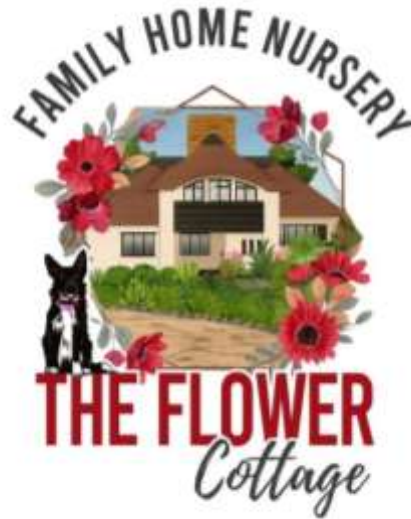


Planning, Learning and Development



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'

At The Flower Cottage, our planning is centred around the children. We follow a flexible, child-led approach that recognises and values each child's individual interests, experiences, and stage of development.

Our weekly planning sheet provides an overview of key information such as outings, experiences, seasonal themes, and important dates. However, rather than using this as a fixed structure for the week, it acts as a guide to support opportunities for learning. We use this alongside ongoing observations of the children to shape meaningful and engaging experiences.

We believe that children learn best when they are interested and involved. Therefore, our planning is responsive and adaptable, allowing us to follow children's ideas, curiosity, and emerging interests in the moment. This ensures that learning is relevant, enjoyable, and purposeful.

Our curriculum builds on children's prior knowledge and experiences, supporting all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). A key part of this is our high-quality continuous provision, both indoors and outdoors. We carefully create stimulating, well-resourced environments that encourage children to explore, create, think critically, and develop independence. These areas are consistently enhanced and adapted to reflect children's interests and next steps in learning.

Children have daily access to a wide range of experiences including role play, indoor sand play, muddy kitchen access, creative activities, sensory exploration, outdoor learning, and real-life opportunities such as planting, baking/cooking, water play, and imaginative play. This continuous provision allows children to lead their own learning while being supported and extended by skilled practitioners. Daily group and circle times offer opportunities for children to share their thoughts, home experiences, and interests, helping to develop communication, confidence, and a strong sense of belonging.

We also place great importance on partnerships with parents, carers, and other professionals. Your input helps us to further tailor our planning to meet each child's needs and interests, ensuring a consistent and supportive learning journey. We focus on giving children exciting, meaningful experiences, supporting them through play and exploration, and helping them grow into confident, curious, and independent learners.

We also work closely with a range of external organisations each term to enrich children's learning through extra-curricular experiences. These include opportunities such as sessions with Midland Futsal Academy, Story Rangers, Moo Music, and Bilingualising, all of which bring new skills, creativity, and excitement into our setting. In addition, we value the importance of community connections and regularly visit our local care home, where children build meaningful relationships across generations. These experiences help broaden children's understanding of the world, support their social development, and strengthen their sense of belonging within the wider community.

By keeping our planning flexible, responsive, and rooted in high-quality provision, we are able to provide a nurturing and engaging environment where every child can thrive.



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Planning and events table

Our **planning and 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:

EXAMPLE DOCUMENT		Planning and events			June 2026 Summer Term	
Important info:	Monday(Date)	Tuesday(Date)	Wednesday(Date)	Thursday(Date)	Friday(Date)	
Book bags to be changed this week Blossom to go home	Baking Mixed berry crumble	Free play	Bilingual Sing Class Spanish with Holly	Planting Planting our bee and butterfly garden	Free play	

Focus & Parental Input
Name & number writing | Toilet training | Independence (e.g. shoes, coats)

Our Approach
Child-led learning based on children's interests. We support all areas of development and work closely with parents to build confidence and communication.

Continuous Provision
Daily indoor and outdoor play with a wide range of resources supporting all areas of the EYFS, including role play, creative, sensory, and physical development. Daily routines (e.g. hand washing and toileting) promote independence.

Attending The Flower Cottage
Please provide plenty of spare clothes, including underwear, suitable shoes, and a hooded outdoor coat. Wetsuits and wellies are available for rainy days as part of our all-inclusive care package. See our welcome booklet for full details.

Experiences (Baking, Cooking, Outings & Classes)
Children take part in a range of experiences in and out of the setting, supporting our curriculum and connection to the community. Activities are shown in the weekly plan.

Inclusion & Cultural Awareness
We include a range of festivals, celebrations, and religions within our planning to help children develop an understanding of different cultures and the world around them.

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The term 'Curriculum'

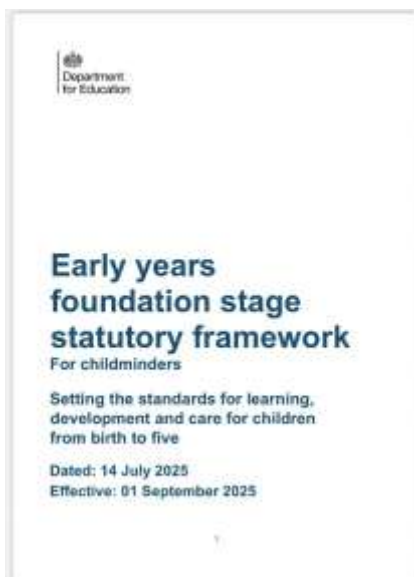
You may already be familiar with the term 'curriculum' from schools, but it is equally important within the Early Years sector. A curriculum simply outlines what we want children to learn during their time with us at The Flower Cottage. Our curriculum is unique to our setting, as it has been carefully 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 places the **child** at the centre of learning, recognising and valuing their individual interests, experiences, and developmental needs. It is designed to be inclusive and appropriate for all children in our care, from one to five years of age. 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.

We build upon children's prior knowledge and interests to create meaningful, engaging, and responsive learning opportunities that support all areas of the EYFS. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which provides the statutory framework for learning, development, and welfare requirements also supports our curriculum. 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 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.

We also value strong partnerships with parents and carers, using daily group and circle times to encourage children to share and discuss their home experiences, weekend activities, and special events, helping to develop communication, confidence, and a sense of belonging.

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.



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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.

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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.



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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.



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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.



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

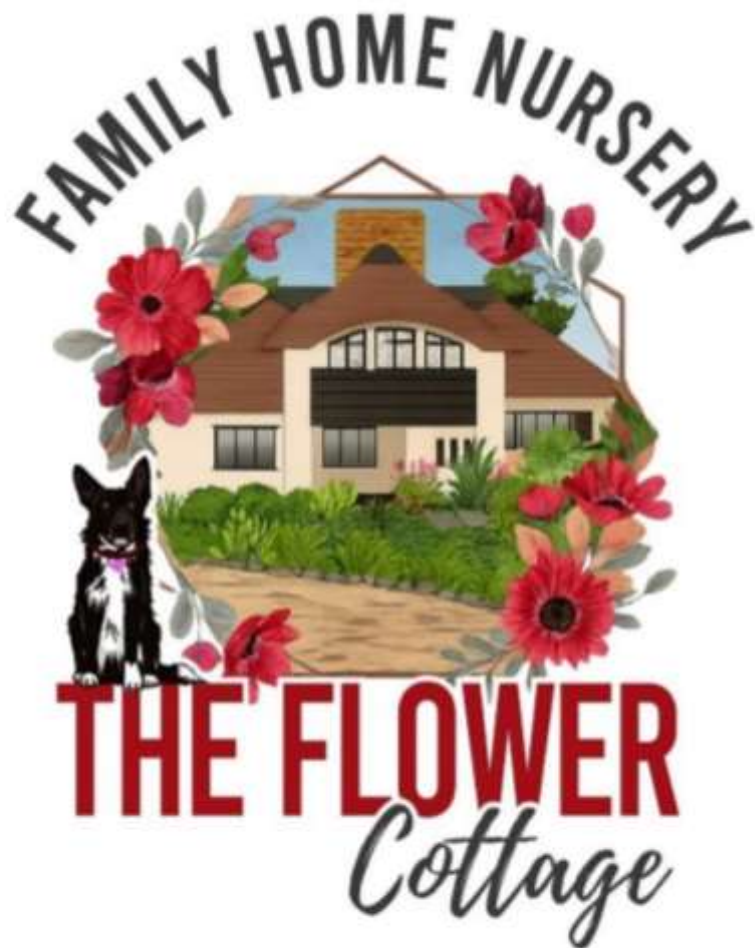
**I hope you have found all the
information you were looking for.
Please don't hesitate to get in touch if
you have any questions or enquiries.**

**With love and big hugs,
Caitlin**

– The Flower Cottage



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