community by building strong connections with others locally. Practitioners care for all children and respect the feelings of children and their families. We work closely with parents as we understand the significance parents play in their child's early education. We pride ourselves in knowing all our children as individuals and forming good relationships by engaging with them in all aspects of their learning.

**The Enabling Environment** - At Burley Oaks, we understand the importance of a rich learning environment, both indoors and outdoors. We carefully plan and prepare areas of continuous provision throughout the EYFS to support children's learning, both independently and with adult guidance. The organisation of resources and learning spaces, indoors and outdoors, adapts regularly—whether termly, weekly, or daily—to meet the evolving needs and developmental stages of the children. Adults actively facilitate and scaffold learning by introducing additional resources in response to the children's interests and requests. Our focus is on creating a language-rich environment, offering varied opportunities for meaningful talk and communication to support children's language development across all areas of learning.

**Learning and Development** - The Early Years Foundation Stage is shaped by seven areas of learning and development. Each of these areas is equally important and interconnected, supporting a holistic approach to a child's growth and development.

***'It is the role of the setting to help children experience the awe and wonder of the world in which they live, through the seven areas of learning.'*** *Ofsted Early Years Inspection Handbook*

**Our Curriculum -** The **prime areas** are vitally important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity, enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. The **prime areas**:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Communication and language** | Listening, Attention and Understanding<br>Speaking |
| **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** | Self-regulation<br>Managing Self<br>Building Relationships |
| **Physical Development** | Fine Motor<br>Gross Motor |

The **prime areas** are strengthened and applied through **four specific areas**:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Literacy** | Comprehension<br>Word Reading<br>Writing |
| **Mathematics** | Numbers<br>Numerical patterns |
| **Understanding the World** | Past and present<br>People, culture and communities |
| **Expressive Arts and Design** | Creating with materials<br>Being imaginative and expressive |

In our EYFS, we focus on developing the strong foundations of core skills and knowledge that will support their future learning and ensure they are well-prepared for the next stage of their education (Strong Foundations, October 2024).

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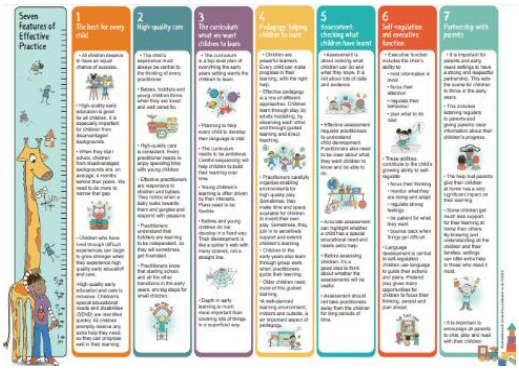
In our setting, the **seven key features** permeate through our practice, philosophy and the environment for learning we provide.

1**. The best for every child**
2**. High-quality care**
3. **The curriculum: what we want children to learn**
4. **Pedagogy: helping children to learn**
5. **Assessment: checking what children have learnt**
6**. Self-regulation and executive function**
7. **Partnership with parents**

*Seven Key Features of Effective Practice – (from Development Matters, also referred to in Julian Grenier's book)*




**<u>Characteristics of Effective Learning</u>**

The characteristics of effective learning highlight key factors that significantly influence a child's learning journey and their development as an effective learner. These characteristics are essential in supporting the transition from EYFS to Year 1 and becoming a lifelong learning with the right learning skills. They are embedded throughout all seven areas of learning and development, focusing on the learning process, behaviours and skills. We teach these characteristics through engaging characters: 'Exploreosaurus Rex,' 'Focus-diplodocus,' and 'Tri-think-atops.'

**Playing and exploring – engagement (Exploreosaurus Rex)**

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

**Active learning – motivation (Focus-diplodocus)**

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

**Creating and thinking critically – thinking (Tri-think-atops)**

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

**<u>Active Learning</u>**

At Burley Oaks, we encourage children to become independent learners, starting in the EYFS with active learning through play in areas of continuous provision. Children engage in sustained learning through interaction with people, objects, ideas, and events. Practitioners support and facilitate learning through play, which fosters creativity, critical thinking, and development across all areas of the EYFS curriculum. Play is adaptable to meet each child's needs, interests, and learning styles.

Teachers also plan active, hands-on learning experiences within broad topics, either in whole class sessions or small groups, to develop specific skills. These practical activities help children discover, explore, and make sense of their world, while acquiring knowledge and skills. Teachers create exciting, fun experiences that bring learning to life through stories, drama, events, and cross-curricular activities. Active learning, including movement breaks, dance, and drama, is part of our daily routine to promote good mental health and well-being, helping children stay physically active, focused, and emotionally balanced.

**<u>Indoor and Outdoor Learning</u>**

We recognise the importance of both indoor and outdoor play, with the outdoor classroom providing children with opportunities for 'bigger', 'louder', and 'messier' experiences that suit many learners and are

where some children, learn best. We believe the carefully planned environment is the 'third teacher' and aim to offer free-flow learning opportunities throughout the day, allowing children to learn and explore both indoors and outdoors building on skills and knowledge. Continuous provision, both inside and outside, is not simply about providing a variety of resources, but about creating thoughtfully planned areas that support independent learning in the absence of an adult. Resources are carefully selected and tailored to meet the developmental needs of individual children. The intentional structuring of these areas, based on skills and assessments, ensures that children are highly engaged, fostering both learning and achievement.

**Teaching**

At Burley Oaks, practitioners provide 'planned, purposeful play' and ensure a balanced approach to learning, incorporating both adult-directed and child-initiated activities. Our teaching is focused on teaching the core fundamental skills for learning to support their learning as they go into KS1 and beyond. As experienced practitioners, we engage in ongoing discussions, observations, and reflections to evaluate and enhance learning experiences. We follow set routines each day, with designated times for whole-group teaching. Carpet learning sessions focus on essential skills such as maths, phonics, storytime, and topic work. These sessions offer opportunities for children to work together as a group, helping them to listen, take turns, stay focused, and ultimately develop their language skills.

At Burley Oaks, language development is at the heart of our EYFS teaching, and story time plays a vital role in fostering a love of reading. We believe that children should develop a lifelong passion for books, which is why we expose them to a wide range of high-quality fiction and non-fiction texts. Through story time, we provide opportunities for children to hear and use new vocabulary, helping to expand their language skills. We focus on imitating, innovating, and inventing stories, ensuring children leave the EYFS with a strong familiarity with both traditional and modern stories. Each day includes time for whole-class story sessions, as well as opportunities for children to engage with books within the continuous provision. In Reception, every child receives their 'reading' book twice a week. They share this book with an adult on a one-to-one basis and in group reading sessions. Additionally, children have the chance to select a book for enjoyment from the school library every week, further promoting a language-rich environment where reading is integral to daily learning.

**Planning**

Planning in the EYFS is a dynamic and responsive process that is based on the needs, interests, and developmental stages of the children. Our planning is informed by continuous observation and assessment, ensuring that we build on children's prior knowledge and experiences. We plan both adult-directed and child-initiated activities, providing a balance of structured learning and opportunities for independent exploration. Our curriculum is flexible, allowing us to adapt and refine learning experiences as we observe children's engagement and progress. This ensures that our planning remains relevant, purposeful, and tailored to each child's unique learning journey. Ultimately, our planning is designed to teach the fundamental skills in the EYFS, laying a strong foundation for future learning and development.

Our school planning includes:

**Long Term Planning:** This provides an overview of key learning themes, topics, and core texts, helping us shape and focus our medium-term planning.

**Medium Term Planning:** This outlines the sequence of content, knowledge, understanding, and skills to be taught, ensuring a structured approach to learning.

**Short Term Planning:** We use ongoing observations and assessments to identify children's starting points, needs, and interests. Short-term planning is flexible and responsive, adjusting to children's fascinations and needs, and offering a weekly overview of how the curriculum will be delivered through activities that cover all seven areas of learning.

**Impact**

At the end of the EYFS at Burley Oaks, our ultimate impact is that children leave with a strong foundation of fundamental early years skills, including language development, social-emotional skills, early literacy and numeracy, independence, and resilience. Through a language-rich environment, purposeful play, and hands-on learning experiences, children are equipped with the confidence, curiosity, and skills to continue their learning journey. Our focus on developing these core skills ensures that children are ready to transition smoothly into Year 1, with a love of learning and the ability to approach challenges with enthusiasm and determination.

**Assessment**

In the EYFS at Burley Oaks, assessment is an ongoing and integral part of the learning process. We use a variety of methods, including observations, interactions, and children's work, to assess progress and development across all areas of the curriculum. These assessments are used to identify individual strengths, interests, and areas for development, helping us to plan responsive and targeted learning experiences. We regularly review and reflect on each child's development to ensure they are making progress towards the Early Learning Goals. This continuous cycle of assessment, planning, and reflection ensures that learning is personalised and children receive the support they need to reach their full potential. Additionally, we share key information with parents to ensure they are fully involved in their child's learning journey. We also complete the statutory assessments which are outlined below.

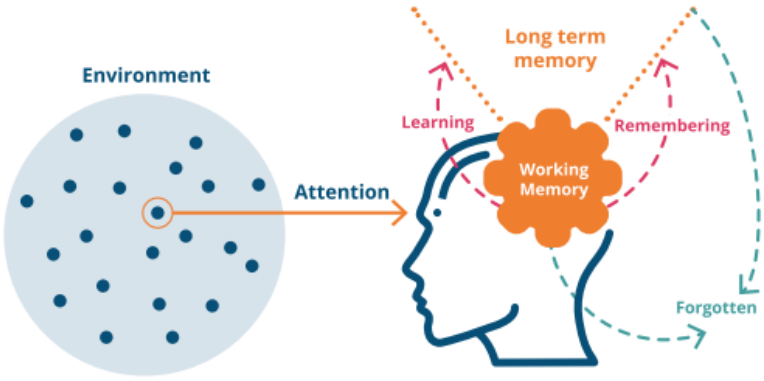
**On Entry Assessment** - When children start in reception practitioners observe and engage with them to make initial assessments which form a baseline on the EYFS profile. From these baselines appropriate learning is planned and all practitioners are aware of every child's developmental stage and needs and the next steps required to make progress in different areas to develop their skills and knowledge.

Statutory assessment for reception is currently the **Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).**
The RBA is an activity-based assessment of pupils' starting points in:

- Language, communication and literacy, and mathematics
- The RBA is a short task-based assessment, children use practical resources to complete these tasks and staff record the results on a laptop, computer or tablet.
- Schools are required to carry out the assessment within the first 6 weeks of pupils starting reception.
- Numerical scores are not shared and the data will only be used at the end of year 6 to form the school-level progress measure.
- Teachers receive a series of short, narrative statements that tell them how their pupils performed in the assessment. These can be used to inform teaching within the first term.

**End of Year Assessment** - The EYFSP (Early Years Foundation Stage Profile) takes place at the end of the school year in reception and is reported to the local authority. '*Each child's development must be assessed against the early learning goals. Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').* This is the EYFS Profile' Statutory Framework. We use practitioner knowledge of the children plus any other significant information.

Observations and assessments are on-going throughout the year and are formative; informing planning and provision in indoor and outdoor areas. They inform us of children's abilities, needs, interests and learning styles. Continuous provision areas will develop and change in response to skills and knowledge taught. We value child-led planning and from observing and engaging with children to find out what they are interested in and excited by, relevant activities are planned and resources provided. This style of planning raises levels of engagement and attainment. Teachers plan an objective and deliver it in different ways to different children depending on the children's interests. Therefore, observation, assessment and planning are the key to quality teaching and learning in the Foundation stage. We believe in the '*little and often'* approach, and '*keep up'*, not '*catch up'* in order to drive learning forwards and move into the long-term memory.




**Child Protection, Safeguarding & Welfare**

*At Burley Oaks Primary School, we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Burley Oaks Primary School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.*

*'Children learn best when they are healthy, safe, and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.'*
(*Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2024*)

At Burley Oaks Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with the welfare requirements as stated in the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2024*, along with *Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023*, *Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2024*, and the *Prevent Duty Guidance, 2021*. We aim to:

- Provide a setting that is welcoming, safe, and stimulating, where children can grow in confidence.
- Promote good health.
- Manage behavior effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the setting, furniture, and equipment are safe and suitable for their intended purpose.
- Maintain records, policies, and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

**Equal Opportunities**

At Burley Oaks Primary School, we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas. For further information, please see the Moorlands Learning Trust (MLT) Equalities Policy and Information.

**British Values**

We actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance across the setting. Many of our activities present opportunities for exploring and promoting each of the British values. We do our utmost to protect children against extremist and violent views by identifying the risk of being drawn into radicalisation and providing a safe inclusive learning

environment that supports spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the promotion of fundamental British values.

**Special Educational Needs**

Every child's needs are different, but when a child is having difficulty progressing in any aspect of their development in the classroom this is recognised. We follow the whole school policy for special needs. The teacher, with the involvement of parents/carers, will identify the child's needs and in collaboration with the SENCO will work towards meeting the child's provision as most appropriate. Please see the MLT SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Policy for a more detailed look at our procedures.

**Health and Safety**

A first-aid box is located in the Reception Classroom. Only medicine prescribed to a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist will be administered. (See the school's 'Managing Medicines Ploicy' which outlines the procedures for administrating medicines). Should an injury occur, first-aid treatment will be administered as required and this will be reported to the parents via the online system Medical Tracker which sends an email. A child who has experienced a head bump will wear a sticker as a visual reminder to all concerned.

**Staffing**

Burley Oaks Primary School has robust recruitment procedures in place, which aims to ensure that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable. Upon employment, all EYFS staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about emergency evaluation procedures, safeguarding, child protection, and health and safety. Staff will be supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experiences.

There will be at least one member of staff on the school premises at all times who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate. Any member of staff who has sole responsibility for looking after a group of children will also hold a PFA certificate, and all newly qualified staff with a Level 2 or 3 qualification will be PFA trained. We ensure compliance with staffing ratios in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2024*, which emphasise maintaining adequate supervision and trained staff to meet the safety and developmental needs of children effectively.

At Burley Oaks Primary School, the Early Years Leader plays a pivotal role in ensuring the success and continuous improvement of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Their responsibilities include:

- **Providing Strategic Leadership**: Establishing a clear vision and direction for the EYFS to align with the school's overall objectives.
- **Supporting Colleagues**: Offering guidance, training, and advice to staff on best practices and developments in early years education.
- **Monitoring and Evaluating Progress**: Analysing data and pupil outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas for improvement.
- **Resource Management**: Ensuring resources are effectively allocated to support teaching and learning in the EYFS.

Additionally, the Early Years Leader remains updated on national and local developments in early years education. They regularly review and refine teaching practices within the school and integrate these improvements into broader school development plans. This role ensures a high-quality and cohesive approach to early education.

**Parents as Partners**

At Burley Oaks, we deeply value the role of parents as their children's first and most influential educators. We recognise the importance of collaboration between home and school to support each child's learning journey. We foster this partnership through the following approaches:

- **Pre-Start Engagement**: Engaging with parents prior to their child starting school to gather insights and, if necessary, create a tailored plan for the child's needs.
- **Transition Activities**: Providing opportunities for children to meet their teacher and familiarise themselves with the school environment during transition sessions.
- **Induction Meetings**: Hosting induction sessions for parents—one before their child starts school and another during the first half term of Reception—to share our approach and discuss how their child is settling into school life.
- **Open Communication**: Encouraging parents to speak with their child's teacher about any concerns, however minor. We maintain an "open-door" policy and also provide formal parent-teacher meetings twice a year to discuss progress. An end-of-year report is shared detailing the child's attainment and development.
- **Collaborative Activities**: Organising events that bring together parents, children, and the school, such as stay-and-play sessions, celebration assemblies, and school trips.
- **Information Sharing**: Keeping parents informed through weekly reading and "Little Wandle Phonic Talk Homework," as well as half-termly newsletters and the reception blog on the school website.

This approach ensures parents feel informed, involved, and empowered to contribute to their child's educational experience.

**Transition to Year 1**

At Burley Oaks Primary School, we prioritise clear and effective communication between EYFS and Year 1 to ensure that children build on their foundational knowledge and experience a smooth transition. Our collaborative approach includes:

- **Sharing Detailed Insights**: Reception staff hold transition meetings with Year 1 staff to provide a comprehensive overview of each child's development, progress, and next steps. This ensures that Year 1 teachers are fully informed about each child's interests, strengths and areas for growth.
- **Induction Activities**: During the summer term, children participate in induction visits to their Year 1 classroom and spend time with their new teacher. This helps familiarise them with the environment and build relationships ahead of the new school year.
- **Gradual Curriculum Adjustments**: Changes to the curriculum are introduced incrementally during the first term in Year 1, allowing children to adapt at their own pace while maintaining continuity in their learning journey.
- **Continuity in Learning Environment**: Classroom organisation, planning, and daily timetables in Year 1 build upon practices in Reception. Provision-based play and linked activities continue, gradually evolving to meet the demands of the Key Stage 1 curriculum and individual learning needs.

This well-structured communication and gradual adaptation process ensures that children feel supported during this pivotal transition and sets the stage for continued success in KS1. All staff adhere to the school's Early Years Foundation Stage policy to maintain consistency and quality in this transition.

**Policy reviewed by**
**Carra Waite - EYFS Leader in the Autumn Term 2024**

Review date: December 2027
**(or earlier as required subject to changes in practice or legislation)**