

GREAT BOOKHAM SCHOOL

The Continual Pursuit of Excellence

EYFS POLICY

REVIEW DATE:

SUMMER 2024

NEXT REVIEW DATE:

SUMMER 2025

Intent

At Great Bookham School, our EYFS curriculum aims to support our children to develop into independent, resilient and happy learners. Through our thoughtfully structured curriculum, children develop positive relationships with peers and adults alike. We aim to provide a nurturing environment that offers exceptional opportunities for children to flourish, explore and build a love for learning.

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance”.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. They begin attending school full time immediately or in some cases after a brief settling in period (by the end of September).

The EYFS is based upon three underpinning principles: A Unique Child, Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments, which in turn all lead to learning and development.

A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as other intrinsic rewards to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion:

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In our school we believe that all of our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking in to account all of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS, we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all of our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued

- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

Welfare:

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them."

We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children
- Promote good health, including oral hygiene, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe and efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong, independent and form secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners:

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- All About Me booklet for parents and children to complete prior to starting school
- Visits by a member of staff to the child's nursery setting
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during their induction afternoon
- Inviting all parents to an induction afternoon during the term before their child starts school

On-going communication by:

- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception classes
- Encouraging parents to add their child's achievements using the 'Tapestry' online tracking system

- Sending Tapestry observations to parents
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns
- There are termly Parent Consultation Evenings over the year. Parents also receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year
- Invitation to a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: class assemblies, Sports Day, Special Days etc.
- Providing good communication with parents about what their child is doing in school through newsletters, reading diaries and parent workshops.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school and in accordance with the EYFS statutory framework 2021, all children have a focus key adult in the Reception classes. We contact all feeder nurseries in the Summer Term to discuss our new intake of children; we visit the key worker and child where possible.

Enabling Environments

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development. Children's interests, development and learning feeds into the ongoing planning of challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning:

The weekly planning within the EYFS takes into account interests, needs and achievements of the children. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS mostly takes the form of observation; this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate.

During the first term, the teacher assesses the ability of each child, using observational baseline assessments alongside the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment. These assessments give us a well-balanced baseline for each child, which enables us to see clear strengths and development needs. They also allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

At the end of each term, the teacher will make a holistic judgement on whether a child is working on track or not on track to achieve the early learning goals in each area of learning. This decision is based upon their observations of each child and is guided by our 'observational checkpoints' document.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals (ELGs). The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

At the end of Reception, we record judgements against the EYFS Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the 7 areas of learning and the early learning goals (ELG) in the EYFS curriculum.

Within the final term of the Reception Year, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting children's progress against the ELG's. We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the class teacher.

The Learning Environment:

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest including our reading arches and designated role play areas. The classrooms are set up with freely accessible, easily identifiable equipment, which children are encouraged to access independently. We have two enclosed outdoor areas which are dedicated to the early years and provide enhanced resources for all 7 areas of learning, creating a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for the children to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. The wider school grounds are also regularly accessed as part of our enhanced provision.

Learning and Development

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter-connected.

The Prime Areas of Learning:

Communication and Language, Physical Development, Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The Specific Areas of Learning:

Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts and Design

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

1. Playing and Exploring

"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development."

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules and boundaries. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

2. Active Learning

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods."

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

3. **Creativity and Critical Thinking**

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Teaching and Learning Style:

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2.

Features that relate to the EYFS:

- Practitioners need to consider different ways children learn and reflect this in their practice
- The partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- The understanding teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching
- The teachers use a range of approaches that provide the children with first-hand experiences, clear explanations and appropriate interventions
- The teachers provide opportunities to extend and develop play, interaction and communication
- The carefully planned curriculum helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout their first year at school
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management
- The support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents
- The good relationships between our school and the children’s previous setting
- The clear aims of our work and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it
- The regular identification of training needs for all adults working within the EYFS setting

Monitoring and review:

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher, Deputy headteacher and EYFS Leader will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.