



Curriculum, Teaching and Achievement

Our approach

Steeton has a strong, established curriculum which is deliberately shaped to our children and community. During 2026-27, our focus is not on adding further initiatives, but on ensuring that the curriculum we have designed is taught with consistently high expectations and translates into strong learning and achievement for every child.

Teaching, curriculum and assessment are inseparable. Teachers need to know what children have learned, where understanding is less secure and what needs to happen next. Our developing assessment approach will therefore be judged not by the amount of information we collect, but by the quality of the action that follows it.

Reading for Pleasure remains central to Steeton's identity and to Learning for Life. We will protect and deepen this culture so that every child is known as a reader and adults actively help children discover the books, authors, subjects and genres that make them want to read more.

Alongside this, we will begin a careful development of Year 1 provision, creating a more purposeful bridge from EYFS without attempting to replicate Reception or introduce change before staff have the confidence and understanding to make it meaningful.

Strategic Priority 1

Strengthen collective responsibility for the quality of teaching so that agreed expectations are consistently lived, challenged and sustained across school.

Why this matters:

Steeton has established clear approaches to curriculum and teaching and a strong culture of monitoring and professional development. Our next step is not to create further expectations, systems or checklists, but to ensure that the approaches we have collectively agreed are consistently lived in every classroom.

Variation remains. At times, agreed approaches or expectations are strongest when they have been recently revisited or when senior leaders are directly monitoring them. During 2026-27, we want to move beyond this cycle. Consistency should not depend upon reminders from senior leaders. Teachers and leaders at every level should understand what strong practice looks like, take responsibility for maintaining it and be prepared to identify and address where practice falls short of what has been agreed.

This is not about creating uniform teaching. Professional judgement and responsiveness remain important. It is about establishing a culture in which agreed expectations mean something, strong practice is shared, inconsistency is challenged and improvement is followed through until it is secure.

Most importantly, we will evaluate consistency through its impact on pupils. The question will not simply be 'Are teachers doing what we agreed?' but 'Can we see the difference in what children know, can do and achieve?'

Ref	Key Action	Success - what will it look like?	Impact Evidence - how will we know?	Lead	By
CTA1.1	Define and sharpen a small number of whole-school expectations for high-quality teaching, drawing together what Steeton already knows works rather than creating additional systems.	Staff are absolutely clear about the aspects of teaching and classroom practice that are expected consistently across school.	Agreed expectations are concise and understood by staff; monitoring demonstrates they are visible across phases and subjects.	HT / DHT	Autumn

CTA1.2	Use monitoring to identify variation, not simply examples of compliance, and establish precisely where agreed practice is not yet secure.	Leaders have an accurate picture of strengths and inconsistencies across classes, subjects and phases.	Triangulation of books, visits, pupil voice and assessment identifies patterns; monitoring outcomes lead to specific action rather than generic feedback.	SLT / Leaders	Ongoing
CTA1.3	Where inconsistency is identified, establish a clear support → action → revisit cycle rather than relying upon reminders.	Staff know what needs to improve, receive appropriate support and are accountable for securing that improvement.	Follow-up monitoring demonstrates whether agreed changes have happened and, crucially, whether they have improved pupils' learning.	SLT / Leaders	Ongoing
CTA1.4	Strengthen phase and subject leaders' responsibility for identifying, supporting and challenging inconsistency within their areas.	Responsibility for teaching quality is increasingly distributed rather than dependent upon HT/DHT oversight.	Leaders can articulate strengths and areas for development, demonstrate action taken and evidence resulting improvement.	Phase / Subject Leaders	Ongoing
CTA1.5	Use strong practice already within Steeton through modelling, coaching, professional dialogue and opportunities to learn from colleagues.	Staff development is practical, relevant and rooted in what works successfully with Steeton children.	Staff can identify changes made as a result of professional learning; monitoring demonstrates stronger practice spreading beyond individual classrooms.	SLT / Leaders	Ongoing
CTA1.6	Evaluate whether increased consistency in teaching and expectations is translating into greater consistency in pupils' learning and achievement.	Variation between classes and groups reduces and children experience equally ambitious expectations across school.	Books, pupil voice, Arbor assessment and Progress Checkpoints demonstrate stronger consistency in learning and achievement; remaining variation triggers further action.	HT / DHT	Termly

Strategic Priority 2

Develop our new approach to assessment so that information held in Arbor gives teachers and leaders a clear understanding of achievement and progress - and, most importantly, leads to the right action for children.

Why this matters:

During 2026-27, Steeton is moving away from assessment practices that generated data without always providing sufficiently useful information about what children had actually been taught, understood or needed next.

Our new Arbor assessment model is deliberately simpler. Teacher assessment will identify whether pupils are On Track (OT) or Not On Track (NOT) against the curriculum taught, with end-of-year judgements and relevant test information providing additional evidence. Brief commentary will capture significant actions, interventions and developments, particularly for pupils who are not on track.

The priority is not simply to populate Arbor accurately. It is to establish a consistent 'so what?' culture around assessment. When a child is identified as not on track, the important questions are: Why? What is the barrier? What are we doing about it? Is it working? What needs to happen next?

For some pupils, particularly those working below curriculum expectations or with additional needs, age-related measures alone do not provide sufficiently sensitive information about progress. The introduction of BeSquared will support staff to identify smaller steps in learning and development and provide a more meaningful picture of progress, including where SEMH or other additional needs affect learning. Assessment at Steeton should be proportionate, purposeful and useful - enough information to improve what happens next, without creating data for its own sake.

Ref	Key Action	Success – what will it look like?	Impact Evidence – how will we know?	Lead	By
CTA2.1	Embed the new Arbor assessment model across school, ensuring staff understand and apply OT/NOT judgements consistently and accurately.	Staff are confident in making judgements based upon the curriculum taught and understand the purpose of the new approach.	Moderation, books and professional discussion demonstrate consistency; Arbor is completed accurately and proportionately.	DHT / Teachers	Termly
CTA2.2	Establish Progress Checkpoints as purposeful termly professional discussions centred on pupils who are not on track and the actions being taken to support progress.	Discussion moves beyond identifying attainment to understanding barriers and agreeing meaningful next steps.	Checkpoints demonstrate a clear thread of identify → act → review; subsequent assessment shows whether agreed actions have made a difference.	HT / DHT	Termly
CTA2.3	Develop effective use of Arbor's commentary function to create a concise running picture of significant actions, interventions and progress, particularly for pupils who are NOT.	Relevant information follows the child across the year without creating additional assessment paperwork.	Comments are concise, meaningful and evidenced through children's work, assessment, observation or pupil voice; duplication with separate documents is reduced.	Teachers / Leaders	Ongoing

CTA2.4	Introduce BeSquared as an assessment support tool for pupils working below curriculum expectations or whose additional needs require a more finely graduated understanding of progress.	Staff can identify and recognise meaningful smaller steps of progress for pupils for whom OT/NOT alone does not provide sufficient information.	Appropriate pupils are identified; baselines and subsequent assessment demonstrate progress and inform teaching/support; staff can explain how BeSquared information has changed provision.	SENDCo / Teachers	2026-27
CTA2.5	Develop leaders' use of Arbor assessment information to identify patterns, variation and pupils or groups requiring closer attention.	Leaders understand achievement across school without recreating an unnecessarily data-heavy assessment system.	Arbor informs monitoring and leadership discussion; areas of concern lead to specific action; governors receive meaningful information about achievement and progress.	HT / DHT / Leaders	Termly
CTA2.6	Evaluate the effectiveness and workload impact of the new assessment model during its first year and prune, simplify or refine elements where they do not add sufficient value.	Assessment remains useful to teachers and leaders without becoming an administrative burden.	Staff feedback informs refinements; unnecessary duplication is removed; leaders can demonstrate how assessment information has led to changes in teaching, intervention or provision.	HT / DHT	Summer

Strategic Priority 3

Keep Reading for Pleasure at the heart of Steeton so that every child is known as a reader and is actively supported to discover, develop and sustain their own reading identity.

Why this matters:

Reading for Pleasure is part of Steeton's identity. Considerable work has established a strong reading culture, rich book provision and a shared understanding of the importance of children choosing and enjoying books.

Our next challenge is to ensure that this culture is lived consistently and does not depend upon leadership reminders or particular enthusiasts. Every adult working with children should know them as readers: what they enjoy, which authors, genres or subjects capture their interest, what they have enjoyed previously and what might tempt them to read next.

Our role is not simply to provide books, but to create the conversations, recommendations and relationships that help children find reading they genuinely want to do. During 2026-27, we will refocus on the simplest and most important principle: find what your children love to read - and help them read more of it.

We will keep evidence proportionate. Success will be visible in children talking about books, adults knowing their readers, purposeful recommendations and increased engagement - particularly for children who do not yet see themselves as readers.

Ref	Key Action	Success - what will it look like?	Impact Evidence - how will we know?	Lead	By
CTA3.1	Re-establish the expectation that every adult knows the children they work with as readers - their interests, preferences, reading habits and possible next reads.	Reading conversations are a natural and regular part of classroom life rather than something prompted by leaders.	Pupil and staff voice demonstrate that adults know children's reading interests and can recommend books purposefully.	JD / Staff	Ongoing
CTA3.2	Identify children who read reluctantly or have not yet developed a strong reading identity and deliberately help them discover texts, authors, formats and subjects that interest them.	Reluctant readers experience personalised encouragement and increasingly choose to read.	Targeted pupil voice, borrowing/choice patterns and observations show increased engagement and a broader range of children talking positively about reading.	Teachers / JD	Ongoing

CTA3.3	Keep high-quality, diverse and appealing reading material visible, accessible and actively recommended across school.	Book provision is used dynamically; displays and collections generate interest rather than becoming background furniture.	Learning walks and pupil voice show children noticing, discussing, recommending and choosing from available texts.	JD / Staff	Termly
CTA3.4	Use staff expertise and professional dialogue to keep knowledge of children's literature current and share successful ways of engaging readers.	Reading for Pleasure remains a collective professional responsibility rather than the work of the Reading Lead alone.	Staff share recommendations and practice; children encounter adults who confidently discuss books and reading.	JD	Ongoing
CTA3.5	Evaluate whether Steeton's established Reading for Pleasure culture is being sustained consistently across classes and phases, intervening where it has become dependent upon reminders.	Strong reading culture is visible throughout school and sustained without repeated senior leadership prompts.	Pupil voice, observations and staff discussion demonstrate consistent practice; identified variation leads to support, action and revisit.	JD / SLT	Termly

Strategic Priority 4

Begin to develop Year 1 provision so that children experience a more purposeful and developmentally appropriate transition from EYFS into Key Stage 1.

Why this matters:

The transition from Reception into Year 1 represents a significant change for young children. While the curriculum rightly becomes increasingly structured, we want to consider carefully how the strongest elements of effective early learning - independence, purposeful exploration, talk, collaboration and opportunities to apply learning - can continue into Year 1.

We recognise that developing this approach will require time, support and professional development. During 2026-27, our intention is not to transform Year 1 overnight or replicate Reception provision. Instead, we will begin with a small number of manageable changes, enabling the Year 1 teacher to develop confidence and understanding alongside leaders.

Changes will be introduced gradually, evaluated carefully and retained where they demonstrably improve children's independence, engagement and learning. The success of this priority will therefore be measured by the quality and sustainability of the changes made, not by how quickly a new model is introduced.

Ref	Key Action	Success – what will it look like?	Impact Evidence – how will we know?	Lead	By
CTA4.1	Develop the Year 1 teacher's understanding of effective EYFS practice through focused observation, professional dialogue and time alongside Reception staff.	The teacher understands the purpose behind provision and can identify elements that could appropriately support Year 1 learning.	Professional discussion and reflection demonstrate increased confidence and a clear rationale for initial changes.	EYFS / KS1 Leader	Autumn
CTA4.2	Identify one manageable aspect of Year 1 provision where greater independence, application or purposeful exploration could strengthen learning.	Development begins with a clear educational purpose rather than adding activities or areas for their own sake.	A small-scale change is planned jointly, linked explicitly to identified pupil need and curriculum learning.	Y1 Teacher / Leader	Autumn
CTA4.3	Introduce and support a small number of purposeful provision elements gradually, with leaders modelling and planning alongside the Year 1 teacher where needed.	Changes are manageable, understood and increasingly owned by the Year 1 teacher.	Observation shows provision being used purposefully; children understand routines and use opportunities with increasing independence.	Y1 Teacher / Leader	Spring

CTA4.4	Evaluate each change through observation, pupil voice and evidence of learning, adapting or removing approaches that do not add sufficient value.	Provision develops because it improves children's experience and learning, not because it resembles EYFS.	Leaders and teacher can explain what has been retained, adapted or stopped and why; evidence shows impact on engagement, independence or learning.	Y1 Teacher / SLT	Spring / Summer
CTA4.5	Agree the next stage of Year 1 development for 2027-28 based on what has been learned during the year.	The school has a realistic, evidence-informed direction for further development rather than an imposed model.	A concise next-step plan identifies successful practice, further training/support and any resource implications.	HT / DHT / Y1	Summer



Early Years

Strategic Priority 1

Further strengthen indoor and outdoor provision so that every area is purposeful, precisely planned and responsive to what children need to learn next.

Why this matters:

In Early Years, the environment is not simply where learning happens - the environment is part of the teaching. With a strong and coherent curriculum now established, our focus for 2026-27 moves to the quality of the provision through which that curriculum is experienced. Every area, resource and enhancement should have a clear purpose and enable children to revisit, practise, apply and deepen important knowledge and skills. Provision must be deliberately planned rather than simply available. Staff should be able to explain why an area is there, what children can learn through it, which children particularly need it and how it will change in response to what adults observe. This applies particularly to the outdoor environment, which requires further development so that it becomes an equally purposeful and ambitious part of children's learning.

Ref	Key Action	Success - what will it look like?	Impact Evidence - how will we know?	Lead	By
EY1.1	Undertake a detailed audit of every area of indoor and outdoor provision, considering its purpose, quality and connection to children's learning.	Every area earns its place within the environment and has a clear learning purpose. Areas which do not add sufficient value are adapted, improved or removed.	Provision audit completed; before/after evidence demonstrates purposeful changes; staff can explain the rationale for different areas.	EYFS Lead	Autumn

Ref	Key Action	Success - what will it look like?	Impact Evidence - how will we know?	Lead	By
EY1.2	Establish a simple and precise approach to planning provision, identifying what each area enables children to revisit, practise and apply and how it connects to current learning.	Provision planning is purposeful without becoming unnecessarily onerous. Staff understand what children can learn through each area rather than simply what activities are available.	Planning demonstrates clear learning intentions and curriculum connections; observations show children applying taught knowledge and skills independently.	EYFS Lead	Autumn
EY1.3	Ensure provision is deliberately adapted for the actual children within the cohort, including disadvantaged children, pupils with SEND, EAL learners, children requiring additional support and those ready for greater challenge.	Provision is responsive to different starting points and needs. Children can access appropriate support, challenge and opportunities for independence.	Planning identifies relevant groups and individuals; observations and case examples demonstrate adaptations; children make progress from their individual starting points.	EYFS Lead / SENDCo	Ongoing
EY1.4	Establish clear expectations for the quality, quantity and condition of EYFS resources and implement a planned programme of renewal and investment.	Resources are high quality, purposeful, accessible and sufficiently open-ended to support sustained learning. Poor-quality, broken or unnecessary resources are removed and renewed when necessary.	Resource audit informs spending; the environment demonstrates improved quality rather than increased quantity; resources are maintained and replaced when necessary.	EYFS Lead / HT	Ongoing

Ref	Key Action	Success - what will it look like?	Impact Evidence - how will we know?	Lead	By
EY1.5	Continue to develop the outdoor environment as a genuine learning space, prioritising purposeful opportunities for physical development, exploration, construction, creativity, language and problem-solving.	Outdoor learning is not an add-on. Children encounter rich opportunities to apply and extend learning outdoors.	Observations show sustained, purposeful engagement; provision reflects a breadth of learning; children's physical confidence, independence, talk and problem-solving are evident.	EYFS Lead	Spring
EY1.6	Develop an observe - understand - adapt cycle so that staff routinely use what they notice about children's play and learning to make purposeful changes to provision.	Provision remains responsive rather than static. Staff recognise when an area is working, when it is not and when particular children require something different.	Staff can explain changes made and why; provision evolves in response to observation; examples demonstrate resulting changes in children's engagement or learning.	EYFS Lead	Ongoing
EY1.7	Evaluate provision through its impact on children's learning rather than through the appearance or quantity of resources available.	Staff and leaders judge provision by what children actually do, say, know and learn within it.	Monitoring considers engagement, independence, language, collaboration, application and sustained learning; findings lead to further refinement.	EYFS Lead / SLT	Termly

Strategic Priority 2

Establish strong and increasingly strategic EYFS leadership so that the quality of provision is understood, challenged and continually improved.

Why this matters:

The appointment of a dedicated EYFS Leader provides an important opportunity to build sustained leadership capacity within the phase. Our EYFS Leader brings significant expertise, having taught within Steeton's Early Years provision for 25 years. The development need is therefore not about becoming a stronger EYFS practitioner; it is about becoming an increasingly strategic EYFS leader. During 2026-27, the EYFS Leader will develop greater ownership of evaluating the whole phase, identifying priorities, supporting and challenging colleagues, making informed decisions about resources and provision and evaluating the difference those decisions make to children. The message for 2026-27 is simple: you know EYFS - now own it. This means moving from being an experienced practitioner within the phase to taking strategic responsibility for its quality, development and impact.

Ref	Key Action	Success - what will it look like?	Impact Evidence - how will we know?	Lead	By
EY2.1	Establish clear responsibility and ownership for EYFS development, provision, standards and outcomes within the EYFS Leader role.	The EYFS Leader confidently leads the phase rather than relying upon HT/DHT to identify and drive development.	The leader can articulate strengths, priorities and actions; monitoring and improvement activity increasingly originates from EYFS leadership.	HT / EYFS Lead	Autumn

Ref	Key Action	Success - what will it look like?	Impact Evidence - how will we know?	Lead	By
EY2.2	Provide coaching and professional support to develop the EYFS Leader's skills in monitoring, evaluation, professional dialogue and leading improvement.	Leadership develops beyond strong classroom practice towards strategic evaluation and action.	Leadership discussions and monitoring demonstrate increasing confidence, precision and independence; agreed actions are followed through.	HT / DHT	Ongoing
EY2.3	Establish a manageable cycle of EYFS monitoring focused particularly on provision, interactions and the experiences of different groups of children.	The leader has an accurate, current understanding of what EYFS feels like for children across the provision.	Monitoring triangulates observation, children's learning, pupil voice where appropriate and outcomes; findings lead to identifiable action.	EYFS Lead	Termly
EY2.4	Strengthen the EYFS Leader's use of assessment and knowledge of individual children to evaluate whether provision is meeting the needs of different groups.	Decisions about provision and support are informed by children's needs and learning rather than habit or assumption.	The leader can identify children and groups requiring attention, explain resulting adaptations and evaluate their impact.	EYFS Lead / SENDCo	Termly

Ref	Key Action	Success - what will it look like?	Impact Evidence - how will we know?	Lead	By
EY2.5	Develop the EYFS Leader's responsibility for identifying resource priorities and making informed recommendations for investment.	Spending is strategic and directly connected to improving the quality of provision.	Resource decisions can be clearly justified; subsequent monitoring evaluates whether investment has improved children's experiences and learning.	EYFS Lead / HT	Ongoing
EY2.6	Enable the EYFS Leader to communicate the quality and development of Early Years confidently to SLT and governors.	Governors understand the strengths, priorities and impact of EYFS development through the leader responsible for it.	EYFS Leader contributes directly to governor monitoring and reporting and can demonstrate progress against this plan.	EYFS Lead / HT	Termly

Strategic Priority 3

Plan and prepare a skilled and sustainable EYFS staffing model for September 2027 that protects the quality of provision as the phase enters its next chapter.

Why this matters:

The current EYFS team includes a second-year ECT who will leave Steeton at the end of 2026-27. The current arrangement was a deliberate staffing decision and has provided additional qualified-teacher capacity within the phase. From September 2027, the staffing model will change and an appropriate EYFS support practitioner will need to be recruited. This transition needs to be planned rather than simply staffed. The role, skills and experience required should be determined by the future needs of the provision and children, alongside affordability. During 2026-27, leaders will therefore define the future staffing model, recruit purposefully and prepare the new team so that the quality of provision and adult interaction is protected from September 2027.

Ref	Key Action	Success - what will it look like?	Impact Evidence - how will we know?	Lead	By
EY3.1	Evaluate the current EYFS staffing model and identify the capacity, responsibilities and expertise required from September 2027.	Leaders have a clear rationale for the future staffing structure based upon provision and children's needs as well as affordability.	Staffing review completed; proposed structure agreed by leaders and governors as appropriate; financial implications understood.	HT / EYFS Lead	Autumn / Spring

Ref	Key Action	Success - what will it look like?	Impact Evidence - how will we know?	Lead	By
EY3.2	Define the role, skills, experience and personal attributes required of the new EYFS support practitioner.	Recruitment focuses upon finding the right person for Steeton's provision rather than simply filling a vacancy.	Job description and person specification accurately reflect the future role and expectations within EYFS.	HT / EYFS Lead	Spring
EY3.3	Recruit a high-quality EYFS support practitioner in sufficient time for September 2027.	A suitable appointment is made through a robust process in which EYFS expertise and understanding of high-quality provision are given appropriate weight.	Strong recruitment and robust selection evidence; successful candidate demonstrates appropriate knowledge, skills and values.	HT / EYFS Lead	Spring / Summer
EY3.4	Plan induction, training and transition so that the new practitioner understands Steeton's curriculum, provision, expectations and relational approach before taking full responsibility within the team.	The new member of staff begins September 2027 with clarity and appropriate preparation rather than learning the role entirely after appointment.	Induction programme agreed; opportunities for familiarisation and handover where possible; training needs identified in advance.	EYFS Lead	Summer

Ref	Key Action	Success - what will it look like?	Impact Evidence - how will we know?	Lead	By
EY3.5	Clarify roles and responsibilities across the future EYFS team, including how adults will contribute to provision, observation, interaction and support for different children.	Adults understand their contribution to the whole provision and work as a coherent team around the EYFS Leader.	Future staffing model includes clear responsibilities; planning for September demonstrates effective deployment of adults across provision.	EYFS Lead / HT	Summer