

EYFS at Stedham

Stedham's curriculum meets the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers, effective from 1 September 2026, supported by the non-statutory Development Matters guidance. Its seven interconnected areas are Communication and Language; Physical Development; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Literacy; Mathematics; Understanding the World; and Expressive Arts and Design. The characteristics of effective teaching and learning - playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically - run through all provision.

Overview of Topics



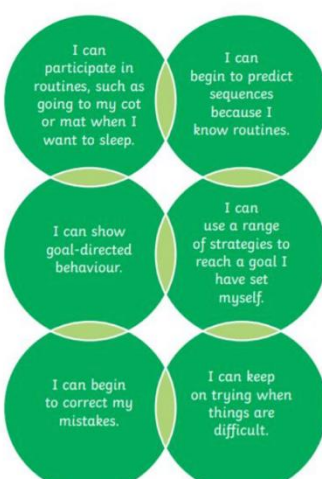
Playing and Exploring

Children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'.



Active Learning

Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements.



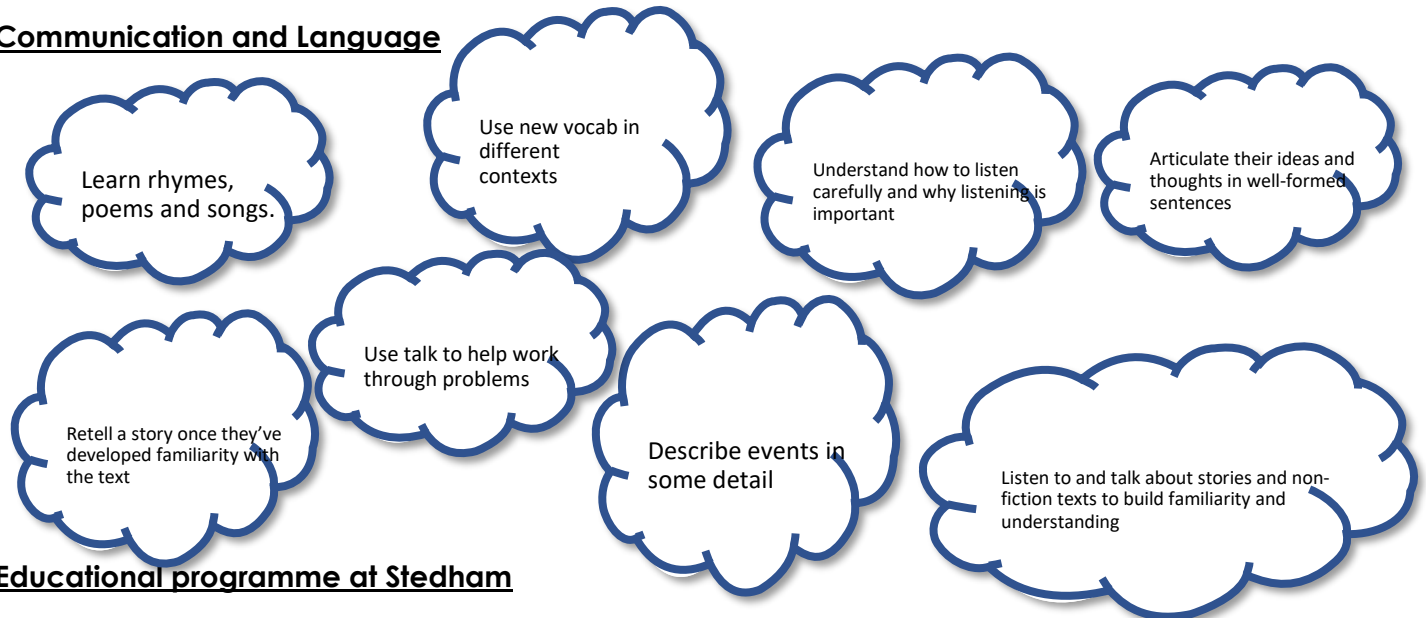
Creating and Thinking Critically

Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.



Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Me and my world	Out of this world	Journeys through time	Homes and habitats	Castles, crowns and kingdoms	Growing together

Communication and Language



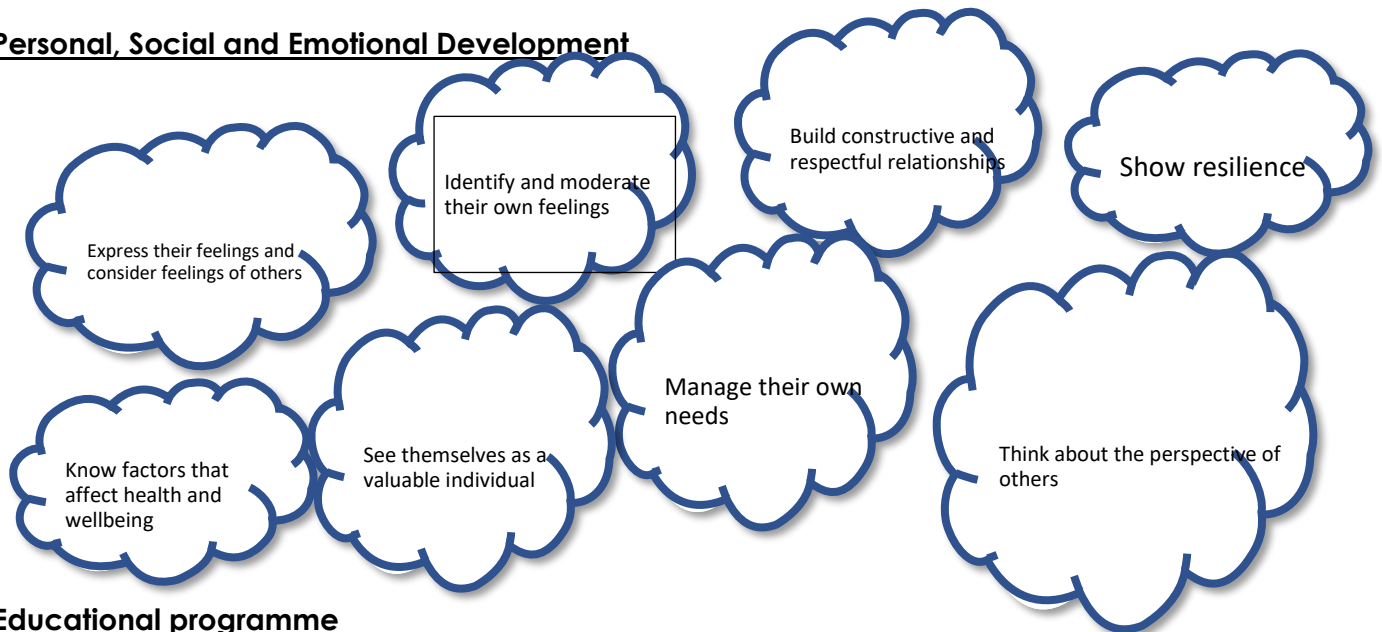
Educational programme at Stedham

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing (and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added) practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

How do we teach... Communication and Language?

- Adult modelling, questioning and conversation.
- Adults thinking out loud to solve problems, modelling complete sentences, and accurate grammar.
- Carpet sessions and assemblies for attentive listening.
- Daily story time and re-reading of texts.
- Quality, vocabulary rich, fiction and non-fiction texts used for taught sessions and story times.
- Daily nursery rhymes and songs to develop vocabulary.
- All children in Nursery and Reception screened using Right Start assessment on entry and individuals identified for intervention/support groups.
- Observed interaction between peers and remodelling of sentences to support.
- Scaffolded play.
- Adults narrating children's actions.
- Open ended questioning from staff to encourage elaboration and conversation.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development



Educational programme

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

How do we teach... Personal, Social and Emotional Development?

- Daily modelling and reminders of school rules.
- Clear routines to support positive behaviour.
- Positive reinforcement of expected behaviour house points, certificates in celebration assembly.
- Circle time and scaffolded interactions to support friendship issues.
- Behaviour issues managed using the Restorative Approaches strategy.
- Parental involvement, parents in for settling sessions and pupil voice ensure we get to know the child and their interests.
- Children make choices about own friendship group and who to sit with at lunchtime etc. whilst also being encouraged to play with others.
- Children are encouraged to reflect on and evaluate their own work.
- Specific, age-appropriate teaching about emotions, relationships, health and staying safe, including online safety.
- Adults encourage children to express their feelings if they are hurt or upset.
- Constructive feedback given.
- Weekly celebration assembly for 'Star of the Week' and 'Well Done' certificates. Children are also encouraged to share awards they achieve out of school.
- Calm down/quiet time for children who need it before returning to the activity.

Physical Development



Educational programme

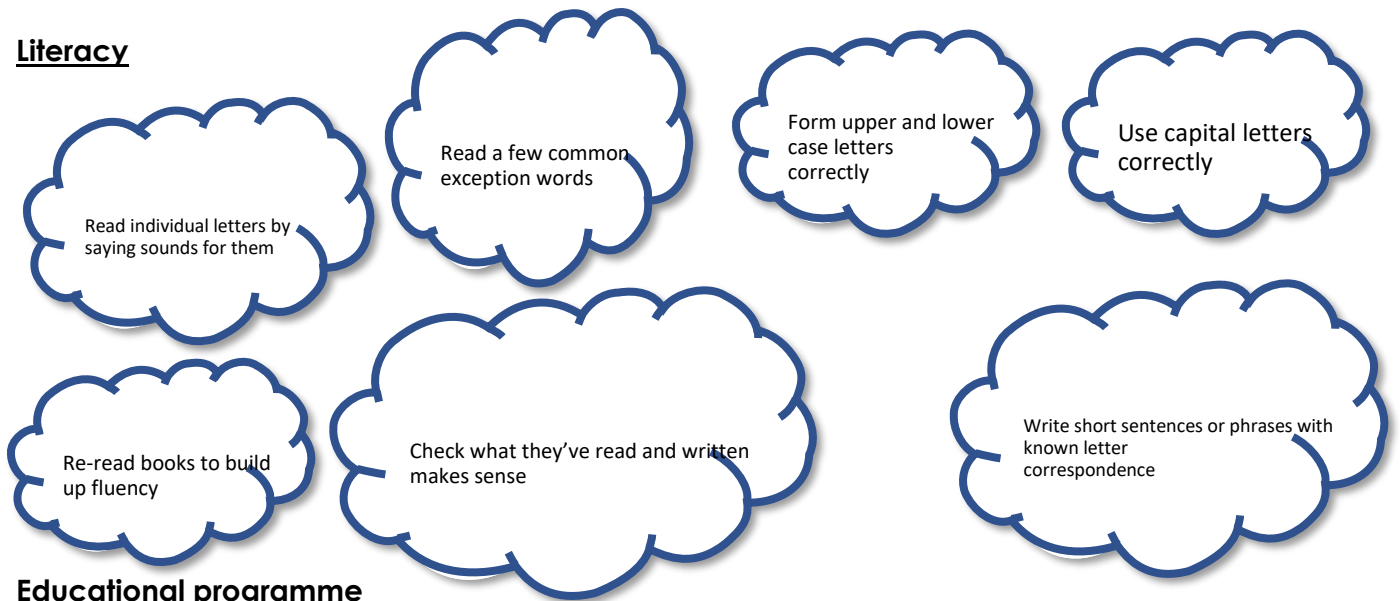
Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, coordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional wellbeing. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

How do we teach... Physical Development?

Daily access to outdoor and indoor provision which includes opportunities for gross motor play i.e. bikes, large bricks, tyres, balance beams, hoops, dens, water wall, mud kitchen, sand pit, parachutes, bats and balls, bean bags and more.

- Daily access to outdoor and indoor provision which includes opportunities for fine motor play i.e. small sand trays, painting, drawing, scissors, playdough, chalk, pegs, colouring, threading, jigsaws, construction, water play etc.
- Weekly timetabled PE sessions both in the hall and outdoors to focus on specific skills.
- Regular physical activity/brain break sessions using resources such as Go Noodle, Cosmic Yoga, Jumpstart Jonny etc throughout the day.
- Mealtimes promote independence and good health. Meals and snacks are healthy, balanced and nutritious; fresh water is accessible; dietary and allergy information is shared with relevant staff; and children are seated safely within sight and hearing of an adult, in line with the EYFS safer-eating requirements.
- Pencil grip continuously monitored and children moved onto the next stage of progression when ready. Pencil grips provided where necessary.
- Follow handwriting policy in Bug Club Phonics- daily practice
- Provision of both left and right handed scissors.
- Use of sensory resources to encourage mark making in various ways i.e. shaving foam, sand, glitter, paint, printing, chalkboards etc.

Literacy



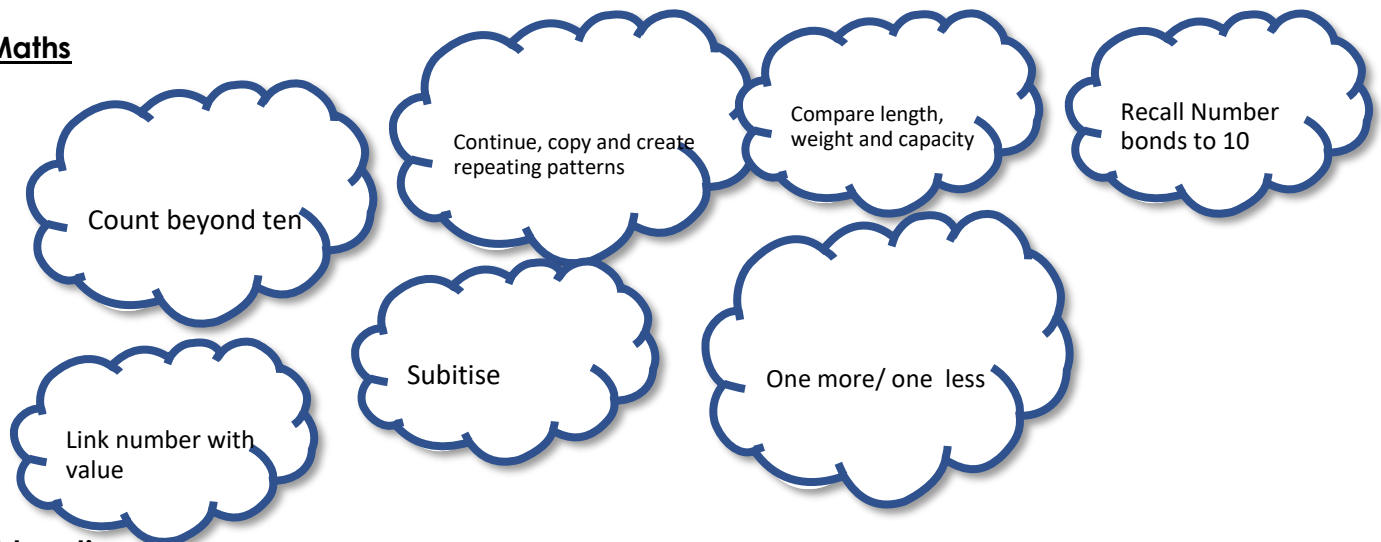
Educational programme

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

How do we teach... Literacy?

- Planned and sequenced daily Phonics sessions
- We follow Bug Club Phonics to teach a clear progression in phonics and common exception words in Reception.
- Parents in Reception invited to a Phonics meeting in first half term to ensure they are aware of how we teach reading and writing and how they can support at home.
- Regular phonics assessment/tracking to ensure children are working at the correct phase and interventions to address gaps.
- Frequent shared and modelled reading and writing in Literacy carpet sessions.
- Comprehension taught during carpet sessions and also when hearing individual readers.
- Quality, vocabulary rich, fiction and non-fiction texts used for taught sessions and daily story times.
- A varied selection of diverse fiction and non-fiction picture books in the provision indoors and outdoors.
- Phonetically decodable reading scheme books for the children to practise and consolidate their phonics knowledge.
- Grapheme and tricky word mats and visuals available at all times in the provision.
- Meaningful reasons and opportunities for the children to read and write for a purpose.
- Daily opportunities for oral blending and segmenting.
- Varied daily writing/writing skill opportunities in provision- based on **Drawing Club**
- Continuous provision includes resources such as notebooks, envelopes, post box, post it notes, chalk boards etc.
- Children are heard reading in school at least once per week.

Maths



Educational programme

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

How do we teach...Mathematics?

- Planned and sequenced daily Maths lessons following the White Rose scheme
- Use of Numberblocks videos and resources for deeper learning.
- Focus on composition of smaller numbers before moving on.
- Consistent modelling of correct mathematical vocabulary.
- Number tracks and lines on view and available at all times.
- Shape is taught in a meaningful and linked way alongside number i.e. triangle is taught when learning about number 3.
- Continuous provision includes various counters, objects for sorting, Numicon, number tracks and lines, tens frames, items to support numeral recognition.
- Lots of practise subitising (recognising amounts without counting them) during taught sessions and encouraged throughout daily routines i.e. how many children are in the sand?
- Modelled and scaffolded play to introduce how Maths can be linked i.e. measuring distances with throwing and jumping games, keeping score in target games, timers for iPads to know when it is time to swap etc.
- Choice to join in with Year 1 activities.

Understanding the World



Educational programme

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, nonfiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

How do we teach... Understanding the World?

- Planned carpet sessions as well as learning in the environment.
- Daily discussions about weather and seasons, including how the environment is changing.
- Visits to the woodland to look at seasonal changes
- Provision of collections of natural objects used i.e. sticks, pine cones, conkers, leaves, shells etc. to encourage children to investigate, discuss and describe.
- Visits into school from professionals from various occupations linked to topics i.e. dental nurse, firefighters etc.
- Visits to places in the local area and beyond such as museums, libraries, farms etc.
- Parents asked to send in baby/family photographs for children to share within the classroom and discuss growth and diversity of families.
- Opportunities to learn about concepts of growth, display and change by planting seeds, observing changes in the garden over time
- When screens or online resources are used, this is purposeful, age-appropriate and supervised, and balanced with conversation, movement, outdoor learning and hands-on play, in line with the current EYFS screen-use guidance.
- Plan and introduce new vocabulary.
- Draw children's attention to forces i.e. how the water pushes up when they try to push a plastic boat under it, how they can stretch elastic, snap a twig but not bend metal, investigating magnetic forces etc.
- Provide opportunities for children to change materials from one state to another i.e. melting ice, cooking etc.
- Explore sinking and floating.
- Varied and diverse texts chosen which support understanding and appreciation of different cultures, countries, disabilities and lifestyles.
- Weekly RE session

Expressive Arts and Design



Educational programme

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

How do we teach... Expressive Arts and Design?

- Provision of a range of materials for children to construct with. Adult modelling to encourage them to think about and discuss what they want to make, identify problems and how to overcome them, and review their work.
- Modelling and teaching of a range of techniques for joining different materials.
- Provide a range of artistic materials and tools and teach children how to use them with care and precision.
- Develop their drawing skills using a variety of media.
- Encourage children to notice features of objects and help them to represent the colour, shape and texture.
- Give children an insight into different types of music including music from around the world, linked to topics and celebrations, and encourage them to move to it.
- Provide a range of musical instruments to explore.
- Provide costumes and props to support children's pretend play.
- Play movement and listening games which use different sounds for different movements.
- Daily opportunities to follow choreographed movement through activities such as Cosmic Yoga and Jumpstart Jonny.
- Encourage children to choreograph their own dances.
- Children take part in Christmas performance for parents

Current EYFS statutory context

Reviewed September 2026

The seven educational programmes and 17 early learning goals remain unchanged. The September 2026 EYFS framework mainly updates safeguarding and welfare expectations, including safer sleep, children's screen use, banned dog breeds and further safeguarding clarifications. Stedham applies the requirements relevant to its Reception provision through its whole-school policies, procedures and day-to-day practice.

What this means at Stedham

Assessment. Assessment is ongoing and formative, based on practitioners' knowledge of each child. It should not create long breaks from interaction or excessive paperwork, and physical or photographic evidence is not required. The Reception Baseline Assessment is completed within the first six weeks. The EYFS Profile is completed by 30 June, shared with parents and Year 1, and records whether each early learning goal is expected or emerging.

Safeguarding. The school's designated safeguarding lead and all staff follow the EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and local procedures. All staff read KCSIE Part One in full and follow the school's safeguarding, whistleblowing, attendance/absence, safer recruitment and mobile phone/camera procedures.

Health, food and screen use. Provision promotes oral health, daily physical activity and outdoor learning. Food and drink are healthy, balanced and nutritious, with safer-eating and allergy procedures followed. Screen use is purposeful, age-appropriate, supervised and balanced with active, social, creative and hands-on experiences.

SEND, equality and partnership. The curriculum is ambitious and inclusive for every child. Staff make reasonable adjustments, identify needs early, work with the SENCO and other professionals, and maintain a regular two-way flow of information with parents and carers. Children's home languages are valued while they are given sufficient opportunities to learn and use English.

Current documents

[EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers](#)

[Development Matters \(non-statutory curriculum guidance\)](#)

[EYFS Profile handbook](#)

[Reception Baseline Assessment framework](#)

[EYFS nutrition guidance](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026](#)

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026](#)

[SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years](#)

[Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education](#)

This curriculum overview should be read alongside Stedham's current safeguarding, SEND, attendance, behaviour, online safety, health and safety, medicines and food/allergy policies.