Blue Hills Federation

EYFS Policy

AUTUMN 2026

The Blue Hills Federation

The Blue Hills Federation is a collective of three primary schools – Clunbury CE Primary School, Newcastle CE Primary School and St Mary's Bucknell CE Primary School. All three schools share one Executive Headteacher and one Governing Body. When using the term 'Blue Hills Federation' within this policy, it is in reference to all three schools. When policy only applies to one school that school will be named specifically. Newcastle CE Primary School does not have a nursery or a preschool, therefore any references to nursery or pre-school do not apply to Newcastle CE Primary School.

Our Vision

Proverbs 22:6 - Good News Bible

'Teach children how they should live, and they will remember it all their lives.'

We are a caring Church Federation bringing together and serving many communities.

We provide nurturing environments that facilitates learning for all. We encourage everybody to become confident, sociable and responsible citizens who achieve to the best of their ability in preparation for a fulfilling future.

Our Values

Trust and Truth; Joy and Happiness; Love and Respect; Thankfulness; Friendship and Family; Perseverance and Resilience

Approved	**Headteacher**	**May 2025**
Next Review		**Feb 2027**
Statutory update	**EYFS framework 2026**	**September 2026**

Contents

1. Aims 3
2. Legislation 3
3. Structure of the EYFS 3
4. Curriculum 3
5. Assessment 5
6. Working with parents 5
7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures 6
8. Monitoring arrangements 8
9. Linked policies ……6

---

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, dated 13 July 2026 and effective from 1 September 2026.

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At the Blue Hills Federation, children are admitted to reception in the September following their fourth birthday. Newcastle CE Primary School's EYFS provision comprises its Reception class; the school does not provide nursery provision. At St Mary's Bucknell, the EYFS provision comprises of it's pre-school which admits children from 2 years old and Clunbury CE Primary School whose EYFS provision comprises of it's Nursery which admits children from 2 years old.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest statutory framework of the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as

particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

4.1 Planning

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers use the national schemes of work, where appropriate, to support their planning for individual children. The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. The planning is based upon themes with discrete phonics, mathematics and reading directed teaching. However, planning, which is based upon a different topic which is identified as vehicle of interest to deliver the children's next steps in learning, also therefore responds to the needs, achievement and interest of the children. Our medium-term planning identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

At the Blue Hills Federation, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff.
We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

5. Assessment

At the Blue Hills Federation, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

During the first term in Reception (within the first 6 weeks) the teacher assesses the ability of each child using Reception Baseline Assessment. This assessment allows us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

Ongoing observations throughout the year inform the progress of each child. Over the year the assessments are monitored through regular moderations with local schools and at the end of the year the final judgements are moderated formally to ensure accuracy of assessment.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The assessment results are sent to the LA for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information too at parental consultation meetings and in the end-of-year report. The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

6. Working with parents

At the Blue Hills Federation, we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

A strong and effective partnership is built with parents through:

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at our open days, Teddy Bears' picnic or arranged appointments
- Arranging, where possible, visits by the teacher to all children in their childcare provision prior to their starting school
- Providing a handbook of information about commencing school.
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home/School agreement
- Providing an induction meeting for Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have
- Holding a parent consultation early in the academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if staff have concerns about the progress of a child they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them
- Written contact through a school newsletter, Home/School reading diary and whole school newsletters
- Sharing the children's 'Learning Journey' with parents/carers and valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents/carers
- Offering parent/teacher consultation meetings throughout the year at which their child's progress is discussed
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in reception
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food tasting and photographs etc
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as a phonics workshop, assemblies, Christmas productions and sports day etc
- Offering a staggered start to school and this can be extended dependent on the needs and development of the child

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We recognise that children learn best when they are healthy safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff:child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

  - We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils
  - In Nursery, for children aged 2, there is at least one member of staff for every five children. For children aged 3 and above, there is at least one member of staff for every eight children and at least one member of staff for every thirteen children if a member of staff holds Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, or Early Years Teacher Status is working directly with the children. At least one member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification or have received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status. At least half of all other staff must hold an approved level 2 qualification.

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in reception by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- Visiting the dentist
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- We provide healthy snack choice to promote good oral health

From 1 September 2026, the school has regard to the Department for Education's guidance on children's screen use in early years settings. Screen use in Reception is limited, carefully planned, age-appropriate and linked to a clear learning, communication or accessibility purpose. Children do not access screen content without adult oversight, and screens do not replace high-quality interaction, practical play, stories, physical activity or outdoor learning. Appropriate assistive technology for pupils with SEND is considered according to individual need.

The school's safeguarding arrangements set out how mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices with imaging or sharing capabilities may be used. Digital content is checked before use; advertising, autoplay, algorithm-driven content and unsuitable artificial intelligence tools are avoided in Reception.

The school follows the safer-recruitment and suitability requirements in the EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education. Staff and regular volunteers working directly with Reception children must have the appropriate identity, reference, enhanced DBS and, where eligible, children's barred-list checks before starting. Occasional supervised helpers are managed through the school's risk-assessment and volunteer procedures. Staff and prospective staff must disclose relevant information that may affect their suitability, subject to the legal rules on protected convictions and cautions.

Banned dog breeds within section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, including the XL Bully type, must not be kept or present on the school premises at any time, including where a dog has a certificate of exemption.

The detailed safer-sleep requirements for children under two are not applicable because the school provides Reception provision only. If a Reception pupil needs to rest or sleep because of a medical condition, disability or other identified need, an individual plan and risk assessment will specify safe supervision and care arrangements. In Clunbury’s Nursery and St Mary’s Bucknell Pre-School, safer-sleep requirements are followed and children are frequently checked. Children are placed on a firm, flat, water-proof mattress without anything that would potentially cover the child’s face.

When Reception pupils attend school-run breakfast or after-school care, the safeguarding and welfare requirements in section 3 of the EYFS framework continue to apply. The learning, development and assessment requirements in sections 1 and 2 do not apply to wraparound-only care for children who normally attend Reception or an older class during the school day.

Further safeguarding and welfare procedures, including child protection, allegations against staff, whistleblowing, online safety, safer recruitment and staff conduct, are set out in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Online Safety Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and associated procedures.

8. Monitoring arrangements

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head Teacher will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The Governing Body will also be part of this process. **This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where statutory requirements change. The next scheduled review is Autumn 2027.**

9. Linked Policies

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy
Children's screen use and use of mobile phones, cameras and electronic devices	See online safety policy, child protection and safeguarding policy and staff code of conduct
Safer recruitment, staff suitability and volunteer checks	See child protection and safeguarding policy, safer-recruitment procedures and single central record
Banned dog breeds and premises controls	See health and safety, visitor and lettings arrangements
Safeguarding and welfare during school-run wraparound care attended by Reception pupils	See child protection and safeguarding policy and wraparound care procedures