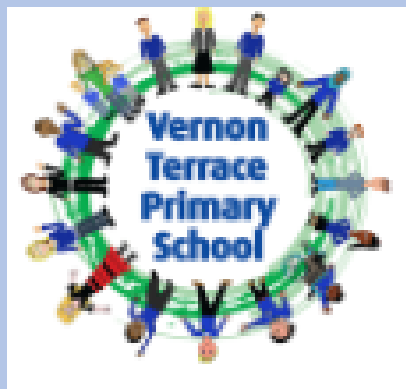


Vernon Terrace Primary School

EYFS Policy 2026



Our Mission Statement:

"We develop our children - socially, emotionally, academically and personally - through a nurturing, inclusive environment. We ensure our children feel safe, with a true sense of belonging. We equip them with essential skills and strength of character to thrive."

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the period of education from birth to 5 years. At Vernon Terrace Primary School our EYFS consists of a Nursery and Reception class. We offer full time and part-time places in our Nursery, 9:00am to 3:00pm Monday to Friday.

Our Reception year starts at 8:45am and finishes at 3:15pm. Nursery and Reception work closely together as an EYFS setting to ensure the best possible outcomes for our children.

This policy describes the key features necessary to provide high quality Early Years education for children in Nursery and Reception. The Department of Education Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage curriculum is divided into two sections, prime areas and specific areas.

Prime areas:

Communication and Language

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Physical Development

Specific areas:

Literacy

Mathematics

Expressive Art and Design

Understanding the World



Intent

In EYFS at Vernon Terrace Primary School, the curriculum intention is to:

- Recognise children's prior learning from previous settings and their experiences at home building upon previous learning;
- Provide first-hand learning experiences;
- Allow the children to build resilience, ambition and integrity;
- Ensure every child is recognised as a unique individual and we celebrate and welcome differences within our school community.
- It intends to underpin fundamental, foundation skills, knowledge, concepts and values.

Our curriculum intends to provide enhancement opportunities to engage learners. We believe that our first-hand experiences of school should be happy and positive, enabling children to develop a lifelong love of learning and preparation for the rest of their schooling journey. The curriculum design ensures children build on previous knowledge, offer exposure to a range of ambitious vocabulary and deepen their knowledge in order to support them successfully to meet their next steps.

Implementation

Our curriculum follows the Early Years Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. This document specifies the requirements for learning and development in the EYFS and provides the prime and specific areas of learning we must cover in our curriculum. The statutory curriculum is supported by Development Matters 2021. Through our knowledge of each child and formative assessments the EYFS team plan exciting and engaging activities that will engage, develop curiosity and move the children's learning forward.

Vernon Terrace Primary School's Nursery and Reception Classes create their own unique blend of whole class, guided, adult-directed play and child-initiated play activities dependent on the interests and needs of the class of individuals. The EYFS team regularly introduces new themes to provide inspiration for learning, whilst providing the flexibility for children to follow their own interests and ideas. These themes have been selected to build upon a child's existing knowledge of the world and broaden their understanding of the wider world. The curriculum is delivered using a range of pedagogical tools in line with the rest of the school, for example use of Talk for Writing, Little Wandle Synthetic Phonics and Kapow. At the heart of each of these themes is communication and literature, with the aim to inspire a love of reading and curiosity in fiction and non-fiction texts.

Our inclusive approach means that all children learn together, however, we also use a range of adaptive teaching methods to support, enhance and scaffold learning, in order for children to reach their full potential. We place a high value on a positive teacher-parent relationship, and strive to establish this link early in a child's school life.

7 Area of Learning in our Curriculum

Communication and Language: Staff develop opportunities for all children to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to practise and extend the range of vocabulary and communication skills they use, to listen carefully, to express ideas and feelings and to organise thoughts.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Staff support the transition to and between settings, allowing children to explore and take risks, promoting an inclusive ethos and providing opportunities for each child to become a valued member of the community. Staff encourage an enthusiasm for knowledge and learning, with a confidence in their ability to be successful learners. Children's social skills will be supported, by providing opportunities that enable them to cooperate and work alongside and with each other and to listen to each other.

Physical Development: Staff develop a range of opportunities for all children to develop and practise their fine and gross motor skills, to increase their understanding of how their bodies work and what they need to do to be healthy and safe. Children have daily opportunities to climb apparatus, which help to develop their confidence in risk taking and increase their physical strength.

Literacy: Staff develop opportunities for all children to explore, enjoy, learn about words and text in a broad range of contexts. They have access to a rich variety of books, fiction, non-fiction and picture books. We follow the '*Little Wandle*' Systematic Synthetic Phonics scheme of learning to teach phonics using a wide range of physical and online resources to support this. Every child has access to a phonics session every day.

For Handwriting we use the Kinetic Letters Handwriting Scheme to support handwriting, which focuses on developing children's core strength and large movements, before putting pen to paper. Once children have developed the strength, staff support children to achieve correct letter formation so that they can enjoy the process of writing and access the writing opportunities on offer within the continuous provision. Within Reception children are encouraged to read at home and are listened to regularly in school by one of the EYFS team. They are given books that match their phonic knowledge in order for them to apply their learning with the aim of becoming successful, confident and fluent readers. We use 'Talk for Writing' strategies to help develop language and storytelling skills.

Mathematics: Staff offer opportunities for all children to develop their understanding of number, measurement, pattern, shape and space by providing a broad range of contexts in which they can explore, enjoy, learn, practise and talk about them. We follow White Rose to support our Mathematics learning. In Reception we place an emphasis on studying key skills of number, calculation and shape so that pupils develop deep understanding and the acquisition of Mathematical language. Children learn through games and tasks using concrete manipulatives which are then rehearsed and applied to their own learning during exploration and in adult directed activities. In Number, we focus on a depth of knowledge around the concepts of: cardinality and counting, comparison, composition, pattern, shape and space, and measures.

Expressive Art and Design: Staff develop opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design and technology, music, movement, dance and imaginative role play activities with a focus on being imaginative and expression. Children have constant access to a range of tools and mediums to help develop their creativity.

Understanding of the World: Staff give opportunities for all children to solve problems, make decisions, experiment, predict, plan and question in a variety of contexts. Children are given time to explore and find out about their environment/natural world and people and places that have significance in their lives both in the past and at present. In addition to this, children are taught about significant famous people from the past, linking to their topics.



Impact

We strive to ensure that our children's progress across the EYFS curriculum is good based on their varied starting points. We also strive for children to reach the Early Learning Goals and gain a Good Level of Development by the end of their Reception year.

The impact of our curriculum is measured by assessment procedures which allow us to measure outcomes against all schools nationally. We measure the percentage of pupils achieving age-related expectations throughout the academic year, by using our termly milestone documents. For those not meeting these, supportive interventions are put in place, such as daily keep up for phonics. Class teachers use observations to make formative assessments informing future planning and ensure that all children build on their current knowledge, develop their vocabulary and skills at a good pace.

Our assessment judgements are moderated both in school and externally with local schools and others in our partnership. We also partake in local authority moderation which validate our school judgements. The impact of our curriculum enables good progress which is shown through data collections and places a strong focus on personal, social and emotional development, language and communication. We foster an enthusiasm for learning, which enables children to have the confidence and skills to make decisions and self-evaluate, make connections and become lifelong learners.

At Vernon Terrace Primary School, we ensure activities support the Characteristics of Effective Learning to ensure learning takes place.

These are:

- 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.

We have dedicated time focused on health and self-care where we explore meditation and relaxation techniques to support a positive mental health. We share a range of healthy snacks and learn about the importance of a healthy balanced lifestyle to maintain our own wellbeing. All of the children perform in a nativity play, attend achievement assemblies, participate in trips linked to the learning themes and explore their local community. Throughout the year we provide regular opportunities for parents and carers to come into school to see their children's work and share successes in assemblies.

Building relationships: Parents as Partners

The school values strong working relationships with our parents. This starts from the term before their child starts nursery or school with new parents invited to 'Stay and Play' sessions with their children and organised home visits. In Nursery parent meetings take place once a year and in Reception, they take place twice a year. Every child receives an annual report in July. When parents and practitioners work together, the results have a positive impact on the child's development and learning, and we therefore seek to develop effective partnership with parents.

The learning Environment

At Vernon Terrace we place great importance on developing children's communication and social skills and central to this is the role of the adult. Our curriculum is responsive to all children's needs and is planned to encourage self-directed activity. There are opportunities for children to engage in both activities planned with adults and also those that they plan or initiate themselves. The Nursery and Reception classes are linked via internal and external doors and the classes are encouraged to mix, especially during the Summer Term to aid the transition for those children entering into our Reception class.

The teaching staff work closely together to provide a rich stimulating environment both inside and outside the classroom to ensure children feel happy and secure. Reception children have access to indoor and outdoor continuous provision and have opportunities throughout the day to use the outdoor space in all curriculum areas. The environment is organised to encourage independence, whilst being inclusive and accessible. Children are encouraged to build in confidence during the foundation years, focusing on our range of Character Muscles, such as kindness, trust, consideration for others, tolerance, perseverance, resilience and forgiveness. We also use Therapeutic Thinking as a way of promoting co-regulation and this informs our whole school Behaviour Policy.

Daily Routine in Nursery

Entry to Nursery happens in September and January. An induction programme is in place, which allows children, parents and teachers every opportunity to meet, thus ensuring a smooth start into Nursery. During this time, information will be gathered about the children, from parents, through home visits and informal observations, to allow appropriate learning opportunities to be planned and develop the children's learning.

A typical day in Nursery will include short adult directed times to develop listening, communication skills, singing rhymes and listening to short stories. Then children are given plenty of opportunities to access the environment independently, developing key communication skills through play. All children have access to free fruit and milk in the morning and afternoon sessions.

Daily Routine in Reception

Entry to Reception happens in September. An induction programme is in place, which allows children, parents and teachers every opportunity to meet, thus ensuring a smooth start to school life. During this time, information will be gathered about the children, from Nurseries, parents and through informal observations, to allow appropriate learning opportunities to be planned based on children's prior knowledge and experiences. School for the first time brings with it new routines, social situations and experiences. It is paramount that children feel safe and settled when starting in Reception, therefore we offer a staggered start to enable the children to get use to the routines and become familiar with the staff prior to being in class for a full day.

Days 1 and 2	8:45am-12pm
Day 3	8:45am – 1pm (staying for lunch)
Day for and after	Full time, 8:45am- 3:15pm

We want children to be happy, feel safe and settled in school, therefore, if your child requires more time to settle into school, we will discuss this with you and a more suitable staggered start will be planned and then reviewed.

New Starters to Reception throughout the Year

The same as at the start of the year, we want children to be settled and happy when starting at Vernon Terrace, therefore, we use a staggered approach in order to aid with the transition.

These are as follows;

New to Country	Children will do mornings only 8:45am- 12pm for two weeks
Relocation from another county	Children will do mornings 8:45am-12pm for one week
Relocation within Northamptonshire	Children will do one morning 8:45am-12pm, then full days after that

We acknowledge that all children are unique and some may require longer to settle, will be arranged through a meeting with the parents and reviewed on a two weekly basis.



Inclusion

Vernon Terrace Primary School is an inclusive school, our school's Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO) liaises closely with feeder nurseries, pre-schools and the EYFS staff. Children identified with specific educational needs, are supported with personalised education plans. These plans are created and monitored to ensure all children achieve. Additional resources or agencies may be required to support identified children and this could be monitored through a cycle of assessing, planning, doing and reviewing which may lead to an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP). All children and their families are valued within our school and we believe our ethos nurtures a sympathetic and caring environment in which children can establish positive relationships.

Children should enter Nursery and Reception toilet trained, unless there is a medical need stated. If a child has a medical need which means they are not toilet trained, an Intimate Care Plan will be created and shared with staff alongside our Intimate Care Policy.

Safeguarding and Welfare

We work in accordance with the following documents: Vernon Terrace Safeguarding Policy, [statutory guidance](#), Vernon Terrace Whistleblowing, Code of Conduct, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021, Equal Opportunities act 2010. as of 2021, it became compulsory to promote good oral health, as well as good health in general including:

The effects of eating too many sweet things and the importance of brushing your teeth.

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Head of Early Years every year. and SLT will review the effectiveness of teaching and learning through exploration and deep dives.

Approved by:

Maya Mousley

Date: 5.05.2026

Last reviewed on: May 2026

Next review due by: May 2027

