



Executive Headteacher: Mrs Maria-Anne Higgins
Executive Assistant Headteacher: Mrs Shelley Steer

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Townley School & Nursery
 Crown Road,
 Christchurch, Wisbech,
 PE14 9NA
 office@townley.cambs.sch.uk
 Tel: 01354 638229
www.townley.cambs.sch.uk



Friday Bridge Primary School
 Maltmas Drove
 Friday Bridge, Wisbech
 PE14 0HW
 office@fridaybridge.cambs.sch.uk
 Tel: 01945 860220
www.fridaybridge.cambs.sch.uk



Friday Bridge School Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

1. Aims

This policy sets out how Friday Bridge Primary delivers Reception provision.

It ensures full compliance with:

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2025
 - Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) statutory framework
- Education Inspection Framework (EIF) expectations for early years
- EYFS Inspection Toolkit 2025
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) refers to the time from birth to the age of five. This early development and learning stage is a distinct phase in each child's education and should provide an essential and firm foundation for their future school life.

All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children's learning and development progresses most rapidly from birth to age five, meaning that early experiences have a significant impact on future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and strong parenting alongside high-quality early education provides the foundations for children to fulfil their potential (Department for Education, 2023). This is reinforced by the government's Best Start in Life strategy, which recognises that the early years, from conception to age five, are crucial in shaping children's development, learning and future health (Department for Education, 2025).

This Policy is in accordance with the statutory framework for the EYFS (effective from 1st September 2025).

The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

2. Policy Purpose

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Friday Bridge Community Primary School provides the foundation for every child's lifelong learning journey. This policy sets out our vision, principles, curriculum intent, implementation, assessment and provision for pupils in Reception. It reflects the statutory EYFS requirements and the non-statutory Development Matters guidance alongside our 2025–2026 EYFS Long-Term Curriculum Plan.

3. Vision

We all belong and deserve to have fun, learn and grow together. Through play, challenge and shared experiences, our EYFS nurtures happy, confident learners who love learning, embrace curiosity and thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

Friday Bridge Primary delivers Reception provision based on the four statutory EYFS principles:

1. Every child is a unique child – resilient, capable, confident, self-assured.
2. Positive relationships – secure relationships with adults and peers.
3. Enabling environments – responsive to needs, with strong partnerships.
4. Learning and development – children learn at different rates; inclusive practice is essential.

Friday Bridge Primary aims to put these principles into practice by doing the following:

Based on the EYFS Framework, Friday Bridge Primary provides a broad and balanced curriculum across the seven areas of learning and development highlighted in the Statutory Framework recognising that all areas are important and interconnected;

Promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported;

Where pupils require support, Friday Bridge Primary looks to provide early interventions;

Work in partnership with parents/carers;

Provide children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life, and ensure children's school readiness;
Plans for the learning and development of each individual child, and regularly assesses and reviews what they have learned, including children with SEND;
Considers language a key element, and for children, whose home language is not English, it provides opportunities for children to develop and to use their home language in play and learning, supporting language development at home. Friday Bridge Primary ensures that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard of English during EYFS;
Provides a secure and safe environment indoors and outdoors for learning and play.

4. Curriculum Intent

Create a secure, nurturing and inspiring environment where children feel safe, happy and valued.
Foster curiosity, joy, creativity and imagination through rich play-based and hands-on experiences.
Build strong foundations of knowledge and skills across all seven areas of learning (prime and specific).
Ensure learning is inclusive and accessible so all children can thrive and achieve their potential.
To foster independence, resilience, creativity and a love of learning through high quality environments, teaching and high-quality adult interactions that promote curiosity, problem-solving and collaboration.
Prepare children effectively for Year 1, ensuring progress towards the Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

5. Guiding Principles

Our practice is shaped by the four EYFS principles: A Unique Child; Positive Relationships; Enabling Environments; Learning and Development.

6. Curriculum Implementation

We follow the statutory EYFS framework and Development Matters pathways and deliver our 2025–26 Long-Term EYFS Plan through a balance of high-quality, purposeful play; child-initiated exploration; adult-guided and adult-led learning; explicit modelling and rich talk; outdoor learning; and real-life, hands-on experiences. Themes include: Whoever you are; World Explorers; Out of this World; From a Tiny Seed; Kings, Castles & Celebrations; Let's Get Wild. Themes remain flexible to follow children's interests.

7. Learning and development

In order to promote the learning and development of children in Friday Bridge Primary's care and to ensure that they are ready for Year 1, the School plans an exciting and challenging curriculum.
This is planned in accordance with the seven areas of learning and development (the Early Learning Goals) to ensure that the children in its care complete the EYFS ready to benefit fully from the opportunities ahead of them.

The seven areas of learning and development are all important and inter-connected. In planning and guiding activities, Friday Bridge Primary reflects on the different ways in which children learn to inform its curriculum planning.

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

These are the prime areas:

Communication and language;

Physical development;

Personal, social and emotional development.

Friday Bridge Primary also supports children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The specific areas are:

Literacy;

Mathematics;

Understanding the world;

Expressive arts and design.

The following Early Learning Goals are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive:

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and to develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, coordination and agility. Children are helped to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food and taking care of their bodies.

Literacy involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest

Mathematics provides children with opportunities to develop their understanding of numbers and number patterns. Children develop a deep understanding of the numbers to ten, subitising, comparing quantities and exploring and representing numerical patterns. Children also develop the skills to count verbally beyond 20, showing recognition of the counting system.

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive arts and design involve enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Each area of learning is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity, including the following **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.

For children, whose home language is not English, reasonable steps are taken to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. Sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS is provided.

Our long-term plan sequences knowledge and experiences to secure progress towards the ELGs.

8. Play at Friday Bridge Primary

Play is central to our curriculum. We prioritise daily outdoor exploration; independence in accessing resources; kindness, collaboration and communication; connection to nature and sustainability; and uninterrupted periods of deep engagement in purposeful play.

We thrive on offering the children at Friday Bridge Primary a high- quality Reception environment, both indoors and outdoors, that is safe, welcoming and stimulating, designed to spark curiosity and enable children to explore and learn independently.

Why enabling environments matter

A positive emotional environment lets children feel safe to explore, make mistakes, take risks, and engage. An emotional environment is about positive relationships, a sense of belonging and mutual respect. This is about how the setting feels — the relationships, the emotional security, the sense of belonging, respect, warmth, and calm.

They support agency — children become active explorers rather than passive learners.
They facilitate independence, confidence, and decision-making.
They help children engage more deeply with learning, revisit and consolidate knowledge.
They support all areas of development: physically, socially, emotionally, cognitively.

During child-initiated play children select resources, decide how to use them, set their own goals and develop their ideas, rather than following adult instructions. Adults observe, support, and are responsive in a way that enriches play with learning opportunities but the ownership of the play stays with the child. Our high-quality environments enable children to freely access resources to explore, rehearse and extend learning.

9. Assessment

Assessment is purposeful, proportionate and embedded in everyday practice. We avoid excessive paperwork and prioritise interaction with children.

We follow:

- Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) – within first 6 weeks
- Ongoing assessment is formative and responsive: practitioners observe, interact, question and assess in the moment with summative judgements reviewed termly
- EYFS Profile – completed at the end of Reception

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, an EYFS Profile is completed for each child.

Each child's development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. The levels are assessed as:

- 1 - emerging;
- 2 - expected;
- A - unable to assess/exemption applies.

The EYFS Profile provides parents/carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against the early learning goals, expected levels and their readiness for Year 1. A copy of the Profile is provided to Year 1 teachers and where required, Friday Bridge Primary reports EYFS Profile results to the Local Authority (LA).

10. Phonics, Early Reading and Mathematics

We deliver daily systematic phonics (Little Wandle) and a language-rich reading culture with regular story, rhyme, poems and non-fiction. Mastering Number/White Rose sequences support deep number sense and spatial reasoning through practical, playful mathematics.

11. Inclusion and equal opportunities

We value every child and plan a curriculum that meets individual needs. We identify additional needs early, adapt provision, draw on specialist advice where appropriate and work in close partnership with families and the SENDCo.

We are an inclusive setting where every child and family is welcomed and valued. We provide equal opportunities for all children, celebrating diversity and removing barriers to learning. Provision is adapted to meet individual needs, including SEND, EAL and vulnerable groups.

Leaders and practitioners have the knowledge and strategies to reduce any barriers and adapt the curriculum appropriately for disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being.

Leaders and practitioners prioritise in their teaching the aspects that children need most support with, making sure that they receive the right help at the right time.

Leaders and practitioners focus on supporting all children who are at risk of falling behind the expected stages of communication and language development.

Early Identification and Graduated Approach Concerns are identified early and addressed through Assess–Plan–Do–Review with the SENCO and, where appropriate, external specialists. Individual plans and reasonable adjustments enable participation and progress.

12. Parents and carers as partners in progress

Parents are children’s first educators.

Within Friday Bridge Primary we are committed to ensuring that a high-quality early years experience is in place for each child. Critical to this is ensuring that a child’s social, emotional and educational needs are addressed appropriately.

Children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between EYFS staff and parents/carers. This begins with effective transitional arrangements into the school, which is recognised as a process that is carefully planned with parents, children, and practitioners of the pre-school settings that the children of Friday Bridge Primary attend.

At Friday Bridge Primary we also recognise that parents are the children’s first and most enduring educators and that when parents and practitioners work together the results have a positive impact on children’s development and learning.

We encourage parent partnership through

- EYFS ‘Stay and Play’ sessions in the Summer term before starting school
- Home visits before starting school
- Showing respect and understanding for the role of the parent in the child’s education
- Listening to accounts of their child’s development and any concerns they may have
- Making parents feel welcome by being friendly, approachable, and having an open-door policy
- Maintaining an on-going dialogue and celebrating achievements with parents/carers
- Being flexible in arrangements for settling children in
- Annual formal parents evening.
- Regular events for parents to attend school and be part of their child’s learning
- Through the use of a weekly learning sway to offer an insight into what their child has been up to in school and offer ideas for things to try at home based on their learning that week

13. Transition

Into Reception: home visits, preschool liaison, transition visits and personalised settling. Into Year 1: shared CPD and curriculum dialogue, familiarisation visits and robust assessment handover to ensure continuity of provision.

The following process is in place to ensure children’s successful transition to Reception class from previous settings:

- Class Teacher, Early Years Lead, SENDco and the Headteacher liaise with other providers to discuss each individual child and their transition process into our school.
- Children are invited into school for a transition sessions in the summer term; this is a chance for staff to get to know the children and allows the children time to explore their new environment and start to develop relationships with the staff.
- Opportunities for feeder nursery (Jack and Jill) to have visits to familiarise the children with the environment and their new staff.
- Home visits are offered on the day before the children start school. This helps each child see their Teacher in their safe home environment and share their key interests or favourite toys. This is really beneficial in supporting children to feeling safe and secure when starting school.
- Members of staff from Friday Bridge Primary School make links to feeder settings. The number of meetings/visits will depend on the child’s needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child’s transition.

- Parents are invited to an open evening, a way to get to know their child's new setting, staff, familiarise themselves with what their child's first year at school will look like and ask any questions they may have.

14. Safeguarding and Welfare

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. Pro-active and dynamic risk assessments are completed by a member of EYFS staff and safe staffing ratios, PFA and other qualifications as detailed in the EYFS framework, are maintained. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risk. We adhere to our school policies, procedures and have documents in place to ensure children's safety.

15. Monitoring and Evaluation

The EYFS Lead, Headteacher and Governors monitor the quality of environment, interactions, curriculum, assessment, provision enhancements and progress. Staff engage in continuous professional development and reflective practice.