



Griffydam Primary School

Early Years Policy

2024

Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Legal requirements
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Principles into practice
4. Early years foundation stage curriculum
5. Structure of the EYFS
6. Assessment and observation
7. Home Learning
8. Safety
9. Inclusion
10. Parental involvement and wider context
11. Transitions

Statement of intent

At Griffydam Primary School, we greatly value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We seek to provide:

- **Quality and consistency**, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and parents.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- Children develop and learn in different ways.

Legal requirements

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018

This policy has due regard to statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2020) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
- DfE (2018) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Working together to safeguard children'
- DfE (2015) 'The prevent duty'

This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following school policies:

- **Assessment Policy**
- **Early Years Supervision Policy**
- **Early Years Behaviour Policy**
- **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy**
- **Teaching and Learning Policy**
- **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**
- **Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy**
- **Drug and Alcohol Policy**
- **Whole-School Food Policy**
- **Equal Opportunities Policy**
- **Administering Medication Policy**
- **Health and Safety Policy**
- **Recruitment Policy**

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

The EYFS lead is (Bethany Farrow) and (Chloe Blaydon) who is the key person and class teacher for all the children in the cohort, in conjunction with the headteacher, has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.

Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy.

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a broad balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning.
- Provide a variety of opportunities for children to engage in purposeful play through a secure and safe learning environment and high-quality adult interactions.
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment.
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context.

Foundation Stage Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observations of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals. All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. There are 3 prime areas of learning, and 4 specific areas.

The prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The Prime areas are:

Communication and Language

This area covers the development of communication skills, including speaking and listening. We plan activities to encourage communication and discussion amongst the children and support their language development and acquisition of new vocabulary. We liaise with the speech and language therapist for children with more complex speech and language needs. The importance of this area of development is reflected in our language rich environment and NELI trained staff that support the progression on early language skills.

Physical Development

This area is focused on children's developing physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulative skills in both indoor and outdoor environments. This includes establishing positive attitudes towards a healthy and active way of life. In class 1 we are very active, children have access to the outdoor area during continuous provision and a range of resources to support their gross motor development including a digging pit, bikes and items to make an obstacle course. The big moves programme is used to assess the children's physical literacy throughout the year and interventions are in place to support those that need it. Daily activities are planned to support fine and gross motor development including dough disco and squiggle while you wiggle.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

This area incorporates attitudes, skills and understanding and is a precondition for children's success and learning. The child's personal, social, emotional, moral and spiritual development is targeted and good attitudes to all aspects of school life are promoted. We follow the whole schemes SCARF and Everyone's welcome. In class 1 we encourage children to explore their feelings and become emotionally aware through circle time, sharing books about feelings and using our class feelings display.

Children are also supported through the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

Literacy

The children in reception follow Anima phonics a government approved programme of study for phonics, giving them 20-25 minutes of structured phonics input a day. Anima phonics resources are used throughout provision to secure learning. Interventions and targeted groups are ran throughout the year to support those with poor phonological awareness but also to boost those who are exceeding the current taught phonics level. Reading books are used in school that match the child's current phonics level and sent home for reading with parents and carers, we aim to hear children read two times a week in school. Children not making expected progress in reading will be heard additionally. Children will also be sent home with the sounds of the week on a Friday and parents will be given a phonics guide at the start of the year.

Talk for Writing is used to engage children in storytelling and story writing using a rich and varied vocabulary. Shared and guided writes are used for whole class inputs. A range of resources in the literacy area and book corner and throughout the indoor and outdoor classroom provide opportunities for children to engage in mark making, storytelling, reading and writing.

Mathematics

Mathematics is a part of everyday life and the children's mathematical learning takes place during lessons and through accessing resources within the environment. The children work towards the key objectives addressed in the Early Years Profile through a range of practical activities. Maths is taught using the White Rose scheme and additionally we use the mastery approach following the NCTEM 'Mastering number programme. Maths mastery empowers the children with a deeper subject knowledge, giving them the skills and understanding to be better mathematicians in and beyond reception. Numicon is also used as a multi-sensory approach to mathematics, using structured apparatus designed to give children the understanding of number ideas and number relationships. We have a well-stocked maths area so children can explore and use the manipulatives that work best for them.

Understanding the World

This area focuses on children's developing knowledge and understanding of their environment, themselves, other people in their lives, the past present and future and features of the natural and manmade world. It provides a foundation of scientific, historical and geographical learning. Our topic-based approach allows children to fully explore a wide range of topics giving them a rich knowledge, in addition we ensure that children have the time and flexibility to explore their own interests and fascinations. Our environment encourages children to explore areas of interest through a number of provocations including a curiosity area exploring seasonal changes, a class timeline, a well-resourced small world area, topic themed role play and active participation in the planting and maintaining of our class garden. The class also participate in Forest Schools weekly.

Expressive Arts and Design

Through art, music, design, drama and dance the children's imagination, ideas and feelings are developed. We encourage children to develop their own interests and provide a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. A creative area in the classroom provides space for children to engage in open ended activities of their choosing. In our outdoor area the children are able to create shows, performances and stories on our outdoor stage, musical instruments are always available in provision. We also encourage the children to be actively involved in the design and setup of the outdoor role play based on their own interests and fascinations.

Structure of the EYFS

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free flow between inside and out.

Observation and Assessment

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways, including through notes and using the iPad through Tapestry. This also builds the child virtual learning journey throughout the year that parents have continuous access to. We use the valuable information we gain to complete a baseline assessment of each child within six weeks of their first day in the school. We also participate in the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment within the first half term. We then use this information to monitor children's progress throughout the year and ensure all children are guided and challenge appropriately. We value contributions from parents. They can comment on observations and upload their own to tapestry.

In the final term of the reception year more formal assessment is completed in order to assess children against the Early Years profile, this information is reported to parents in the end of year reports.

Home learning

Every child will take home a reading book suitable for their stage which will be changed weekly. Parents and carers are encouraged to read with their child and comment in a reading record. Every child will be read with in school each week. The class also has access to the library which we visit every week to pick and change a reading for pleasure book. This book is to be shared with an adult. Children are also sent home with a phonics pack with taught sounds and common misconception words for them to practice at home.

Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. The school has policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety. Our EYFS environment risk assessment is read by all that work in the setting and an environment check is conducted and signed daily. We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including through the teaching of Health and Self Care, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals at Griffydam Primary School, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

Parents as Partners and the Wider context

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care. Parents are regularly invited to spend time in the classroom through stay and play sessions, hearing children read and sharing their own knowledge and experiences through leading sessions and assemblies.

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible. We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for, and time given to ensure continuity of learning. Prior to a child entering reception, the parents and the child are invited to visits at the school. These visits give the child an opportunity to meet their teacher and to see the classroom that is soon to be theirs. We

also visit each preschool setting to talk to key workers and, if possible, see the child in their setting. All children attend school on a short part time basis and progress towards a full day, giving them time to settle in and feel comfortable in their new surroundings. Parents and children will also attend a welcome afternoon in the term before they start school, here they will be given all the information they need before starting school including access to tapestry so that we can interact with families before they start school. Children will attend two transition mornings in the summer term before they start school.

In the final term in Reception, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children. The class will spend two mornings in the Year 1 classroom as part of 'move up' days'. The summer term topic will explore topics of growing and changing, transition and feelings.