

# Welcome to the Early Years Foundation Stage at Fairfields Primary School



# What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a stage of development from birth to the end of their first year at school.

The EYFS framework describes how schools should work with children and their families to support their development and learning.

**In 2020 the framework was revised to make it clearer and easier to use, with more focus on the things that matter most. This new framework has a greater emphasis on language and vocabulary development for children. The framework has been revised again with changes to the statutory guidance coming in to effect in September 2021.**

The framework describes how your child should be kept safe and cared for and how we can all make sure that your child achieves the most that they can in their earliest years of life.

It is called the Foundation Stage because it gives a secure foundation for future learning.

**Childhood is important and we want all children at Fairfields School to have many enjoyable, successful and satisfying learning experiences. We aim to develop positive attitudes to learning in all of our children.**



**Why are the years from birth to five so special?**

**The years from birth to five see the greatest growth and learning for all children.**

**We want your child to:**

- Be happy**
- Feel safe**
- Be successful**



**Early learning is the key to your child's future and families make the greatest difference at this stage.**

**At Fairfield's we aim to work hand in hand with you as parents to give your child the best possible start in life.**



At Fairfields primary School we follow the  
EYFS framework (2020).  
Within this framework there are four guiding  
principles which shape our practice.

**These are:**

1. 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**.


2. 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.

3. Children benefit from a **strong partnership** between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

4. **Children develop and learn at different rates.** The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).







**In Early Years at Fairfield's, we have Curricular Goals that we work towards to help our children confidently move into each phase of their learning.**

**Our curriculum is ambitious and designed in a sequential way to ensure progress towards the end of reception goals.**

**We want our children to be:**

**Ready to learn:** Children have a positive, confident attitude to learning. They are both physically and emotionally ready to learn.

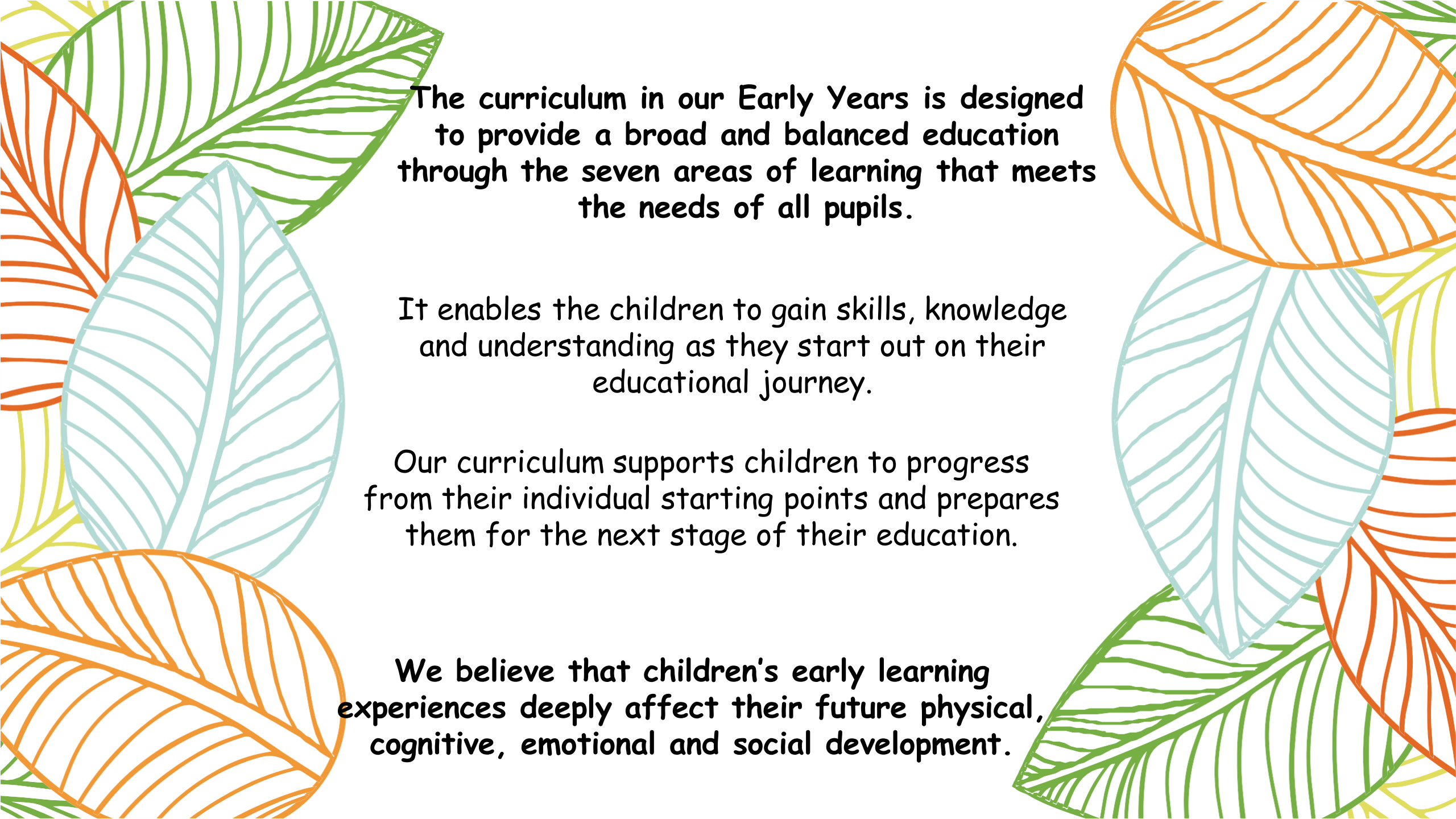
**Resourceful:** Children show initiative, are independent, ask relevant questions and are prepared to use a variety of strategies to learn.

**Reflective:** Children are curious, willing to take risks and learn from their mistakes. They can describe their progress.

**Resilient:** Children are prepared to persevere and stay involved in their learning, even when the process is challenging.

**Reciprocal:** Children are prepared to help each other and work as a team alongside children and adults.





**The curriculum in our Early Years is designed to provide a broad and balanced education through the seven areas of learning that meets the needs of all pupils.**

**It enables the children to gain skills, knowledge and understanding as they start out on their educational journey.**

**Our curriculum supports children to progress from their individual starting points and prepares them for the next stage of their education.**

**We believe that children's early learning experiences deeply affect their future physical, cognitive, emotional and social development.**

Our children learn best when they have access to skills-based teaching, where they learn skills which are relevant and appropriate to them.

**We offer a mix of adult led and child-initiated learning.**



We recognise that all children come into our setting with varied experiences.

All staff ensure that the learning opportunities provided nurture children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

**We have ambitious expectations for all.**



**Our curriculum encompasses seven areas of learning and development in the EYFS. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.**

# **The Seven Areas of Learning**

**Three prime areas are particularly important for building a foundation for children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving. These are:**

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



**These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning. As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in four specific areas. These are:**

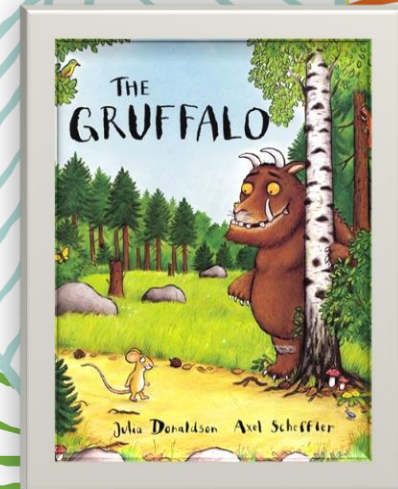
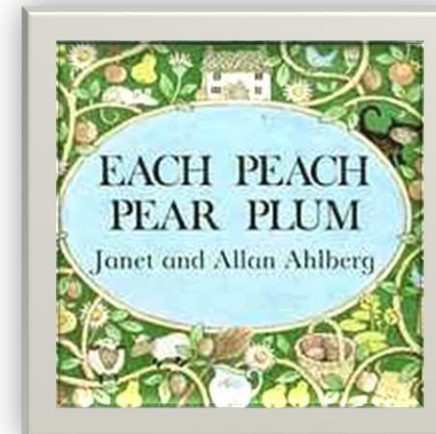
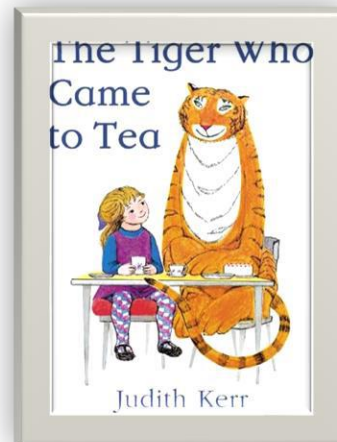
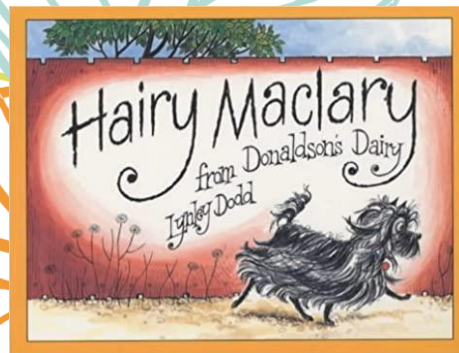
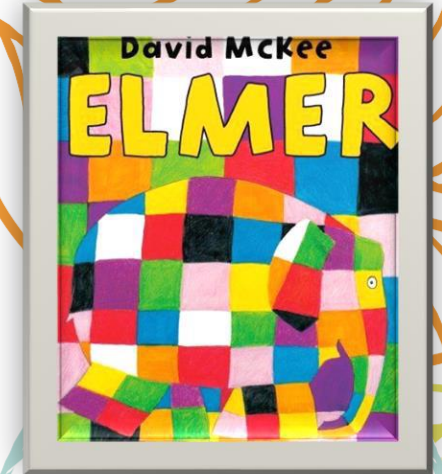
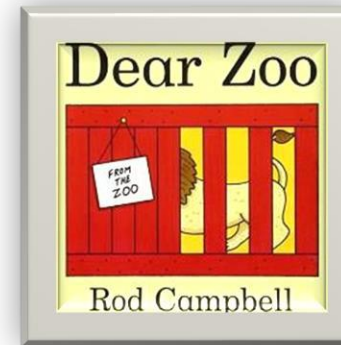
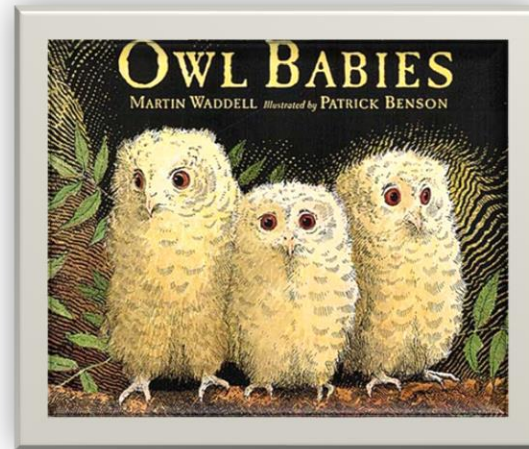
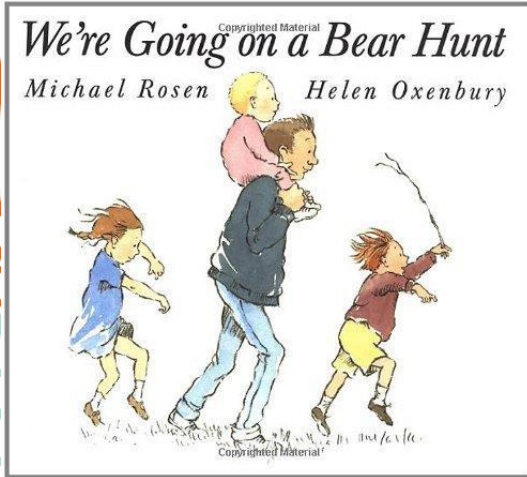
- Literacy.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding the world.
- Expressive arts and design.







Our curriculum is language rich with core texts  
at its heart.

Importance is placed on talk and opportunities  
for discussion and conversation are plentiful.








The curriculum is planned and delivered both indoors and outdoors to provide continuity and progression of skills through a blend of child led and thematic based learning.

We enhance learning through topics that excite and engage children in their learning, building on their own interests and broadening their experiences of the world around them.



We enable our children to revisit knowledge and build upon experiences; assisting them to learn and remember more.

**We believe repetition is the key to development.**



We celebrate diversity and support the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Those children with particular needs including SEND are supported appropriately allowing them to be successful.

Our children have the confidence and skills to make decisions and self-evaluate, make connections and become lifelong learners.

**We work in partnership with parents and carers to encourage independent, curious and happy learners who thrive in school and can reach their full potential.**







**Threaded throughout the EYFS curriculum at Fairfields are the Characteristics of Effective Learning.**

**Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

**Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.

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

**These elements underpin how we reflect on each child's development and adjust our practice accordingly.**

**Supporting children in their individual learning behaviour and observing the context of children's play is essential.**



**Along with focused adult led sessions in small groups, your child will primarily learn through play in our EYFS. Play underpins the EYFS. It also underpins learning and all aspects of children's development.**

Through play, children develop language skills, their emotions and creativity, social and intellectual skills. Play takes place indoors and outdoors and it is in these different environments that children explore and discover their immediate world.

It is here they practice new ideas and skills, they take risks, show imagination and solve problems on their own or with others. The role that adults have is crucial.

**Adults provide time and space and appropriate resources.**

These might include clothes, boxes, buckets, old blankets that will inspire play and fire children's imaginations. They observe play and join in when invited, watching and listening before intervening.

**They value play and provide safe but challenging environments that support and extend learning and development.**



**The Early Years Foundation Stage is about you and your child working in partnership with us at Fairfields School to ensure your child's needs are best met.**

At Fairfields, our approach is influenced by knowledge of child development, how young children learn and how adults can support their learning.

Provision is underpinned by an effective balance of adult led, adult-initiated and child led learning.

We are ambitious in our approach using a continuous cycle of observation and assessment, planning/teaching, alongside structured and systematic lessons and guided group work.

Here is a typical day in Reception...

8.55am -9.30am	Busy Fingers
9.30am -9.45am	Literacy shared input
9.45am - 10.15am	Adult led literacy groups
10.15 - 11.15am	Continuous provision (CIL) <i>Snack Bar opens</i>
11.15am -11.40am	Phonics
11.40am - 12 noon	Story and rhyme time
12 noon - 1pm	<b>LUNCHTIME</b>
1.15pm - 1.45pm	Shared maths input
1.45pm - 2.15pm	Adult led maths groups
2.15pm - 3pm	Continuous provision (CIL) <i>Snack Bar opens</i>
3pm - 3.15pm	Story and rhyme time
3.15pm	<b>HOMETIME</b>

Here is a typical morning in Nursery...

9am -9.30 am	Busy Fingers
9.30am - 9.45 am	Carpet time - Shared Learning
9.45am - 10.15 am	Group Work
10.15am - 11.30am	CIL Snack bar opens.
11.30am - 12.00pm	Phonics and Storytime



## Shared Input

We engage our children, three times a day in shared input as a whole class covering the specific areas of literacy, math's and phonics. We have a carefully planned, progressive skill based curriculum which we follow alongside the 'Little Wandle' phonics programme.



## Adult led focused groups

Short focused groups are planned for writing, reading and maths and immediately follow a shared input. These sessions are planned with care, meeting the needs of all children, using prior knowledge of the child's learning experiences and guidance from the EYFS document 'Development Matters', 2021.

## Continuous Provision (CIL)

Indoor and outdoor resources are organised to develop children's skills in personal interaction and exploration. Resources are carefully selected to meet the development needs of the children in order to enhance potential for new learning and consolidate prior learning. Resources are dressed/displayed to reflect children's interests - discover, experiment and explore are key themes.



Continuous provision incorporates all areas of learning and provides children with the opportunity to demonstrate the three characteristics of effective learning.



Children are given the freedom to make independent choices and are encouraged to be active learners and take control of their own learning.

# 3 a day!

**In EYFS at Fairfield's, children are read to at least 3 times a day at school in addition to books provided for home reading.**

We share books with children for many reasons: enjoying stories together, linking with personal experiences, vocabulary building, developing imagination and language, learning about books. Listening to stories being read and reread helps children to gain insights into meaning and story structure.

**All children in our EYFS have weekly access to our excellent school library and love their visits.**



## Guided reading

Short group reading sessions take place daily in Reception and texts are carefully chosen by staff to match the phonemes pupils have learnt. Improving young children's vocabulary is paramount. Exploring and extending pupils' vocabulary is part of everyday teaching. Vocabulary is discussed with the intention of building background knowledge so pupils can comprehend the content of a text.

## Individual reading

Encouraging reading for pleasure is part of our school vision to create learners for life.

All children have their own individual reading books in Reception; one phonetically decodable 'read to me' book, one 'read with me' and one library book. Children select books from a wide range of genres including picture books, non-fiction information books and poetry. If needed, staff will guide pupils towards a suitable selection of a home reading book.

**Reading progress is monitored closely.**

**Story and rhyme times are an integral part of our day in EYFS.**



## Writing at Fairfields

**Mark making and speech provide children with powerful tools for thinking, reasoning and problem solving.**



Time, space and attention is given to children's mark making, mathematical graphics, drawing and writing experiences.

Throughout each day, children have opportunities for spontaneous mark making, drawing and writing in both the indoor and outdoor environment.

Resources are carefully chosen, well organised and attractively presented, so that the children can decide independently how they want to represent their ideas and which medium would best suit their purpose.

**High value is placed upon imagination, ideas and self-expression demonstrated by the children.**

### Handwriting

Handwriting development in our EYFS includes a wide variety of activities planned to develop the fine motor skills required for the correct pencil grip. 'Busy Finger' activities may include threading, using tweezers, dough gym, exploring screws, cardboard weaving. The list is endless!

From entering Reception, children are taught handwriting using the Nelson Scheme. Nelson Handwriting is a whole-school programme designed to help all children develop a confident, legible and personal handwriting style and meet higher curriculum expectations.



# Phonics at Fairfield's

We follow the 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds' phonics programme.

Whole class and small group keep up teaching takes place daily. Phase 1 (*Foundations for Phonics*) is taught continuously throughout EYFS.

You can read more about 'Phonics in Reception' on our website.



## Maths at Fairfields



### There's more to maths than counting!

Children learn about maths through play and their daily experiences. And the more meaningful to them and hands on it is, the better.

Our setting is full of mathematical opportunities for children to explore, sort, compare, count, calculate and describe. Providing a safe environment to be creative, critical thinkers, problem solvers and to have a go.

**Mathematics is identified as one of the specific areas of learning, alongside expressive arts and design, literacy, and understanding the world.**

Our objective is to ensure that all children develop firm mathematical foundations in a way that is engaging, and appropriate for their age. This means actively learning using resources and activities provided in the environment.

**In addition, maths is explicitly taught daily as short whole class sessions and followed up with small group work within the environment.**

**Mastery of mathematical concepts in the EYFS takes the following approach:**

**Concrete** - children use concrete objects and manipulatives to help them understand what they are doing.

**Pictorial** - children build on this concrete approach by using pictorial representations. These representations can then be used to reason and solve problems.

**Abstract** - with the foundations firmly laid, children move to an abstract approach using numbers and key concepts with confidence.

**You can read more about our approach to maths in Early Years in the 'Maths Mastery' information sheet on our website.**

# A continuous cycle of observation, assessment and planning is embedded throughout our EYFS provision to help your child progress through the curriculum.

Observation and responding to children's thinking inform our planning of experiences and opportunities, how we create our environment for thinking, the strategies the adults use to extend learning (modelling, scaffolding, questioning, discussion) and how we capitalise knowledge of children's interests to ensure high levels of engagement.

All adults record 'Wow!' moments - when a child does or says something that demonstrates progress or skill in a particular area.

**Wow moments are also welcomed and celebrated from home.**

## Planning

What next?  
Opportunities,  
experiences  
and learning.



## Assessment

Analyse observations.

## Start here

## Observation

Look, listen and note.

In addition to the continuous cycle of observation and formative assessment which informs each child's next steps, summative assessments are carried out for phonic development, number and writing development. This informs planning of subsequent teaching and learning.





# Learning Journals

During your child's time in EYFS he/she will have a Learning Journal which will contain observations, specific achievements and independent work.

The children will also be able to add pieces of work that they are particularly proud of.

This Journal is available for you to share with your child at any time and the children will bring it home at the end of the year as a keep sake.

Children learn best when there is a strong partnership between home and school and when parents and staff share their knowledge and skills.



**TAPESTRY**  
ONLINE LEARNING JOURNAL

**We use an online Learning Journal system called 'Tapestry' which enables parents to view their child's observations and work from your iphone/ipad or laptop.**

**It also lets us know what you have been doing at home with your child.**

**It is very important therefore for parents to contribute to their child's Learning Journal, about significant developments at home and there will be many opportunities for this.**



**The most recent statistics show that the majority of our children leave the EYFS with a Good Level of Development (GLD). This is in line with the National expectation in the UK.**

**Children at Fairfields enter Key Stage One ready to begin the next chapter of the educational journey.**

**They are equipped with a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for future progress through school and life.**







**We welcome you to EYFS at Fairfields and appreciate that this is a big step in your child's life. Your queries and concerns are important.**

**Our doors are always open.**

**If at any time you wish to talk to us, please do so.**

**You can contact us by phone on 01992 633195 or email at**

**[admin@fairfields.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@fairfields.herts.sch.uk)**

**We wish your child every success and happiness for their future.**

**The Foundation Stage Team**