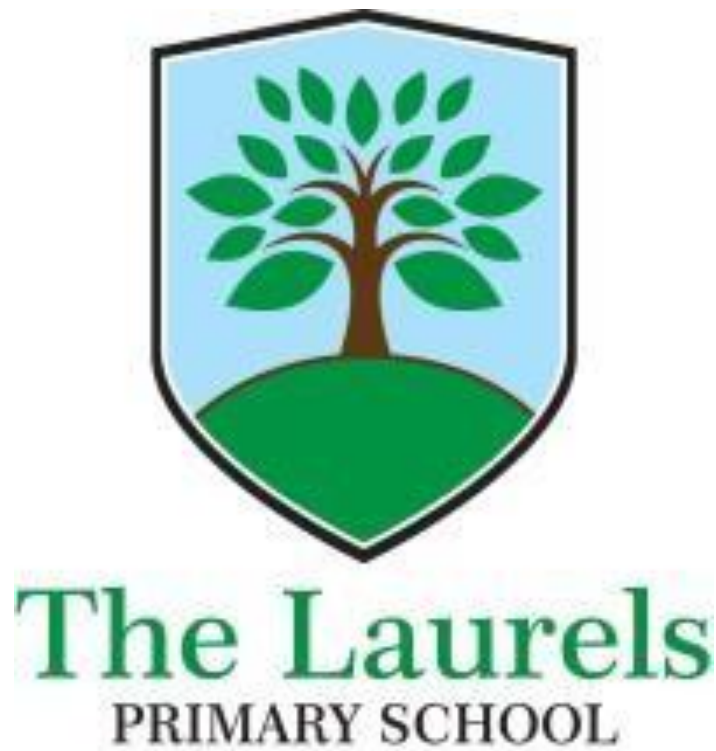




Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2026-2027

Compiled/ Reviewed and Updated	Author: Rebecca Metcalf	Date: September 2026
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Aim

At Team Laurels, we want every child to have a happy, nurturing and ambitious start to their school journey. Our school vision, *Getting better never stops*, begins in Reception. We provide a language-rich, inclusive and stimulating environment in which children feel safe, valued and confident to explore, take risks, make mistakes and develop as independent learners. Through high-quality interactions, carefully sequenced teaching and purposeful play, we build strong foundations for future learning.

Our values of Resilience, Reflection and Responsibility shape everyday experiences. Children learn to persevere, think about what they have tried, celebrate progress and take increasing responsibility for themselves, their relationships and their environment. Our school rules, Ready, Respectful, Safe, give children consistent expectations as they learn together. Adults model these values and help children recognise that learning is a continuing process of getting better.

Our approach is guided by the four EYFS principles:

- Every child is unique, with individual strengths, interests, needs and ways of learning.
- Positive relationships help children to feel secure and become confident and independent.
- Enabling environments, with responsive teaching and support from adults and strong partnerships with families, help children build their learning over time.
- Children develop and learn at different rates. Our education and care include every child, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Our curriculum

Our Reception provision follows the EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers effective from 1 September 2026.

Development Matters is non-statutory curriculum guidance which supports our planning and professional judgement.

Reception has an ambitious and carefully planned curriculum. We identify the important knowledge and skills children need and sequence learning so that secure foundations develop over time. Children revisit, practise and apply learning in different contexts. Their interests, experiences and ideas help us make the planned curriculum meaningful and engaging.

Our curriculum covers all seven interconnected areas of learning. The prime areas are communication and language, physical development, and personal, social and emotional development. The specific areas are literacy, mathematics, understanding the world, and expressive arts and design.

Reception forms the foundation of the wider Laurels curriculum. Teachers consider what children have already experienced and what comes next, so that learning connects across Reception and into Year 1. The Early Learning Goals are end-of-Reception assessment measures; they do not replace our broad curriculum or act as an ongoing checklist.

Teaching, purposeful play and provision

We explicitly teach important foundational knowledge and skills alongside purposeful play. Carefully planned continuous provision offers familiar opportunities to explore and practise. Enhanced provision introduces resources, experiences or challenges that extend learning. Linked provision gives children opportunities to apply what has been taught, with adults providing support and challenge when needed.

Adults observe, join play sensitively, model, explain and ask thoughtful questions. They know when to guide learning and when to give children time to work independently. Teaching and provision develop the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:

- Playing and exploring: children investigate, experience things and have a go.
- Active learning: children concentrate, persist through difficulties and enjoy achievement.
- Creating and thinking critically: children develop ideas, make connections and try strategies.

Our indoor and outdoor learning environment

Our purpose-built Reception outdoor area is an integral part of the curriculum. We plan indoor and outdoor environments across all seven areas of learning, enabling children to explore, investigate, communicate, create, solve problems and collaborate. Carefully chosen resources and continuous and enhanced provision invite children to apply learning independently. Adults review and adapt the environment in response to what children know, can do and need next.

Physical Development

Children have daily opportunities to develop gross and fine motor skills through indoor and outdoor learning. Carefully planned experiences support the development of strength, balance, coordination and control, alongside the fine-motor skills needed for increasing independence and early writing. Children are encouraged to be active, develop confidence in movement and learn about making healthy choices.

Communication, language and literacy

Communication and language underpin learning throughout the day. Adults model clear language, listen carefully and develop vocabulary through conversation, stories, non-fiction, songs and rhymes. Children have repeated opportunities to hear, understand and use new words in meaningful contexts.

We use the SHrEC approach (Share attention, Respond, Expand, Conversation) to support high-quality, responsive adult-child interactions. Adults tune into the child's focus, respond warmly to verbal and non-verbal communication, expand language by building on what the child communicates, and sustain conversation through back-and-forth exchanges. Adults allow time for responses and adapt their language to the child, using comments as well as carefully chosen questions.

Phonics and early reading

We use Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised to teach phonics systematically. Carefully sequenced teaching helps children build the foundational knowledge and skills they need to decode words and become successful readers. Assessment informs practice and additional support so that children can consolidate learning and address gaps.

Alongside phonics, we nurture enjoyment of books through daily stories, shared reading, songs, rhymes and discussion. Children develop vocabulary, understanding and confidence as they talk about texts. We work with families to support reading at home and share approaches that help children practise successfully.

Drawing Club and early writing

Drawing Club develops imagination, language, vocabulary and early writing. Children talk about ideas, draw, create and increasingly communicate their thinking through writing. Adults model language and writing, support the physical skills needed for handwriting and help children connect their growing phonics knowledge with writing.

Meaningful writing opportunities continue throughout provision. Children are encouraged to choose writing for their own purposes, return to ideas and use resources independently. We value their efforts, build confidence and enjoyment, and provide appropriate support as they develop as writers.

Mathematics

We use a mastery approach to mathematics so that children develop a secure and deep understanding of early mathematical concepts. Carefully sequenced teaching, practical experiences, mathematical talk and representations help children build foundational knowledge. Children revisit concepts, notice relationships and explain their thinking, rather than moving on before understanding is secure.

Adults model mathematical language and use practical resources to make ideas clear. Indoor and outdoor provision offer opportunities to explore, practise and apply mathematical ideas through play, routines and problem solving. Assessment helps us identify misconceptions and provide the support or challenge each child needs.

Understanding the World

We help children make sense of their physical world and their community by building on what they already know and introducing them to new people, places, experiences and ideas. Through first-hand experiences, stories, discussion, exploration and our wider opportunities, including trips, visitors and celebrations, children develop curiosity and broaden their knowledge of the world around them. They explore the natural world, begin to understand the past and present, and learn about different people, families, communities, cultures and beliefs. Adults introduce and revisit important vocabulary, helping children make connections between new learning and their own experiences.

Expressive Arts and Design

Children have regular opportunities to explore, create and express their ideas through art, music, movement, imaginative play and a range of materials and media. Adults introduce children to techniques, resources, songs, stories and creative experiences, while giving them opportunities to practise skills, make choices and develop their own ideas. Continuous and enhanced provision enables children to revisit and apply what they have learned independently, developing creativity, confidence and self-expression.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Behaviour, relationships and self-regulation

In Reception we teach the behaviours and routines children need to be successful. Adults model, explain, practise and revisit our expectations, using Ready, Respectful, Safe consistently with the rest of the school. Positive relationships, clear routines and sensitive support help children understand what is expected and experience success.

Through daily interactions, play and Learning For Life lessons, children learn to recognise feelings, build friendships, cooperate and resolve difficulties with support. Adults help children develop self-regulation, resilience and independence at a pace appropriate to their development. We respond to individual needs and help children reflect, try again and recognise their progress.

Inclusion

Ambition for every child

We are ambitious for every child, including children with SEND and disadvantaged children. We identify potential barriers early and work with parents and carers, the SENCo and other professionals where appropriate. We adapt teaching, interactions, resources, the environment and provision to individual needs while maintaining high expectations for what each child can learn and achieve.

Adults build on children's strengths and interests, provide appropriate support and review its impact. Children have opportunities to participate, make choices and develop independence. We recognise different ways of communicating and learning and help every child feel that they belong at Team Laurels.

Transition into Reception

Our partnership with families begins before children start. We welcome parents and carers to a meeting to explain Reception at The Laurels, share key information and begin building trusting relationships. Stay-and-play sessions help children explore the environment, meet adults and begin to feel at home.

Reception staff visit children in nursery and pre-school settings to meet them where they feel comfortable, see their interests and relationships, and talk with the practitioners who know them. Information is shared sensitively so that we can prepare for each child's learning, care and support needs.

Individual meetings with parents and carers in September recognise families as experts in their own child's development. Families have time to share strengths, interests, experiences, development and any individual needs. We bring this information together with previous-setting information and our own observations to understand each child's starting points and plan a positive start.

All children have the option to start full-time in September. Requests for part-time attendance are addressed through the school's admissions and attendance procedures, taking account of the child's age and needs and parents' rights. Arrangements are discussed with families and recorded.

Parent partnership throughout Reception

We value an ongoing exchange of information with parents and carers. Informal conversations at arrival and collection, agreed meetings and communication through Tapestry help us share achievements, understand experiences at home and respond to concerns. Families can speak with us about urgent matters and arrange a confidential discussion when needed.

Once children are settled, we offer a 'six weeks in' workshop for parents and carers to help them support their child's learning. This includes guidance on enjoying books together and supporting early reading at home. Autumn and Spring parent evenings provide opportunities to discuss children's learning, development, progress and next steps with their teacher. We explain our curriculum and classroom routines and share practical ways families can support learning.

At the end of Reception, families receive an annual written report summarising their child's learning and development across the year. It includes outcomes against the 17 Early Learning Goals within the EYFS Profile. Parents and carers have the opportunity to discuss the report with the teacher.

Assessment and knowing what comes next

Starting points and the Reception Baseline Assessment

Our understanding of starting points draws on families' knowledge, information from previous settings and observations and interactions during everyday activities. This gives us a rounded picture of children's strengths, knowledge, skills and needs and helps us plan teaching and provision.

Separately, we administer the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment within the first six weeks of starting Reception, following the current administration and reporting arrangements, including applicable participation provisions.

Ongoing assessment

Assessment is part of teaching and learning. Adults notice what children already know and can do, identify what they need to learn next and recognise where additional support or challenge is needed. They respond through modelling, explanation, questioning, practice and adjustments to provision.

Observations and assessment inform weekly planning and decisions about individual and group support. We review children's responses and progress to judge whether our teaching and adaptations are helping, and adjust them when needed. Our aim is useful information that improves learning while keeping adults focused on interacting with children.

The EYFS Profile

At the end of Reception, we assess each child against all 17 Early Learning Goals, recording expected or emerging for each goal. We complete the Profile and submit the data to the local authority through its agreed process by 30 June.

The Profile supports transition to Year 1. Professional judgement draws on knowledge of the child, including relevant contributions from families.

Transition into Year 1

Transition is a shared process between Reception and Year 1. Reception gradually develops children's independence and learning stamina, while Year 1 adapts its environment, teaching approaches and routines to build on the strengths of EYFS practice. Expectations increase progressively, with practical learning and appropriate continuous provision supporting continuity.

Classroom visits, meeting the adults and experiencing Year 1 routines help children become familiar with their next stage. Where children would benefit from additional support, we use approaches such as extra visits, transition booklets, social stories and individual planning in partnership with families.

Reception and Year 1 teachers complete a thorough handover of children's learning, strengths and next steps, alongside relevant pastoral, SEND and safeguarding information shared through appropriate procedures. This enables Year 1 to build on what is already known about each child and sustain progress and confidence.

Routines, care and safeguarding

Children are expected to arrive on time and well equipped for the day. We provide a mid-morning fruit or vegetable snack, access to drinking water and the school's milk arrangements. A hot lunch is available. Snacks brought from home must follow our food-safety and allergy arrangements.

Attendance

We share our attendance policy with families, follow up unexplained or prolonged absence promptly, contact parents and alternative emergency contacts, and escalate safeguarding concerns appropriately.

Key person

The Reception teacher is the key person for all children in the class and is the main point of contact for parents and carers. Children are also supported by the wider Reception team, who work together to know each child well and meet their learning, development and care needs. When the Reception teacher is unavailable, families can speak to another member of the Reception team or contact the school office.

Safeguarding and staff

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with adults. We follow the current EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements and our school safeguarding, child protection and health and safety policies.

We follow Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. All staff must read Part One in full and follow school safeguarding procedures; the overview is supplementary.

We ensure that adults looking after children are suitable to do so and that they have the appropriate qualifications, training, skills and knowledge; including an up-to-date understanding of safeguarding children issues and policies. Staffing arrangements are organised to ensure safety and to meet the needs of the children.

Practitioners and the designated safeguarding lead receive safeguarding training meeting EYFS Annex C, renewed every two years, alongside school safeguarding updates.

Health, safety and welfare

We promote the good health of the children and take appropriate action when the children are ill, taking necessary steps to minimise the spread of infection.

We ensure we have sufficient information about the medical condition of any child with long-term medical needs and we act on information about a child's dietary needs.

We work with families to ensure children have suitable clothing and equipment for the day, including water bottles, sun hats, sunscreen and wellington boots as appropriate.

Meals, snacks and allergies

Children must remain within staff sight and hearing while eating. A member of staff with a current full-course paediatric first aid certificate must be in the room. Children should sit safely; staff should face them where possible.

Before admission, we obtain dietary, allergy and intolerance information. We update it with families, share it with relevant staff and identify the adult responsible for checking each child's food at every meal and snack. Food is prepared to minimise choking risks and suit individual needs. These arrangements also apply to snacks brought from home.

Allergy action plans are developed and reviewed with families and relevant professionals. Staff must understand allergy and anaphylaxis symptoms and treatment.

Following DfE guidance, we record choking incidents requiring intervention, inform parents and review incidents for recurring risks. Staff handling food follow appropriate hygiene arrangements.

Safe rest and sleep

Any child needing sleep is settled safely. For Reception, we agree individual arrangements with families, provide a suitable rest space, supervise and check the child regularly.

Toileting and intimate care

We work sensitively with families to develop independence in toileting. Children needing nappies, continence support or help with personal care receive an individual approach that protects dignity, privacy and wellbeing. Staff follow the school's intimate-care arrangements. Spare clothes are available; families are asked to return borrowed clothing.

Safe spaces and outings

Outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, equipment and toys must be safe and suitable for their purpose. Regular risk assessments are carried out in these spaces as well as for outings. Parental permission is obtained for outings and essential information and equipment is taken with us. We take accidents seriously and will phone home immediately if there has been a significant bump to the head.

Oral health

Through our curriculum and daily routines, we help children understand the importance of healthy choices, including good oral health. We take part in the NHS toothbrushing scheme and incorporate toothbrushing into the school day.

Digital practice and information

Photography and Tapestry

Staff use school iPads, rather than personal phones or devices, for photographs and videos used in Tapestry. Families are informed about how images are used and how to contact the office to discuss or change permissions. Use of images and records follows the school's data-protection, privacy and safeguarding arrangements.

Children's screen use

We have regard to DfE guidance on children's screen use in early years settings.

As a school approach, adults select purposeful content, support children's use and review its place alongside conversation, play, movement and practical experiences.

Related policies and guidance

This policy should be read alongside the school's current:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Information Report/Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Intimate Care procedures
- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection/Privacy arrangements

Key statutory guidance: Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework; Development Matters; EYFS Profile handbook; Reception Baseline Assessment guidance; Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.