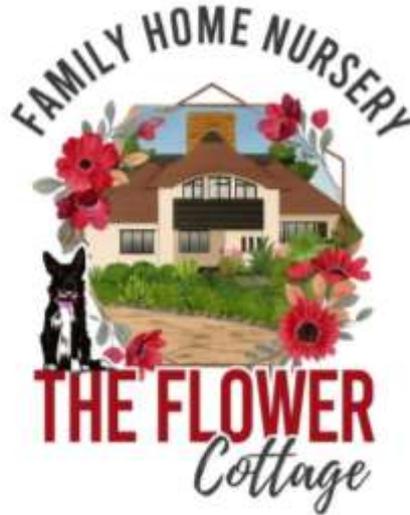


# Planning, Learning and Development



In this booklet, you will learn:

- **What we plan and when** (Intent)
- **How we put our plans into practice** (Implement)
- **Why we do what we do** (Impact)

You will discover how The Flower Cottage supports and extends children's learning, the effective techniques we use, the meaning of Continuous Provision, and how we build on experiences to create small, achievable next steps for each child. This booklet also explains our planning, curriculum, and pedagogy, including the **Three I's**, as well as the statutory documents and support tools we use as a childminding setting.

Pour yourself a lovely drink of your choice and enjoy reading our Planning, Learning, and Development booklet.



## Our environment and continuous provision

My home-from-home setting is thoughtfully organised both indoors and outdoors to ensure that all resources are easily accessible to the children. We offer a wide range of learning materials across our indoor and outdoor environments. Inside, play areas are arranged using wicker baskets, deep and shallow trays, and cube storage units. These contain a varied selection of loose parts, natural materials, plastic items, and open-ended resources designed to engage children and encourage exploration.

'Continuous Provision' refers to the consistent availability of carefully chosen resources within the environment each day. This approach enables children to explore safely and independently, make their own choices, and follow their interests. It also provides opportunities for challenge and open-ended learning. The learning environment is reviewed weekly across the entire setting and adapted or enhanced as needed to reflect the children's interests and developmental needs.

Resources are rotated every few weeks to prevent boredom and to stimulate creativity and imagination, ensuring that materials remain inviting and purposeful. As a childminder, my role is to extend each child's learning by introducing new ways to explore their interests, encouraging appropriate challenge, and fostering a sense of awe and wonder.

All baskets are clearly labelled with real photographs of the toys they contain, helping children to identify and independently access resources. Clear labelling also supports organisation, promotes independence, and encourages children to take responsibility for tidying up.



This booklet is reviewed and updated as and when necessary

## The term 'Planning'

Planning is the process of thinking ahead and deciding in detail how something will be carried out before it begins. It ensures that activities, experiences, and opportunities are purposeful and support children's learning and development effectively.

We carefully record and review our planning to ensure that our continuous provision remains inviting, stimulating, and supportive of all areas of learning, both indoors and outdoors. During each session, we observe the children closely, building on their chosen activities, interests, and play. From these observations, we plan one or two focused activities per day (where appropriate), designed to extend their knowledge, skills, and development based on their individual interests.

We also maintain a 'special dates' calendar, which maps out the year ahead. This allows us to prepare for and participate in a variety of events, celebrations, and festivals, enriching the children's experiences and broadening their understanding of the world.

Each week, we complete a 'Weekly Planning and Reflection' record. This documents the child's voice and interests, adult-led activities, next steps, 'WOW' moments, outings, and any new foods introduced. It also includes space for professional reflection, noting one aspect that went well and one area for improvement. This reflective process supports continuous improvement in my practice and helps me prepare effectively for the week ahead. Prior to each week, parents and carers receive an 'Events Table and What to Bring' document to inform them of any planned trips or themes. Families are provided with the full events table, as outlined on page 10.



Autumn Term  
Ages: 3 months to 5 years  
Opening hours: 9am-4pm

### Events, important information and items/clothing required:

- Wellies, slippers, jellies and coats provided at the setting
- Please bring plenty of spare clothes
- **COVID test and to the extent planning is required, do not worry if the day shows as 'blank'**
- Planned in accordance with special events, festivals/celebrations
- Focus activities are not forced if children are engaged in their own interests
- Give table, sand/water, outdoor painting, slough station and mark making trolley always available to the children
- Thinking style activities
- Weekly Spanish sessions
- Weekly baking/cooking
- Wide dance to promote fine motor movements

Wed 29 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> Oct	Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct
<b>This week we are introducing:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Book Baby (Speech and language)</li> <li>• Brush time</li> <li>• Book Bags</li> <li>• Autumn Photos</li> </ul>	<b>Beginning our Autumn photos</b> Autumn photos opportunities will run on weekly until 27 <sup>th</sup> October.	<b>Down on the farm</b> Bake with Mrs. Anna Day. Doing light chocolate mosaic for soup and decorated Christmas for store.	<b>Stargazing</b> Spanish and sensory lesson with Abby 7.00am-10.30am	<b>Intergenerational Photo Mats</b> Autumn / Halloween special at the local city hall.	<b>Autumn Festival</b> Football session with coach Lou and coach Gailine (Following Tuesday and Friday)  "Lunch and nap slightly earlier"  Free play everyday
Free play everyday Strong focus on feelings and emotions	Free play everyday Strong focus on feelings and emotions	Free play everyday Strong focus on feelings and emotions	Free play everyday Strong focus on feelings and emotions	Free play everyday Strong focus on feelings and emotions	Free play everyday Strong focus on feelings and emotions

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## The term 'Curriculum'

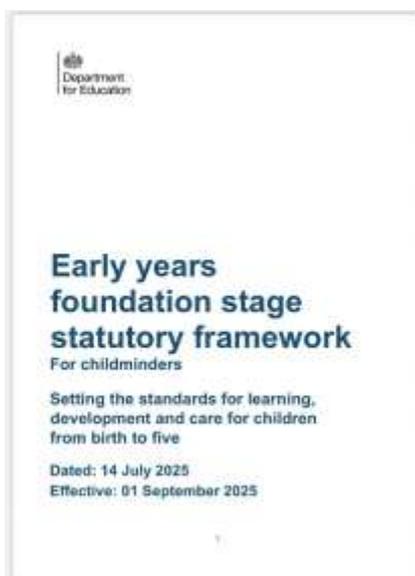
You may already be familiar with the term 'curriculum' from schools, but it is equally important within the Early Years sector. A curriculum simply outlines what we want children to learn during their time with us at The Flower Cottage. Our curriculum is unique to our setting, as it has been carefully developed to reflect our values and approach. It continues to evolve over time, responding to children's individual needs and stages of development, while promoting strong partnerships with parents and carers.

Our curriculum provides clear structure and direction for us as Early Years Educators, ensuring that each child remains at the centre of everything we do. It is designed to be inclusive and appropriate for all children in our care, from one to five years of age.

At The Flower Cottage, we focus on supporting children to develop lifelong skills. These include independence, positive social interactions with peers, confident speaking and listening skills, and the ability to understand and regulate their emotions. Above all, we want every child to feel safe, secure, happy, and loved within a warm, home-from-home environment.

Our curriculum is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which provides the statutory framework for learning, development, and welfare requirements. The EYFS outlines the seven areas of learning and guides us in supporting each child's progress. All of our resources and experiences are carefully chosen to reflect these areas. Using the EYFS statutory guidance alongside Development Matters as a starting point, we identify what we want children to learn and plan how best to support them in achieving this.

When a child first joins the setting, including during their settling-in period, I carry out brief, meaningful observations of their interests and the activities they choose. These observations are conducted while remaining fully present and engaged with the child, without prolonged use of devices. Photographs may be taken as quick snapshots, but written notes are recorded afterwards. From these initial observations, a baseline assessment is created in partnership with parents and carers to identify each child's individual starting points and to ensure their learning journey begins with a clear understanding of their needs and interests.



This booklet is reviewed and updated as and when necessary

Using the Statutory Framework for the EYFS, supported by the non-statutory guidance *Development Matters*, alongside each child's individual baseline and strong partnerships with parents and carers, we identify simple, realistic, and achievable next steps for every child. These targets are supported through our enabling indoor and outdoor environments, a balance of in-the-moment planning (following children's interests), adult-led experiences, and meaningful pre-planned activities—particularly when linked to upcoming events, themes, or celebrations. We also provide appropriate challenge and carefully supported risk-taking opportunities to promote confidence and resilience.

It is important to note that when planning activities linked to our 'Special Dates' calendar, there is no fixed or predetermined outcome. These experiences are intended to help children understand the world around them, including their communities, different occupations, cultures, events, and celebrations. Promoting British Values is an integral part of our practice and is woven naturally throughout the curriculum.

Our curriculum is at the heart of everything we do. We believe children learn best through play, meaningful experiences, and open-ended opportunities within high-quality, purposeful, free-flow provision. Effective scaffolding from us as Early Years Educators ensures that children are supported and extended in their learning at the right time.

We provide opportunities that enable your child to:

- Make choices and develop independence.
- Explore and investigate through sensory and open-ended play.
- Use their imagination in role-play experiences.
- Express ideas, thoughts, and feelings confidently.
- Lead their own play and learning.
- Engage in adult-guided activities.
- Learn in a calm, relaxed, and nurturing environment supported by thoughtful use of music and lighting.
- Access spacious outdoor areas and varied play environments.
- Reach their full potential across all areas of development.

### **The Three I's: Intent, Implementation, and Impact**

**Intent** – This is rooted in our curriculum. It outlines what we want your child to learn and achieve. Our intention is to provide the very best start in life, ensuring children learn in a safe, clean, caring, and stimulating environment. We achieve this through high-quality indoor and outdoor provision delivered by trained professionals.

**Implementation** – This refers to how we put our intentions into practice. It includes our planning processes, the delivery of our curriculum, ongoing observations, individual targets, weekly photo galleries, meaningful partnerships with families, and the wide range of daily experiences we provide to support children's knowledge and development.

**Impact** – This is the outcome of our teaching and provision. It reflects the progress children make from their individual starting points and highlights their achievements. Impact also considers how well children are prepared for their next stage of education, ensuring they leave our setting confident, capable, and ready to continue their learning journey.

This booklet is reviewed and updated as and when necessary

## The term 'Pedagogy'

When we refer to 'pedagogy', we mean the way we bring our planning and curriculum to life — the approaches, methods, and theories we use at The Flower Cottage to support and extend children's learning.

The Flower Cottage is a small, family-run, home-from-home setting offering personalised, attentive care for children aged 9 months to 5 years. We care for a maximum of six children per day between myself, the childminder, and my mum, who is my assistant. This small group size allows us to provide meaningful one-to-one interactions and truly understand each child's individual needs. We see ourselves as guides and facilitators; rather than interrupting children's play, we scaffold their learning by building on their interests, experiences, and ideas.

We place great value on outings, time in nature, and experiences that promote curiosity, imagination, and open-ended exploration. Within our home, we create cosy, nurturing spaces, including soft "caves of light" with twinkling lights and dimmed lamps in the living room, offering a calm area for books and quiet activities. Our playroom is light, peaceful, and inspired by a hygge approach, with steps leading down to a spacious garden that includes a sand shed, investigation station, mud kitchen, fairy garden, forest area, construction space, planting and potting greenhouse, and an outdoor lodge housing a sensory room and role-play area.

A key influence on our pedagogy is the Hygge in the Early Years approach, developed by Kimberly Smith of KSEY Consultancy. After completing accreditation and the Wanderlust Child Nature Study, I have embedded the concept of hygge not only into our practice but throughout the home environment itself. The space is intentionally designed to promote calm and wellbeing, with soft background music, gentle lighting, natural elements, and soothing scents. This approach complements our curriculum and planning perfectly, strengthening our vision of providing a warm, secure, and nurturing home-from-home environment. It also reinforces the importance of outdoor learning and bringing nature indoors.

Hygge (pronounced "hue-gah") is deeply rooted within our pedagogy and is reflected in our daily provision, teaching, and learning experiences.



This booklet is reviewed and updated as and when necessary

## Learning and development

At The Flower Cottage, we ensure that all teaching and learning techniques, observation, assessment, and support are carried out in line with our curriculum. Our aim is to provide the highest quality of care while making a positive impact on each child's development. We offer a balanced approach that combines adult-led and child-initiated play, supported by a purposeful and accessible continuous provision. This promotes independence and also incorporates key themes to extend learning and encourage curiosity, exploration, and growth

## What is our ethos?

At our play-based cottage, we care for a small number of children at any one time to ensure safeguarding and the highest quality of care are at the heart of everything we do. We take a holistic approach, supporting each child in managing their emotions and helping them feel safe, secure, and comfortable in a warm, welcoming home-from-home environment.

Children enjoy sharing nutritious, home-cooked meals, snacks, and drinks together, and can take required naps in cosy spaces with soft lighting and calming music. While some rest, others have time to relax, reflect, or enjoy a story in a peaceful atmosphere.

Our setting provides magical, imaginative, free-flow play opportunities both indoors and outdoors, allowing children to explore, connect with nature, and use all our thoughtfully designed play spaces. We also encourage children to develop a sense of community by visiting local groups, parks, events, and meeting new people in the neighbourhood.

Our aim is to lay strong foundations for children's future health, happiness, and personal growth, helping them develop into confident, curious, and unique individuals. Our practice is inspired by *Hygge in the Early Years* and *The Curiosity Approach*, which guide our calm, nurturing, and exploration-led environment.

## Observations

Observations begin from the very first day a child joins our setting, even during the initial hours of settling in. We continually observe and reflect on each child's development, both visually and in writing, to identify how best to support their learning and growth. Snapshot photos are taken throughout the day, though the number varies depending on the level of adult interaction and the child's engagement. Some days you may receive only a few photos, while other days there may be more. This approach ensures that photography does not interrupt learning or distract children during important interactions.

Typically, I work directly with the children, with my mum (also my assistant) providing additional support on busier days. Parents and carers receive a weekly overview at the end of the week, along with short observations and updates throughout the day as appropriate. All photos are shared securely via WhatsApp. Any content posted on social media always has children's faces covered unless prior consent has been given.

# Assessments

## Written Assessments Carried Out at the Setting

1. **All About Me / Care Plan** – Completed before the child starts, to understand their individual needs and routines.
2. **Baseline Assessment** – Carried out within the first two weeks to identify starting points for learning and development.
3. **Wellcomm Assessment** – Conducted each term to support and monitor speech and language development.
4. **Ongoing Group Tracking and Observations** – Using *Development Matters* checkpoints and the non-statutory EYFS guidance to monitor progress across all areas of learning.
5. **2-Year Check** – A progress review for children aged between 2 and 3 years.
6. **End-of-Year Report and Transition Form** – Completed to support preparation for school and the next stage of learning.

No additional written paperwork is required. Communication with parents and carers is maintained through WhatsApp, business messenger, email, phone calls, or discussions during drop-off and collection.

We also liaise regularly and effectively with the local authority, and additional support from external professionals or agencies can be arranged when needed to ensure every child receives the help they require

## Home learning – Working in partnership with parents and carers

To further support children's next steps in learning, home learning bookbags are available to take home. These bookbags may include a simple book to enjoy in the evening or before bedtime, promoting literacy and focus, or a more engaging activity designed to develop creative skills, problem-solving, and completion of a task.

Parents and carers can choose to opt out of the home learning bookbags if they feel they are not needed. Bookbags are only sent home when relevant and once the current learning objective or next step has been achieved. Depending on the child's progress in the setting, there may be gaps between receiving bookbags.

We also encourage parents and carers to share photos or examples of any speech, activities, or achievements from home to help support ongoing learning and development.



This booklet is reviewed and updated as and when necessary

## Online support hub

I consistently review the setting as a whole to ensure that all methods of communication with parents and carers are effective, high-quality, and easy to use, especially when using apps or social media. To enhance support, I have created a private Facebook group exclusively for current parents and carers at The Flower Cottage. This group allows families to share ideas, reviews, children's voices, or photographs from experiences outside the setting—although participation is entirely optional. Parents and carers can simply check in for updates, post anonymously if they wish, and all posts are reviewed before being published to ensure safety and privacy.

This support tool also allows me to share home learning ideas, celebrate achievements within the setting, and communicate important information efficiently. It helps create a secure and collaborative environment where families and staff work together to provide the best outcomes and opportunities for our children. Any sensitive information or photographs of individual children, along with weekly overviews, will continue to be sent directly via WhatsApp as usual.



# Events table

Our **events table** is an essential document that parents and carers should read before attending, so they know what is needed and what is planned for the coming days. It also includes any planned absences for myself or my mum (assistant), along with details of which staff member will be covering during these times.

The events table highlights all activities taking place both inside and outside the setting, including themes, topics, celebrations, and festivals. It also provides reminders for any appropriate clothing or footwear required for each activity. Some weeks may appear quieter, but this is often because the children are fully immersed in creative, play-based learning.

We aim to balance external events with time for free play, adult-guided interactions, and independent exploration, ensuring children enjoy their days without feeling rushed or constrained by schedules. Balance is key to maintaining a calm, playful, and nurturing environment. An example of the events table is provided below:



Autumn Term  
Ages: 9 months to 5 years  
Opening hours: 8am-6pm

### Events, important information and items/clothing required:

- Wellies, slippers, jellies and crocs provided at the setting
- Please bring plenty of spare clothes
- **Child led and in the moment planning inspired**, do not worry if the day shows as 'blank'
- Planned in accordance with special events, festivals/celebrations
- Focus activities are nil forced if children are engaged in their own interests
- Glue table, sand/water, outdoor painting, dough station and mark making trolley always available to the children
- Tinkering style activities
- Weekly Spanish sessions
- Weekly baking/cooking
- White dance to promote fine motor movements

Wk: 29.9.20	Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> Oct	Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct
<b>This week we are introducing:</b>	<b>Beginning our Autumn photos</b> Autumn photo opportunities will now be available until 31 <sup>st</sup> October.	<b>Down on the farm</b> Taste safe farm animal bag. Using light chocolate mousse for mud and blended cheese for straw.	<b>Bilingual</b> Spanish and sensory lesson with Holly  10am-1030am	<b>Intergenerational Moo Music</b> Autumn / Halloween special at the local care home.	<b>Midland Futsal Academy</b> Football session with coach Josh and coach Cedam (Alternating Tuesdays and Fridays)  "Lunch and nap slightly earlier"
	Free play everyday  Strong focus on feelings and emotions	Free play everyday  Strong focus on feelings and emotions	Free play everyday  Strong focus on feelings and emotions	Free play everyday  Strong focus on feelings and emotion	Free play everyday  Strong focus on feelings and emotions

**Please don't forget to regularly check our business Instagram, Facebook, and website for the latest photos of the setting and updates on what our children have been exploring and achieving as a group.**

**If you have any further questions about your child's learning and development, please don't hesitate to send me a message.**

**Kind regards,  
Caitlin – The Flower Cottage**

**Thank you for taking the time to read  
our Planning, Learning and  
Development booklet.**

**I hope you have found all the  
information you were looking for.  
Please don't hesitate to get in touch if  
you have any questions or enquiries.**

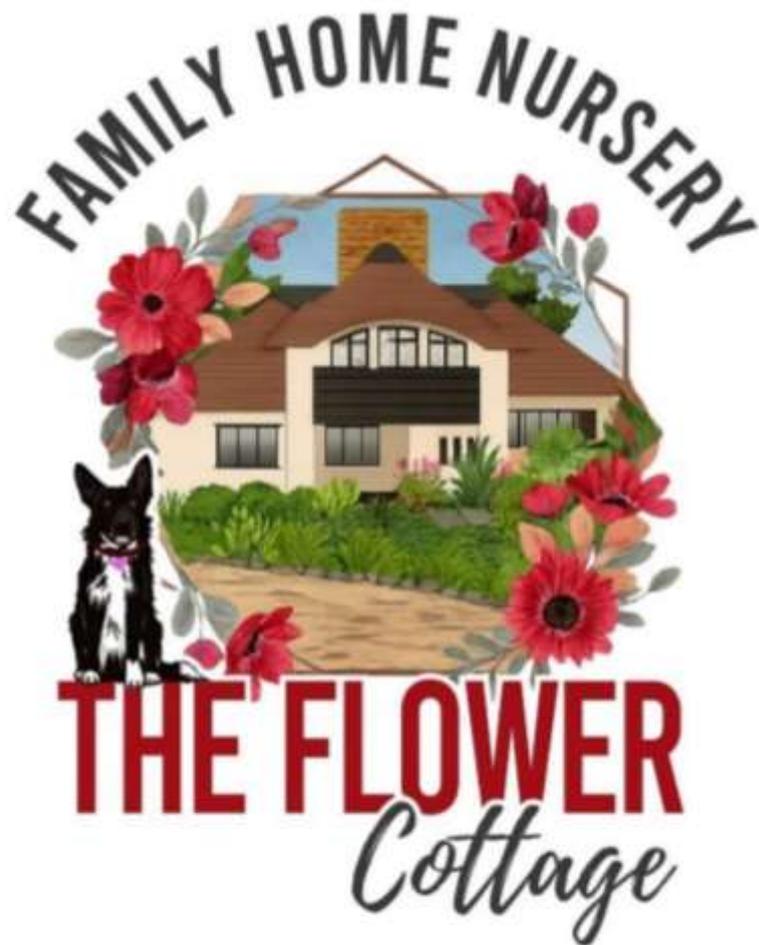
**With love and big hugs,**

**Caitlin**

**– The Flower Cottage**



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