

KS2 Foundational Skills Checklist

Building directly upon the secure foundations established in Key Stage 1, the Key Stage 2 framework at The Leys Primary and Nursery School ensures a coherent and progressive continuation of skills across Communication and Language, Executive Function, and Academic Foundations (Reading, Writing, and Maths). We recognise that long-term academic success depends on these early foundations developing into fluent, efficient, and transferable skills that can be applied independently across increasingly complex and unfamiliar contexts.

At Key Stage 2, pupils are expected to move beyond basic accuracy and demonstrate increasing automaticity, flexibility, and depth of understanding. This framework sets out the progressive skills, knowledge, and understanding expected across Years 3-6, while also clearly defining the secure end-of-Key Stage 2 expectations that pupils are working towards by the end of Year 6.

We recognise that by this stage, pupils should no longer rely on working memory for basic skill execution; instead, cognitive resources must be available for reasoning, inference, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking. Where gaps in foundational knowledge persist, these must be explicitly identified and addressed to prevent cognitive overload and ensure full access to the curriculum.

Rather than introducing premature complexity without secure foundations, this framework acts as a structured instructional blueprint for Key Stage 2. It directs high-quality first teaching, informs targeted intervention, and ensures consistency of expectation across the primary phase. By deliberately aligning progression with end-point outcomes, we ensure that the developmental gains made in Key Stage 1 are systematically built upon, secured, and sustained through to the end of Year 6.

Communication and Language

<u>Physical Delivery</u>	
Uses appropriate tone, pace, and volume depending on context and audience	
Uses body language, facial expression, and gesture to support meaning	
Maintains appropriate eye contact in discussions and presentations	
Speaks clearly and confidently in whole-class and group settings	
<u>Linguistic</u>	
Uses a widening range of subject-specific vocabulary accurately	
Selects vocabulary for precision and effect in both spoken and written language	
Uses grammatically accurate sentence structures in formal and informal contexts	
Explains ideas using increasingly complex sentence structures	
<u>Cognitive</u>	
Organises ideas logically before speaking	
Justifies opinions and answers using evidence or reasoning	
Asks probing questions to deepen understanding	

<u>Social and emotional</u>	
Participates actively and respectfully in group discussions	
Listens attentively and responds appropriately to others' viewpoints	
Shows awareness of audience when communicating ideas	
Collaborates effectively, sharing and developing ideas with others	

<u>Working Memory</u>	
Holds and manipulates information while completing multi-step tasks	
Applies previously taught knowledge accurately in new contexts	
Follows increasingly complex instructions independently	
Recalls key learning across subjects to support reasoning and explanation	
<u>Self-Regulation and Focus</u>	
Sustains attention for extended periods during independent and group tasks	
Manages distractions and refocuses independently	
Regulates emotional responses during challenge or feedback	
Uses strategies to persevere when tasks are difficult	
Demonstrates increasing independence in managing behaviour and learning	
<u>Creative Thinking</u>	
Generates multiple approaches to solving problems	
Applies knowledge flexibly across different contexts and subjects	
Builds on ideas of others to extend thinking further	
Shows originality in writing, problem-solving, and project work	
Reflects on strengths and identifies next steps for improvement	

Executive Function

Academic Foundations

Reading

<u>Word Reading</u>	
Applies phonics and morphological knowledge to decode unfamiliar words	
Reads increasingly complex vocabulary with fluency and accuracy	
Recognises and applies spelling patterns, prefixes, suffixes, and root words	
Reads common exception words automatically and fluently	
Reads aloud with expression, fluency, and appropriate intonation	
<u>Comprehension</u>	
Demonstrates secure understanding of age-appropriate text.	
Summarises main ideas and key information accurately	
Makes inferences supported by evidence from the text	
Explains and justifies interpretations of characters, events, and settings	
Analyses language choices and their impact on the reader	
Retrieves, records, and presents information from a range of texts	
Understands and compares different text types and purposes	

Writing

<u>Transcription</u>	
Writes fluently and legibly at speed, using joined handwriting where appropriate	
Spells accurately, including common exception words and statutory KS2 vocabulary	
Applies knowledge of spelling rules, patterns, and morphology	
Uses a wide range of punctuation accurately (including commas, apostrophes, speech punctuation, and more complex structures as appropriate)	
Maintains consistent spelling, punctuation, and grammar across extended writing	
Organises writing into paragraphs to structure meaning	
Writes at length with increasing stamina and accuracy	
Plans, drafts, and edits writing with increasing independence	
Reads back and evaluates their own writing for improvement	

Place value and the number system	
Demonstrates secure understanding of place value in numbers up to at least 1,000,000	
Reads, writes, compares, and orders numbers accurately	
Understands the value of each digit in increasingly complex numbers	
Rounds numbers appropriately to support calculation and estimation	
Recognises and uses number patterns and sequences	
Operations	
Uses efficient mental and written strategies for all four operations	
Selects appropriate methods for addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division	
Applies knowledge of multiplication tables fluently and accurately	
Uses estimation to check the reasonableness of answers	
Language and vocabulary	
Uses precise mathematical vocabulary accurately in spoken and written work	
Understands and applies key terms such as factor, multiple, prime, equivalent, simplify	
Explains reasoning using full sentences and structured mathematical language	
Interprets word problems and identifies key mathematical information	
Transcription	
Records mathematical work clearly and systematically	
Sets out calculations accurately using appropriate layout and structure	
Writes numbers, symbols, and equations correctly and consistently	
Presents working in a legible and organised manner to support accuracy	
Uses correct notation for fractions, decimals, and percentages	

Mathematics