

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy



**Manadon Vale
Primary School**

Policy Reviewed:	September 2026
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Reviewed by:	Georgia Barber (EYFS lead)





This document includes an introduction into our EYFS unit here at Manadon Vale Primary School. Our key aims and principles to ensure children thrive here. It also includes:

- Overarching principles
- The curriculum/assessment/planning
- Characteristics of effective learning
 - Enabling environments
- Positive relationships with families
 - Early Learning Goals
 - Observation
- Assessment health/safety/safeguarding
- Inclusion and supporting children with additional needs
 - Screen time
 - Tapestry
 - Transition into school
- Foundation to Year One Transition

Introduction

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up."

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE 2023)

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year when they are five. At Manadon Vale Primary School children usually start in reception at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. We complete an extensive induction programme that helps with the transition into school for both parents and children. We receive information from preschools, nurseries and child minders.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Manadon Vale Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.



Aims

- To provide a quality teaching and learning environment that is committed to raising standards and ensuring appropriate challenges are set for all children.
- To provide a caring, happy, secure environment where children feel valued and develop respect for others and their surroundings.
- To ensure breadth of balance across the curriculum through carefully planned adult input and sensitive interaction using Development Matters and the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage.
- To encourage parents/carers to become partners with the school in educating their children.
- To provide a curriculum that is based on active learning to meet the individual needs of each child.
- To foster a love of learning, enable choice and decision making, encourage independence and self-confidence.
- To provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs, that are inclusive.
- To support children in their social, physical, intellectual and emotional development.
- To ensure that we provide a smooth transition into reception from nurseries and pre-schools and also from reception onto Key Stage 1.

EYFS overarching Principles

A Unique Child

Every child is unique and develops in their own way. Children are supported to become resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive Relationships

Children develop and learn through warm, responsive and respectful relationships with parents, carers and practitioners.

Enabling Environments

Children learn best in welcoming, stimulating environments where their individual needs, interests and experiences are valued.

Learning & Development

Every child develops at their own pace. Practitioners support learning through play, meaningful experiences and activities that build on children's interests and abilities.

The four principles work together to support every child to thrive, learn and develop.

Equal Opportunity and Inclusion

At Manadon Vale Primary School, we believe that every child is unique, valued and deserves the best possible start to their education. We celebrate the diversity of our children and families and ensure that everyone is treated with kindness, fairness and respect, regardless of their background, culture, religion, gender, ability or individual needs.



We:

- Adapt our teaching and learning to meet the individual needs of every child.
- Provide experiences that build confidence, independence and self-esteem.
- Use books, resources and activities that celebrate diversity and promote inclusion.
- Work closely with parents and carers to understand and support each child.
- Work with our SENCO and other professionals when additional support is needed.
- Monitor children's progress carefully and provide appropriate support to help every child thrive.

We want every child and family to feel that they belong at Manadon Vale Primary School.

Positive Relationships with families

We believe that parents and carers are their child's first and most important educators. Strong relationships between home and school help children feel safe, secure and confident as they begin their school journey.



We work closely with families by:

- Offering opportunities to visit school before starting, including Stay and Play sessions and individual visits.
- Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a voluntary basis to assist with the children's learning.
- Providing clear information about starting school, routines and expectations.
- Keeping parents and carers informed about their child's progress through parent consultations, Tapestry and regular communication.
- Sharing information about learning and topics through the school website and newsletters.
- Welcoming parents and carers to speak to us at any time if they have questions or concerns. If Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Working together with families, the SENCO and other professionals to support each child's individual needs.
- Offering the services of our school Family Support Advisor.
- Sharing a written report on each child's progress at the end of their time in EYFS.
- Providing an Information Pack for parents/carers prior to children starting school.
- Outlining the school's expectations in our Home-School agreement.

We value the knowledge and experiences that families bring and encourage parents and carers to share in their child's learning and achievements.

Enabling Environments

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations, we assess the children's interests and stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.



The Foundation Stage Unit is organised to allow the children to explore and learn securely and safely whilst encouraging them to develop their independence. There are four areas for learning within the unit which all the children can access at different times; Turtles' classroom, Seahorses' classroom, the Garden Room and the Courtyard (our outdoor area). Within the unit we have many opportunities for the children to locate equipment and resources by themselves and develop their own ideas and creativity. The continuous provision of play opportunities in all areas is carefully planned and developed according to the children's needs and their interests.

Learning and Development

At Manadon Vale we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying the secure foundations for future learning and development. All children begin school with a wide variety of experiences and learning and it is the privilege of the adults working within the Foundation Stage to accept the task of building upon that prior learning experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents/carers and the Foundation Stage team work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children in their charge. We believe that learning through play is crucial at this stage in a child's development and therefore use a balance of adult led and child initiated activities.

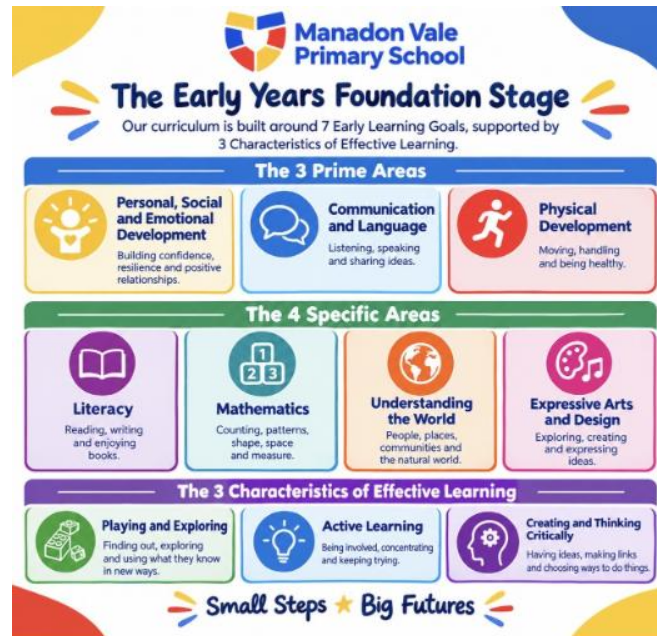
The Curriculum

The Foundation Stage at Manadon Vale follows the curriculum as outlined in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE 2025)

[EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers](#)

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but *"three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive."* (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage DfE 2023) They support children's learning in all other areas and are known as the Prime Areas.

The EYFS also includes the Characteristics of Effective Learning. The Foundation Stage teachers plan activities within the unit with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.



The balance in coverage of the areas will shift as the year progresses, in response to the children's needs and progress. All children will also participate in daily phonics sessions, following Essential Letters and Sounds which is a DfE validated Systematic Synthetic Phonics teaching scheme, chosen by Connect Academy Trust.



We recognise that teaching can take place at all times of the day through directed teaching sessions, through times of play and inside and outside the classroom. We encourage all of these. We strive to make our environments irresistible to children and encourage our staff and volunteers to seize every opportunity for teaching. Weekly and daily planning formalise this and aim to ensure a balance of formal and informal learning. Staff are encouraged to think carefully about their questions and interventions in children's learning in order to optimise this. Learning should be personalised by building on the child's interests and involving them fully in reflecting on what they have learned and how they may build on their skills. Children will be intrinsically motivated to be life-long learners.

At appropriate opportunities the adults will:

- Question, respond to questions and engage the child in extended conversations that support sustained shared thinking
- Extend vocabulary, knowledge and skills
- Encourage independence
- Add resources that stimulate, motivate and engage the learner
- Demonstrate, model and work alongside the children

- Help children to see links in their learning
- Support and encourage the children
- Encourage children to be problem solvers, problem setters and investigators
- Re-direct the play if necessary
- Help children to learn how to negotiate and resolve conflict
- Promote children's well-being
- Observe and assess learning
- Track progress (via areas of concern on Tapestry) and plan for next steps in learning
- Provide feedback to child/other adult/parents
- Ensure the environment is safe and secure and that the Welfare Requirements are in place

Planning

The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are taken from the Development Matters Statements found in the Early Years Foundation Stage document. Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. The planning is topic based, changes on a half-termly basis and is driven by the children's needs, achievements and interests. Medium-term planning includes intended learning outcomes but is flexible and changes as the term progresses. Weekly planning documents are informed by observations, assessments and interactions with the children. An overview of what is being covered each week is included on Tapestry. This also promotes involvement and partnership with parents and carers. For our some of SEND pupils we have reached it out to Longcause for some outreach training and planning to support staff in managing and planning for these children. This includes using the curiosity programme to support the development of these children.

Observation

Foundation Stage staff use observations to inform planning and assessment. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Relevant and significant observations are recorded on Tapestry.

Assessment

Reception Baseline Assessment:

All children will participate in the statutory RBA. The purpose of the assessment is to provide the starting point for a progress measure that will help parents understand how well schools support their pupils to progress between reception and year 6.

The assessment has been designed to ensure that it is inclusive and accessible to as many children as possible, including those with special educational needs or disability (SEND), or English as an additional language (EAL).



During the first term the teachers assess the ability of each child using a combination of observation, assessment tasks, information provided by nursery transition documents and input from parents/carers during 'Getting to Know You' sessions. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort in order to plan for individual children and groups of children.

The teachers then use the Foundation Stage Profile (which is the nationally employed assessment tool) to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

The teachers and teaching assistants use online Learning Journeys (Tapestry) and examples of each child's adult directed work within a 'workbook'. These both contain a wide range of evidence that we share with parents/carers at each parent consultation meeting.

Health & Safety and Safeguarding:

"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 - DfE 2023

At Manadon Vale Primary School we follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE 2026.)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a5f8e4fb00f3323bf1a23a1/EYFS_group_and_school_based_from_September_2026.pdf

Please see our whole school policies on Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Child Protection for more information.

See our separate Safer Eater Policy following mandatory statutory updates introduced in September 2025 by the DfE.

Inclusion:

At Manadon Vale Primary School we are committed to providing an inclusive Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) where every child is valued, respected and supported to achieve their full potential. We recognise that children develop at different rates and in different ways, and we aim to ensure that all children, regardless of background, ability or need, have equal access to learning opportunities. In line with the EYFS Statutory Framework, the Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice (0-25 years), we promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that no child is excluded or disadvantaged.

Supporting Children with Additional Needs and Disabilities:

We recognise that some children may have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), English as an additional language (EAL), or other individual needs. Early identification and intervention are key to ensuring positive outcomes. We work closely with parents/carers and relevant professionals to identify needs and provide appropriate support. Support may include:

- Differentiated teaching and learning experiences
- Adaptations to the learning environment and resources
- Individual support strategies and targeted interventions
- Use of visual supports, alternative communication methods and assistive resources
- Advice and guidance from external agencies where appropriate
- The EYFS team works in collaboration with the school SENDCo to ensure that children's needs are identified early and that support plans are reviewed regularly

Tapestry

To ensure parents and carers are aware of their children's learning and development within school, we use an online learning journal called Tapestry. This app is our main tool for communicating with our new families as photos and videos can be uploaded from both school and home.



It is a downloadable app that provides updates of your child's learning throughout their school days. At Manadon Vale, we use Tapestry to add weekly objectives, key memos/letters, WOW moments, home learning activities and even sharing what the children have got up too at home!

Screen time

At Manadon Vale Primary School, we recognise that digital technology is part of children's everyday lives. However, in line with the EYFS Statutory Framework (2025), our priority is to ensure children develop through play, interaction, and real-world experiences.

This policy reflects current UK government guidance that screen use in early years should be:

- Limited
- Purposeful
- Developmentally appropriate
- Balanced with active learning and communication



Key principles

At Manadon Vale Primary, we ensure that:

- Play is central to learning and screen use never replaces hands-on, exploratory play.
- Technology adds value and screens are only used when they clearly enhance learning outcomes.
- Adults lead learning and screen use is always supervised and guided by staff.

Screen time expectations in school:

Reception

- Up to 30-60 minutes per day, where appropriate.

Lessons that regularly use a screen include phonics, maths & PSED.

We recognise that some pupils with additional needs may require more frequent or personalised access to screen-based resources. This use is purposeful and supports learning, communication, and emotional regulation, in line with individual support plans.

There also may be times where it is necessary for the limits to be exceeded for the whole class- these will be infrequent and will adhere to acceptable uses of screen time.

Acceptable uses of screen time

Screens may be used to support:

Communication and Language

- Listening to and joining in with nursery rhymes.
- Supporting children's understanding and use of new vocabulary.

Physical Development

- Yoga videos to support movement, balance, coordination and relaxation.
- Dough Disco videos to encourage fine motor development, hand strength and coordination.
- Short movement activities and brain breaks to promote physical activity.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

- Jigsaw PSED slides and resources to support discussions, reflection and emotional development.
- Mindfulness activities and short brain breaks to support children's emotional wellbeing, self-regulation and concentration.
- Digital resources may be used to support discussions around feelings, friendships and positive relationships.

Literacy

- The Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) phonics programme and associated digital resources.
- Phonics games and interactive activities to reinforce children's learning.
- Slides and visual resources to support phonics, stories, vocabulary and early reading and writing skills.

Mathematics

- White Rose Maths slides and digital resources to support mathematical concepts.
- Maths games and videos to reinforce number, counting, shape, space, measure and pattern.

Understanding the World

- Using videos, photographs, maps and other digital resources to explore different places, cultures, communities and the natural world.
- Digital resources may be used to support children's understanding of topics that cannot be directly experienced within the setting.

Expressive Arts and Design

- Age-appropriate drawing and creative apps to support children's creativity and self-expression.

All use must be

- Interactive
- Adult-supported
- Linked to learning intentions

Unacceptable uses

Screens will not be used:

- As a substitute for supervision
- For passive watching for long periods
- As a replacement for lessons that can be delivered without a screen

Safeguarding and online safety

We ensure that:

- All devices use filtered and monitored internet access
- Children are supervised at all times
- Only age-appropriate content is used

Staff follow:

- Mobile phone policy (see separate)
- Acceptable use policy (see separate)
- Photos/videos follow parental consent procedures

Role of staff

Staff will:

- Plan purposeful digital experiences
- Limit screen time carefully
- Sit with children during use (co-engagement)
- Ask questions and promote talk
- Model safe and appropriate use
- Be mindful of correct vocabulary being used in digital content
- Ensure screens do not dominate provision

Partnership with parents

We work closely with families to promote healthy habits

We encourage parents to:

- Limit screen time at home
- Avoid screens before bedtime
- Watch and talk about content together
- Prioritise play, conversation, and outdoor activity

Monitoring & review

- Reviewed annually
- Updated in line with government guidance



- Learning walks from EYFS Lead and other senior management staff



Transition into school

During the Summer term prior to a child's entry into the Foundation year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure a successful transition.

1. 🗨️ Welcome meeting - Parents are invited to a welcome meeting to meet the Headteacher, Deputy Head and our Foundation team. Parents will receive a pack with information and key documents to sign and return. This is a great opportunity for parents to ask any questions.
2. 🧸 Stay and Play sessions - These sessions are held within the school for your child to come and play in their new environment and meet all of the Foundation team. The children have 2 transition afternoons one with parents/carers and one without. We offer an enhanced transition session for those children who require extra settling time.
3. 🗨️ September: We offer 30 minute 1:1 'getting to know you' meetings with the teacher, parent/carers and child. We ask a range of questions whilst the child sits with the TA completing a starting school activity book. This gives us the opportunity to gather important information about our new starters and allows parents/carers to ask questions too.
4. 📅 When your child starts school in September after 3 days of 'getting to know you meetings', the children will have 2 days of part-time hours before being in school full time.

5. Additional visits and support

Members of staff including the Foundation team and SENDCo from Manadon Vale may make visits to feeder settings. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required to support the child's transition. Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting. Often these children will have been identified as requiring additional support. We create transition booklets for all children starting with us.

From Foundation to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Foundation, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development. Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary

on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Foundation and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning need and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Year 1