

# Temple Meadow Primary School



## Early Years Policy

### **Safeguarding Policy Statement-**

*This policy is part of the wider umbrella of Keeping Children Safe in Education - and Temple Meadow's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.*

### **Policy Ownership: Early Years Lead**

<b>To SLT:</b>	Oct 2025
<b>To Staff:</b>	Oct 2025
<b>To Governors:</b>	Oct 2025
<b>Document Live date:</b>	Oct 2025
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	Oct 2026

## Rationale

At Temple Meadow Primary School, we deeply value the role of the Early Years Foundation Stage in providing children with a secure and strong foundation for future learning and development. We believe that the early years are pivotal in shaping a child's educational journey and fostering a love of learning that will support them throughout their lives.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the relevant statutory Department for Education (DfE) guidance, including the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework. It ensures that each child experiences a happy and positive start to their school life, enabling them to build a solid foundation for future academic success and personal growth.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is built upon the belief that every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support needed to enable them to fulfil their potential. Research shows that children develop quickly in the early years, and the experiences they have between birth and age five have a profound impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is vital for children's well-being and long-term development.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework sets out the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure children learn and develop well, are kept healthy and safe, and are fully supported in becoming 'school ready'. It also promotes teaching and learning that provides children with a broad range of knowledge and skills, giving them the right foundation for good progress through school and life.

At Temple Meadow, we are committed to fostering a supportive, nurturing, and enriching environment where children can feel secure, happy, and excited about learning. We ensure that each child's early years experiences are filled with opportunities for them to thrive, discover, and grow – aligned with our core values of Belong, Nurture, Thrive, Discover, and Grow.

This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Assessment Policy
- Positive Interactions Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Drug and Substance Misuse Policy
- Healthy Eating and drinking Policy
- Disability & Equality Policy
- Medical Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Admissions Policy

## Our Vision for Early Years

At Temple Meadow Primary School, we are a partnership of children, staff, families, and governors, working together to create an enriching and supportive learning environment. In our Early Years, children are happy, confident, and motivated to learn. They are inspired by rich, challenging learning experiences, with ample opportunities to explore, take risks, and engage in imaginative, hands-on activities.

We have high expectations for all our children, recognising that each child comes with their own unique starting point. We provide a nurturing and safe environment where every child is cared for, supported, and encouraged to develop at their own pace. We plan learning experiences based on each child's stage of development, ensuring they have the chance to thrive, discover, and grow in all areas of their development.

Our aim is for children to develop as well-rounded individuals who are independent, resilient, and confident both in themselves and in their interactions with others. We foster a strong sense of belonging and celebrate the diversity of cultures within our school, encouraging good citizenship and the core values of Belong, Nurture, Thrive, Discover, and Grow.

We believe that early childhood is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives. It is not merely preparation for the next stage but is vitally important in its own right. Our approach is to support the development of the physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and cultural aspects of each child's life. These aspects are the prime areas of learning, supported by the characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

At Temple Meadow, play-based, child-centred learning is at the heart of our practice. We are committed to excellence in everything we do and strive to help every child reach their full potential, ensuring that the Early Years Foundation Stage provides the best possible start for all our children.

## Aims

Through the implementation of this policy, Temple Meadow Primary School aims to:

- **Give each child a happy and positive start** to their school life, establishing a strong foundation for a lifelong love of learning.
- **Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually, and emotionally**, ensuring well-rounded growth that supports their overall well-being.
- **Encourage independence** within a secure and friendly atmosphere where children feel confident to take risks and explore their world.
- **Support the development of social skills**, such as co-operation, sharing, and forming positive relationships with peers and adults, in a nurturing environment.
- **Work closely with families** to meet each child's individual needs, ensuring that every child reaches their full potential in a supportive partnership.
- **Promote the well-being** of each child, ensuring they feel safe, secure, and emotionally at ease, fostering a calm and positive learning environment.
- **Ensure children's safety** through a Protective Behaviours culture, embedding strategies that help children feel safe, valued, and empowered.
- **Encourage the development of positive relationships** between children, their peers, and adults, supporting their growth as compassionate and confident individuals.
- **Ensure smooth transitions** from home to school, Nursery to Reception, and from Reception to Year 1, helping children adapt seamlessly at every stage of their early years journey.
- **Value each child as a unique individual**, recognising their strengths, interests, and needs, and tailoring our approach to help them thrive.
- **Support and encourage all children** to achieve their best in a nurturing and caring environment, where they feel empowered to take responsibility and rise to challenges.
- **Foster a 'can-do' culture**, where children are encouraged to take initiative, meet challenges with confidence, and develop resilience through a positive approach to learning.
- **Provide a stimulating curriculum** that develops children's enjoyment, confidence, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, ability to cooperate, and independence, making learning a fun and engaging experience.
- **Deliver a curriculum that reflects our society**, embracing diversity, using the latest technology, promoting cultural awareness, tolerance, and global responsibility.
- **Develop children's connection with nature** by using outdoor spaces as an essential part of the learning experience, allowing them to explore, engage, and learn in natural environments.
- **Foster a strong sense of community** among families, staff, children, and the local area, encouraging social responsibility and a shared sense of belonging.
- **Promote every child's voice**, encouraging a sense of ownership, responsibility, and active participation within the school community.

## The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of their Reception year. Our Early Years accommodates children from the age of 3 to 5 years old.

### Nursery

We have one Nursery class, which splits into three cohorts: AM Nursery, PM Nursery and our group of 30-hour children who stay from 8.45 to 3.30 (including lunch time.) Within our Nursery there is a self-registration board which promotes a sense of belonging and supports with name recognition. Children can access our Nursery either at the start of the term they turn 3 (if eligible for the finding) or at the next intake point after their third birthday. The school office facilitates Nursery Admissions (see Nursery Admissions Policy).

### Reception

Admissions to Reception are handled by Sandwell School Admissions. Children are eligible for Reception in the academic year in which they turn 5. We operate two Reception classes, with thirty places available in each class; therefore we have an overall PAN (Pupil Admission Number) of 60.

## Curriculum aims and principles

The key themes of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) underpin all of our practices, and we draw from the Development Matters document to support our approach. The themes and the principles that inform them work together to support the growth and development of children in our Early Years provision.

#### Overarching Principles from the Statutory Framework:

1. Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and developing. We ensure that each child is treated as an individual, with a unique set of needs, strengths, and interests. Our approach supports their growth into resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured learners.
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. By fostering secure attachments with adults, children develop the confidence to explore, learn, and express themselves freely.
3. Children learn and develop well in enabling environments. These environments are rich in resources, opportunities for exploration, and responsive teaching. Our qualified staff are trained to recognise each child's interests and needs, adapting their support to ensure that learning progresses over time.
4. Partnership with families. We value the contributions of parents and carers, knowing that children benefit greatly from a strong partnership between school and home. Families play an essential role in supporting their child's learning journey.
5. Children develop and learn at different rates. We acknowledge that every child develops at their own pace. Our curriculum is flexible and responsive, allowing children to progress according to their individual developmental stages, with appropriate support and challenge.

We recognise that children joining Temple Meadow Primary School have already acquired valuable learning experiences from their time in various educational settings within our community. Building on this prior knowledge, the Early Years education we offer is rooted in the following core principles:

#### Our Key Principles:

- Provide a balanced curriculum: Our curriculum, based on the Early Years Foundation Stage, covers the seven areas of learning and development, with play at the heart of the learning process. Play enables children to explore, experiment, and express themselves in meaningful ways.
- Build on prior learning: We celebrate and build on what children already know and can do, ensuring that each child's learning journey is supported by a strong foundation of prior experiences.
- Promote inclusion: We are committed to ensuring that no child is excluded or disadvantaged. Every child is given equal opportunities to learn and develop, regardless of their background or individual needs.

- **Work in partnership with families:** We see parents and carers as integral partners in a child’s learning. We engage with families to ensure that our education is aligned with each child’s needs, and we offer consistent communication and support to foster a strong school-family connection.
- **Plan challenging learning experiences:** Our learning activities are planned to be both challenging and engaging, considering the individual child’s interests, strengths, and areas for development. This is informed by continuous observation and assessment of each child’s progress.
- **Provide rich and stimulating environments:** We create enabling environments—both indoors and outdoors—that encourage exploration and independent learning. These spaces are filled with a range of activities, resources, and experiences that support curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking.
- **Key person approach:** Each child has a key person, a dedicated member of staff who builds close, nurturing relationships with the child, supporting their emotional and developmental needs. Through strong, trusting relationships with adults, children learn to express themselves, solve problems, and collaborate with others.
- **Celebrate individuality:** We understand that each child is unique. We celebrate their individuality and provide a safe and secure environment in which they can learn and grow. Children are encouraged to become resilient, confident, and self-assured individuals.

## Outside learning environment

At Temple Meadow Primary School, we are proud to have a dedicated Early Years outdoor learning space that is accessible to children every day. We believe that outdoor play is an essential part of a child’s development, and we encourage our children to explore and engage with nature, no matter the weather. By removing any barriers to outdoor learning, we ensure that every child can experience the benefits of being outside, which supports physical, social, and cognitive development.

Our outdoor learning space is an extension of our continuous provision. It is carefully planned and equipped with a wide variety of resources that facilitate learning across all areas of the curriculum. These resources support creativity, problem-solving, physical activity, and co-operative play.

In addition to providing the resources, our staff also plan and lead structured activities that support the children’s development. However, we also believe in giving children the freedom to make their own choices, fostering their independence, decision-making, and ownership of their learning.

Each day, we complete risk assessments to ensure that the outdoor learning environment is safe and suitable for all activities. This allows us to support adventurous play while maintaining safety.

At key points during the year, children also have the opportunity to access the wider school grounds. These experiences are designed to broaden their learning, offering a range of new environments and stimuli that enhance their overall development and understanding of the world.

## Forest school

Our Reception children participate in regular Forest School sessions, which are an integral part of our outdoor learning program. Forest School provides children with child-centred learning opportunities that foster confidence, self-esteem, and independence through hands-on experiences in a natural environment.

We encourage families to provide an all-weather appropriate Forest School kit for their child, ensuring they are ready to engage fully with outdoor learning. However, to remove any barriers to participation, we offer spare Forest School kits in school for our disadvantaged pupils, ensuring all children have equal access to this valuable experience.

Forest School is more than just outdoor play—it is a unique learning process that allows children to take risks, explore, and engage in unstructured play that enhances their emotional, social, and physical development. In these sessions, children have the freedom to explore their environment, learn to problem-solve, and develop key skills that support their overall growth.

On entry to Reception, we are mindful that many children may face challenges such as a lack of confidence in making relationships, difficulties with communication skills, and challenges with fine motor skills. Forest School provides a safe and supportive environment where children can build their confidence and develop these skills through practical, experiential learning.

## The seven areas of learning

At Temple Meadow Primary School, we follow the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage framework, ensuring all children develop through the seven areas of learning and development, which are interconnected. These areas are divided into Prime and Specific areas.

### Prime Areas

1. **Communication and Language**  
Development of spoken language is fundamental to all learning. Through frequent conversations, reading, and storytelling, children expand their vocabulary and language structures, supporting cognitive and social development.
2. **Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED)**  
PSED is vital for children’s well-being and future learning. Through supportive relationships and guided experiences, children build emotional resilience, social skills, confidence, and a positive sense of self.
3. **Physical Development**  
Physical activity supports overall development. Children build strength, co-ordination, and fine motor skills through a range of physical play and activities, both indoors and outdoors, helping with later skills like writing and literacy.

### Specific Areas

4. **Literacy**  
A love of reading is cultivated from an early age, with children developing language comprehension and word reading. Writing is nurtured through transcription (spelling/handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas before writing).
5. **Mathematics**  
A strong foundation in numeracy is essential. Children develop confidence in number sense and understanding patterns, supported by hands-on activities that promote spatial reasoning and mathematical vocabulary.
6. **Understanding the World**  
Children develop an understanding of the physical world, their community, and different cultures through real-world experiences and exposure to diverse stories, fostering a broad vocabulary and knowledge.
7. **Expressive Arts and Design**  
Opportunities for creativity help children explore materials and develop self-expression. Regular engagement with the arts enhances their imagination, communication, and ability to interpret the world around them.

### Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

The Characteristics of Effective Learning describe the ways children approach learning. At Temple Meadow, we believe that how children learn is as important as what they learn. To support this, we foster:

- Engagement: Encouraging curiosity, enthusiasm, and energy in learning.
- Independence: Giving children the freedom to make choices and follow their interests.
- Thinking Skills: Adults provide thoughtful interactions, guiding children to develop their thinking and problem-solving skills.

We believe these approaches empower children to become confident, creative, and lifelong learners, enabling them to thrive across all areas of learning.

## Planning for learning

At Temple Meadow Primary School, we take a child-centred approach to planning, ensuring that our Early Years curriculum is both engaging and developmentally appropriate. Our planning process incorporates both long-term and short-term planning to ensure comprehensive coverage and progression across all areas of learning.

## Long-Term Planning

Our long-term plans outline the topics and themes for each term, ensuring that there is a broad and balanced curriculum across the Early Years. We have designed our plans to ensure cohesion in topics across both Nursery and Reception. This approach ensures that:

- Progression is built into the curriculum, avoiding repetition and ensuring that children’s learning is continuously evolving.
- A layered curriculum for our Nursery cohorts, where learning builds and deepens, while also providing a strong base of prior knowledge for children transitioning into Reception.
- The key skills to be covered are clearly identified, with a focus on developing a deeper understanding and smooth transition as children move from Nursery to Reception.

The long-term plan also ensures that we provide a solid foundation for all children, whether they are just beginning their journey in Nursery or transitioning into Reception, ensuring that learning is progressive and developmentally appropriate.

In addition, we have coverage documents that ensure all aspects of the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) are met throughout the year, providing a clear overview of how our topics and themes align with the curriculum’s expectations.

## Sensational Starts

To ignite children’s curiosity and engagement, we plan sensational starts to each topic. These activities serve to immerse the children in the new theme, sparking their imaginations and providing real-life, tangible experiences that support the development of key areas, such as:

- Communication and Language: Through rich, interactive experiences and discussions.
- Writing: By offering opportunities for mark-making, storytelling, and structured writing activities.
- Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED): Through collaborative activities and play that focus on relationship-building, emotional regulation, and self-expression.

## Weekly Planning

We create weekly timetables and plans that identify the provisions and activities for both indoor and outdoor settings, ensuring all seven areas of learning are covered. These plans are based on the children’s interests and developmental needs, offering a balanced mix of structured activities and child-initiated play with clear intent.

## Schemes of Work

To provide structured, high-impact learning in specific areas, we follow well-established schemes of work:

- Little Wandle for Phonics: A systematic and progressive phonics program that ensures children develop their reading and writing skills in a structured way. We ensure full fidelity to the scheme to maximize the impact of phonics instruction on early literacy.
- Kinetic Letters for Handwriting: A multisensory approach to teaching handwriting that supports children in developing correct letter formation, grip, and fluency. We implement this program with full fidelity to ensure children gain the confidence and skills needed for neat, legible handwriting.
- Mastery of Maths: This approach emphasises deep understanding and problem-solving in mathematics. We provide varied opportunities for children to explore number, shape, and space, ensuring a secure foundation for future mathematical learning.

By adhering to the principles of these schemes, we ensure that children receive a coherent, progressive, and evidence-based curriculum that builds the key skills and concepts they need to thrive.

## Ownership and Adaptation

Our teachers take full ownership of their planning, ensuring that each plan is responsive to the needs and interests of the children in their care. Teachers are encouraged to adapt plans as necessary, adjusting to reflect the individual learning styles, progress, and interests of the children. This ensures that the learning experience is always relevant, meaningful, and engaging for every child.

All planning is overseen by the Early Years Lead, ensuring consistency and high standards in delivery. The Early Years Lead supports staff in reflecting on practice, providing guidance on how to adapt and extend learning to ensure all children can thrive.

This planning approach, combined with the structured schemes and the flexibility for personalisation, ensures that our Early Years curriculum is rich, responsive, and rooted in the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Nursery Rhymes and Rhyme Time

We place a high value on Nursery Rhymes as a key part of our Early Years curriculum. Nursery rhymes offer a range of benefits for children's development, including:

- **Enhancing language and vocabulary:** Nursery rhymes introduce children to a rich variety of words, phrases, and sounds that help expand their vocabulary.
- **Building reading knowledge and skills:** Rhymes support early literacy development by helping children with rhythm, rhyme recognition, and the structure of language, all of which are essential for reading.
- **Improving memory and recall:** By repeating and reciting nursery rhymes, children strengthen their memory and cognitive skills.
- **Strengthening home-school connections:** Nursery rhymes create opportunities for families and children to engage in shared learning experiences at home, fostering stronger relationships and supporting the home learning environment.

### In Nursery

In Nursery, we follow the Little Wandle Rhyme Time programme, which is designed to develop children's vocabulary and enhance their ability to recall nursery rhymes off by heart. This structured approach ensures that children enjoy a language-rich environment, allowing them to make meaningful connections between words, sounds, and their meanings.

### In Reception

In Reception, nursery rhymes and songs are woven throughout the areas of learning and are incorporated into our daily routines. By revisiting familiar rhymes and songs, children deepen their understanding, build on prior learning, and continue to develop their communication skills, preparing them for future reading and writing development.

## Partnership with families

We believe that fostering a strong partnership with families is essential to a child's development. We recognise that together we can have a significant impact on a child's learning journey. We actively encourage families to engage confidently in their child's education through a variety of avenues:

- **Stay and Play Sessions:** Families are invited to attend 'stay and play' sessions each term, allowing them to experience their child's learning environment, interact informally with staff, and connect with other families.
- **Learning Workshops:** We offer workshops that provide practical advice and support on how to best support their child's learning at home.
- **Regular Communication:** We maintain an open-door policy, encouraging families to speak with teachers at the beginning and end of the school day. Additionally, families are invited to attend family engagement evenings to discuss their child's progress in more detail.
- **Tapestry:** Families can contribute observations about their child's development on Tapestry, allowing us to celebrate children's achievements and track progress. This platform also serves as a way to share key updates and reminders from the Early Years team.
- **Weekly Home Learning:** We provide weekly home learning tasks (see Home Learning Policy) to give families the opportunity to support their child's learning and consolidate the skills taught in school. This encourages family involvement and reinforces the child's development outside the classroom.

### Working with Other Services and the Community

We believe in working collaboratively with external services and community organisations to meet the individual needs of our children. This includes:

- **Information Sharing:** At times, we may need to share information with other professionals to ensure the best support possible for children's learning and development.
- **Community Engagement:** We enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting local professionals from various fields to engage with the children. These interactions help bring real-world experiences into the classroom and broaden their understanding.

### Health and Wellbeing

We prioritise the health and wellbeing of all our children. In partnership with the School Health Nurse Programme, we provide regular health checks for children, including assessments of height, weight, and vision. Additionally, health professionals visit the school to talk to children about healthy lifestyles and teach them how to look after their teeth.

## Inclusion

At Temple Meadow Primary School, our ethos wholeheartedly embraces inclusion, recognising the unique abilities, strengths, and experiences that each child brings. We value the diversity of our children and understand that each child has their own developmental path, shaped by a range of life experiences, backgrounds, and cultures.

We strive to provide every child with the opportunity to achieve their best, setting realistic yet challenging expectations that meet their individual needs. By understanding and respecting each child's learning journey, we can tailor our approach to maximize their potential. We aim to build upon children's knowledge, experience, and interests, fostering their self-esteem and confidence. Our teaching strategies are flexible and varied, designed to meet each child's needs, whether they require additional support or more challenging activities to extend their learning.

### Inclusion in Practice

We are committed to:

- Providing a wide range of opportunities to engage, motivate, and support children in their learning, ensuring that every child feels valued.
- Ensuring that children work in a safe and supportive environment where the contribution of each child is respected.
- Using resources that reflect diversity, promoting respect for different cultures, and ensuring that materials are free from discrimination or stereotyping.
- Offering challenging activities tailored to the needs of all learners, including those with advanced abilities.
- Monitoring children's progress regularly and taking action when needed to provide the necessary support, liaising with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) and Inclusion Lead when required.
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We follow the guidelines set out in our SEND and Inclusion policies, working closely with families and external agencies to ensure that each child receives the support they need.

### Speech and Language Support (SALT)

For children who require Speech and Language Therapy (SALT), specific targets are set by the Speech and Language Therapist. These targets are shared with the teaching team, allowing staff to provide targeted support in the classroom and within the continuous provision.

- A Learning Support Practitioner (LSP) works closely with the child to support them in meeting their SALT targets. Progress is recorded in the child's SALT folder, and evidence is gathered through 1:1 sessions and Tapestry uploads during child-initiated play.
- We monitor the child's progress regularly, ensuring that targets are being met, and adjust strategies where necessary.

### Supporting Children with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)

Children identified as having additional needs are placed on the SEND register and have an individual SEND folder. This folder contains their provision map and child-friendly targets using the Widgit tool. The class teacher is responsible for ensuring these needs are met and supported through the strategies outlined in the provision map.

If a concern is raised regarding a child's progress or emerging additional needs an internal referral to the SENCo is made. Families are always informed when a referral has been made, and we work in partnership to ensure the appropriate steps are taken.

At Temple Meadow, we are dedicated to ensuring that all children, regardless of their starting point or background, feel included, valued, and supported in their learning journey. Through a tailored approach to each child's development, we aim to enable them to reach their full potential and thrive in our Early Years environment.

## Assessment and reporting

Assessment plays an important part in helping us to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities and assess the need for support. We use formative assessments to assess the learning and development of children in our Early Years. The Early Years team observe children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. This information is then used to shape the experiences for each child.

## Statutory Reception Baseline Assessments

The reception baseline assessment (RBA) is a measure of a cohort's starting point and is used to measure progress from Reception to the end of Key Stage 2. The RBA is completed within the six weeks of a child starting school. The materials and resources are stored by the Assessment Lead in a secure filing cabinet. The assessments are carried out by the class teacher in a quiet space and recorded on the online system. Once all children's assessments are completed and have been checked these are submitted on the [Reception Baseline Assessment \(education.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reception-baseline-assessment). Any new children who start Reception that have not completed the baseline at their previous school are assessed by Temple Meadow.

## Assessments and tracking progress

At Temple Meadow Primary School, we ensure that each child is given the time they need to settle into their learning environment and become familiar with routines before conducting any formal assessments. When children start in Nursery or Reception, we allow them the opportunity to form relationships and adjust to their new setting. After this settling period, we conduct a baseline assessment to understand their starting points in key areas of learning.

### Internal Baseline Assessment Process

Our baseline assessments are conducted through the following methods:

- Observations of children's engagement, social interactions, and participation in both structured and child-initiated activities.
- Phonic assessments to assess early literacy development.
- Child-initiated writing evidence to observe fine motor skills and early writing abilities.
- Holistic teacher judgements based on professional understanding of the child's developmental progress and learning needs.

These assessments provide insight into each child's individual learning needs and allow us to identify patterns of attainment across the cohort. This data supports our ability to adjust teaching strategies and plan interventions for groups or individual children. We also gather additional information from previous pre-schools, families, and childminders to create a more complete picture of the child's learning journey.

### Recording and Analysis of Baseline Data

Once the baseline assessments are complete, teachers record the data on Bromcom, our School Information Management System. This includes a record of each child's standing against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

- The Early Years Lead conducts an in-depth group analysis of the data, identifying trends and patterns. This analysis helps in identifying key groups of children, including those requiring additional support.
- This information is shared with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and discussed during phase meetings. Key children are highlighted so that all staff can contribute to planning and supporting children with the next stage of their development.

We assess children at three key points throughout the year:

1. Baseline – Upon entry into Nursery or Reception.
2. Mid-year – To monitor progress and identify any emerging needs.
3. End of year – A final assessment which is shared with families through the end-of-year report.

### Marking and Assessment Codes

To track children's progress in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) goals, we use a simple marking system:

- 1: Not on Track – Child is not yet meeting the expected level for this area of learning.
- 2: On Track – Child is meeting the expected level for this area of learning.

These assessments inform the planning of targeted support and interventions, ensuring each child receives the appropriate level of challenge and guidance to support their development.

By assessing at baseline, mid-year, and end of year, we ensure that every child's progress is tracked and monitored. This approach enables us to respond promptly to children's learning needs, making adjustments to our teaching and provision to ensure all children achieve their full potential.

## Next steps

Once baseline assessments have been completed, gaps in learning and next steps are identified. These key targets for each child are monitored by the class teacher. Next steps and target children are discussed in phase meetings and outcomes of these discussions inform planning and focused interventions. Key next steps will be shared on Tapestry for families to support with at home.

## Phonic assessments

We believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Nursery and Reception and follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression, which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

## Nursery

### Foundations for phonics in Nursery

We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and language' and 'Literacy.' These include:

- sharing high-quality stories and poems
- learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
- activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
- attention to high-quality language.

We ensure Nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

## Reception

### Daily phonics lessons in Reception

We teach phonics for 30 minutes twice a day. In Reception, we build up from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers. Children make a strong start in Reception; teaching begins in Week 3 of the Autumn term.

We follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress:

'Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy'. Please refer to the school Phonics and Reading policy.

For children who need additional support, we provide 'Keep Up' sessions to ensure they don't fall behind. These sessions are targeted at reinforcing key phonics skills, with extra practice and support to help children catch up and keep pace with the rest of the class. This ensures that no child is left behind and all are provided with the opportunity to succeed.

By following this structured approach, we aim to ensure that all children make excellent progress in phonics, setting them up for a successful transition into reading and writing across the curriculum.

## Wellcomm assessments

At Temple Meadow, we use WellComm Screening to assess children's speech, language, and communication development in both Nursery and Reception. This helps us identify any early speech and language needs and track children's progress in these critical areas.

### Nursery WellComm Assessments

- Autumn 1: All children in Nursery are screened using the WellComm tool. The results are recorded on the WellComm screening word template, which highlights whether children pass (green) or need additional support (amber or red).
  - Amber and Red results: If a child scores amber or red, targeted support is planned through weekly activities focused on the areas they need improvement. This includes small group work and activities tailored to their needs.

- Data Recording and Monitoring: The results are entered into the Nursery EYFS tracker, and the data is reviewed in the Autumn term and Summer term during the Local Authority Data return for WellComm.
- Family Involvement: If a child does not pass the screening, the teacher shares the results with the family and provides an activity pack for home support.
- Talk Boost: Children scoring amber are placed into the Talk Boost intervention group, where targeted speech and language support takes place.
- Half-Termly Screening: Children are screened every half term to track progress and identify emerging needs quickly.

### Reception WellComm Assessments

- Autumn 1: All children new to Temple Meadow and those who did not pass the Nursery WellComm screening in Summer 2 are screened again in Autumn 1. The results are recorded similarly on the WellComm screening word template, categorizing them as either passed (green) or needing support (amber or red).
  - Data Sharing: The WellComm data is shared in phase meetings and with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to ensure the whole team is aware of children's progress and needs.
  - Focused Planning: If a child does not pass the screening, they are added to the forest school planning and their specific needs are addressed in weekly planning. Activities are designed to target their areas of need.
  - Family Communication: Families are informed of their child's progress and provided with an activity pack for home learning support. Children scoring amber are included in Talk Boost interventions.
  - Ongoing Screening: Children who do not pass the initial screening are re-screened every half term until they pass.

### Holistic Assessment Practice

At Temple Meadow, holistic assessment is central to understanding and supporting each child's individual learning and development. Assessments are ongoing, informed by a variety of methods:

- Observations: Teachers and staff assess children's progress through observations, both during adult-led activities and child-initiated play.
- Discussions: Conversations with families and regular team discussions also inform assessment. This ensures a well-rounded picture of each child's progress and development.
- Child-Initiated Writing and Evidence: Writing and other work produced by children, along with verbal and non-verbal interactions, are used as part of the assessment process.
- Tapestry: All assessment information is stored in Tapestry, our online learning journal. This includes:
  - Wow Moments: Photographs, written observations, pupil voice, and samples of work produced by the child.
  - Parental Involvement: Families have access to Tapestry and are encouraged to contribute their own observations to the child's learning journey. Staff monitor engagement and ensure families are active contributors by reviewing their activity on the platform. If there are barriers to engagement, these are addressed through discussions with families.

### Monitoring and Intervention

- Regular Monitoring: The Early Years Lead regularly monitors the Tapestry accounts to ensure children have quality assessments and observations. This helps maintain a thorough and accurate record of each child's learning journey.
- Interventions: Where needed, interventions such as Talk Boost are implemented based on assessment data to address areas of concern, such as speech and language difficulties. The impact of these interventions is tracked, and adjustments are made to the provision accordingly.

By combining WellComm screening, holistic assessment practices, and interventions, Temple Meadow ensures that children's individual needs are met and progress is closely monitored throughout their Early Years journey.

## Tapestry

At Temple Meadow, we encourage families to share their child’s milestones and moments of celebration on **Tapestry** as well. This two-way communication helps us build a richer picture of each child’s learning and development, both at school and at home. By sharing these special moments, families actively contribute to their child’s learning journey, strengthening the partnership between home and school.

## Writing moderation

Each child in Nursery and Reception has a Literacy book. This book contains evidence of children’s child-initiated mark making and writing as well as guided writing. Evidence is short dated and annotated with pupil voice to add context where required. Termly moderation takes place in phase across Early Years to ensure children are making progress and there is a clear journey. Moderation is also taken to SLT.

## Early Learning Goals (ELG)

In the Summer term, no later than the 30<sup>th</sup> June, the EYFS profile must be completed for each child. This provides families and staff with a well-rounded picture of the child’s knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels and their readiness for Year 1. Each child’s level of development must be assessed against the Early Learning Goals. Teachers must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels (‘emerging’). Once the profiles have been written and attainment added into Bromcom, the results are sent to the Local Authority.

The ELGs support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child’s development, and their readiness for Year 1. When forming a judgement about whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, teachers draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement.

See the EYFS Statutory Framework for the ELGs.

## Early Years Pupil Premium

All extra funding we receive will be used to support areas in which we identify that the child will best benefit in interventions. We track children’s progress to ensure that they are making good progress and to ensure that support is adjusted to target specific areas as the child develops. EYs Pupil Premium is used to support Wellcomm interventions, resourcing and school experiences. See our Pupil Premium report on our school website.

## First Aid

### Paediatric First Aid

3.29 At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate must be on the premises and available at all times when children are present and must accompany children on outings. The certificate must be for a full course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A. PFA training<sup>19</sup> must be renewed every three years and be relevant for people caring for young children and babies.

3.30 Providers should take into account the number of children, staff, and layout of premises to ensure that a paediatric first aider is able to respond to emergencies quickly.

3.31 All staff who obtained a level 2 and/or level 3 qualification since 30 June 2016 must obtain a PFA qualification within three months of starting work in order to be included in the required staff:child ratios at level 2 or level 3 in an early years setting<sup>20</sup>. To continue to be included in the ratio requirement the certificate must be renewed every 3 years.

3.32 Providers should display (or make available to parents) staff PFA certificates or a list of staff who have a current PFA certificate.

Our paediatric first aiders are displayed in our provision, so all adults are aware of who our first aiders are.

## Health and safety

Children’s safety and welfare are our top priorities at Temple Meadow. We create a secure environment and provide a curriculum that teaches children how to make safe choices, assess risks, and understand boundaries, rules, and limits. We encourage children to take risks safely and highlight how to recognise and avoid hazards.

Our comprehensive Health and Safety Policy includes stringent procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of all children. These include dynamic risk assessments for both indoor and outdoor environments, which are completed daily by staff before use. Reception staff are responsible for the outdoor Early Years risk assessment, which must be signed off before registration.

We promote good health in several ways:

- First-aid boxes are available in Nursery, Reception, and the Nook.
- Toys are disinfected with Milton spray every Friday.
- Only prescribed medicines are administered, in line with the Administering Medication Policy.
- Serious accidents, illnesses, or injuries are reported to Ofsted within 14 days (see Medical and Safeguarding Policies).
- Fire evacuation plans are in place (see Health and Safety Policy).
- All food and drink provided is healthy, balanced, and nutritious.
- Information on dietary requirements and allergies is recorded and shared.
- Fresh drinking water is always available.
- Smoking is prohibited on the school premises (see Smoke-Free Policy).

These policies, along with our handover procedures, ensure that safeguarding and safety are consistently maintained.

## Healthy eating

At Temple Meadow, we promote healthy eating as an essential part of our Early Years curriculum, supporting the physical and cognitive development of all children. In line with the recent Food and Nutrition Statutory Guidance and our Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy, we ensure that children receive nutritious, balanced meals that contribute to their overall well-being. Our approach encourages healthy food choices, teaching children the importance of eating a variety of foods to support growth and energy. We offer a range of fruits and vegetables, through the school free fruit and vegetable scheme, while limiting sugary snacks and drinks. Additionally, we engage children in discussions and activities that help them understand where food comes from, the role of food in keeping them healthy, and the importance of hydration. Our healthy eating and drinking practices also support children in developing positive habits early, empowering them to make informed choices as they grow.

We have drinking water machines in our Nursery and Reception and are [part of the Cool Milk Scheme.

See our Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy for more information.

## Ratios

### Nursery

Temple Meadow has robust recruitment practice in place, which aims to ensure that members of staff employed in our Early Years are suitable. All new Early Years staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection and health and safety. (See induction checklist).

Staff are supported with undertaking appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience.

The Early Years Lead is a qualified teacher with at least two years’ experience working in an Early Years setting. At least half of the other Early Years staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification. At Temple Meadow, our LSS are minimum of NVQ3.

Appropriate cover for the teachers is implemented when they are not class-based.

Temple Meadow provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the ‘Statutory framework for the Early Year’s foundation stage.’

In Nursery during a teaching session the ratio is 1:13 as a teacher is working directly with the children.

3.34. For children aged three and over in registered early years provision where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another approved level 6 qualification, is working directly with the children<sup>39</sup>:

- there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children
- at least one other member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification

During the 30-hour lunch time, the ratio is 1:8 because the teacher is not working directly with the children. There must be a level three adult in charge and at least half of all the other staff MUST hold a level 2 qualification.

3.46 For children aged three and over in maintained nursery schools and nursery classes in maintained schools<sup>30</sup>:

- There must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children<sup>31</sup>.
- At least one member of staff must be a school teacher as defined by section 122 of the Education Act 2002<sup>32</sup>.
- At least one other member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification<sup>33</sup>.

## Reception

3.47 Reception classes in maintained schools and academies are subject to infant

class size legislation<sup>34</sup>, which is limited to 30 pupils<sup>35</sup> per school teacher<sup>36</sup> (subject to permitted exceptions) while an ordinary teaching session is conducted. 'School teachers' do not include teaching assistants, higher level teaching assistants, or other support staff. Consequently, in an ordinary teaching session, a school must employ sufficient school teachers to enable it to teach its infant classes in groups of no more than 30 per school teacher<sup>37</sup>.

## How do we improve our teaching skills and knowledge of how children learn?

At Temple Meadow the Early Years team access ongoing CPD through phase meetings and staff meetings.

Staff are also encouraged to access and targeted for specific training that meets the needs of the school and is outlined in the School Development Plan. Performance development and appraisal cycles support staff development.

## Transition

At Temple Meadow, we understand that starting school and moving between year groups can be challenging for both children and families. To ensure a smooth and confident transition, we have a well-established procedure that supports children at every stage of their journey. Our approach focuses on meeting the individual needs of each child and fostering strong partnerships with families and external settings.

### Nursery Induction

Our Early Years team values a smooth transition into Nursery. Families are invited to tour the school, learn about daily routines, and meet the staff. Upon joining, children's details, including medical information and interests, are recorded and shared securely. Families also receive a transition leaflet and an Early Years prospectus. The child is invited for a 'settling in session' with a family member to familiarise themselves with the environment. Once the child starts, a checklist is completed to ensure all necessary information is gathered.

### Reception Induction

Families new to Reception are invited to a welcome meeting where they can meet staff, ask questions, and receive an Early Years prospectus. Children receive a transition pack over the summer, containing materials such as a name-writing card and phonic mat, to prepare them for the upcoming term. The Early Years Lead liaises with any external nurseries to share information about the child's development. Children are then invited for a 'settling in session' and a 'come dine with me' experience to help them acclimatise to the lunch environment. This approach builds a strong foundation for their transition into Reception.

### **Transition to Year 1**

As children transition to Year 1, we use the EYFS Profile to support their progression. Reception staff work closely with Year 1 teachers to ensure that children's learning and development are appropriately supported. The children are invited for visits to Year 1, where they meet their new teacher and see their new classroom. In the summer term, Year 1 and Reception staff meet to discuss each child's progress, ensuring a smooth and well-planned transition. Families are also invited to a Year 1 transition meeting to familiarize themselves with the new routines. Year 1 teachers also observe Reception children to further ensure continuity in learning and care.