



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfill their 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 that provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive

At Grendon Underwood School our Foundation Stage 1 and 2 classes (Nursery and Reception) work closely together to provide quality provision for the children in our care.

The Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage at Grendon Underwood School are:-

- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum which embraces the themes, principles and commitments of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- To provide a happy, secure, stimulating and challenging environment.
- To provide a rich and stimulating environment for children to make choices which will facilitate independent learning, creative thinking and enable them to feel confident as learners.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- To provide opportunities for children to develop their communication, linguistic, investigative and problem solving skills through interaction with adults and other children.
- To promote children's imagination in play through stimulating resources and activities within the inside and outside classrooms.
- To develop a partnership with parents/carers based on a shared understanding of the learning needs of the children.
- To provide quality first hand, play based learning experiences that are well planned and contain an appropriate balance between different types of play, permeating all aspects of the curriculum.
- To provide a range and balance of child initiated, adult initiated and adult focused activities indoors and outdoors.
- To provide a smooth transition between the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 – Year 1.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage at Grendon Underwood School we believe:-

- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It builds on what our children already know and can do;

- That how we provide for and interact with children has a profound effect on their well-being and learning;
- That information provided by parents/carers is valued and seen as a vital link in forming a partnership with families and in building a picture of each child;
- That the Early Years Foundation Stage is the springboard to a good start in their education at school;
- That play is a major vehicle through which young children learn and gain access to all aspects of the curriculum. Play is a natural process. It puts children in charge of their own learning. It helps children to make sense of their world and enables them to develop their personal qualities, attitudes and higher order learning;
- That children learn more effectively in a lively, rich and stimulating environment with opportunities to access all areas of the curriculum indoors and out;

Essentially we want children to make decisions, become independent learners, interact with people, enjoy learning and become confident with themselves, others and our world.

Guidelines

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2017/03/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf

In providing a basis for our Early Years Foundation Stage Policy we have discussed and evaluated the following areas:-

- Staffing
- Planning the EYFS Curriculum
- Characteristics of Effective Learning
- Indoor/Outdoor environments
- Planning
- Observations, assessment and record keeping
- Partnership with parents and families
- Transition
- Safeguarding and Welfare
- Admissions

Staffing

Staff knowledge and expertise is seen as a prerequisite for an effective Foundation Stage department and this is accomplished by:-

- Foundation 1 and 2 staff working closely together so that knowledge and expertise is shared by all parties.
- Members of the team keeping abreast of relevant research and information.
- Staff attending in-service courses, conferences and support group meetings.
- Ensuring that the Nursery Leader and EYFS Leader have appropriate training and experience with knowledge of child development and the Early Years. They will have the ability to structure and support young children's learning, lead and manage the team and work closely with other agencies.

Planning the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum

Learning experiences are planned for both indoor and out and are linked together through topic work which encompasses seven areas of learning.

The '**Prime Areas**' of learning, focussed on initially within Nursery (building links to the 'Specific Areas' below) are

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

The '**Specific Areas**' of learning, focussed on equally alongside the Prime Areas within Reception, are

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

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Playing and exploring - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- Active learning - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Indoor /outdoor environments

Reception and Nursery areas are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, be quiet, be creative etc. Children have access to both the inside and the outside environment at various points in the day which is known to have a positive effect on the children's development. The Early Years Foundation Stage pupils have their own outdoor area with sand or water, climbing equipment, bikes, writing opportunities, mud kitchen, construction and role play. Spending time outdoors offers opportunities for exploring and learning things differently to when pupils are indoors and gives things a different perspective. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. All areas of the curriculum can be explored outside.

Planning

Each Year Group considers how to provide for the children using three stages of planning

□ Long term:-

This is informed by the Development Matters statements and Early Learning Goals the children need to meet in their development. Continuous Provision plans show how each area of the environment supports the children's learning.

□ Medium term:-

These plans cover the half term topic work each year group will deliver. They include the details of possible learning activities and opportunities in each of the 7 areas of learning indoors and out.

□ Short term:-

The weekly plans for each year group identify the learning intentions/outcomes to be taught along with evaluations linked to the activities provided. The needs of individual learners, based on observations, are catered for within this framework.

Learning objectives are differentiated so that the able are challenged and those that need additional help are supported. Gifted and able pupils will be identified through formative assessment in sessions.

Observation, Assessment and Record Keeping

Learning Journeys are used to record the learning that occurs over the children's time in Nursery and Reception classes. Nursery use Tapestry and Reception use learning journey books and Class Dojo.

At Grendon Underwood Primary School and Muddy Boots Nursery, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents/carers.

During the first term, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using observations and activities. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. This first /baseline assessment also takes into account any other records we receive from previous pre-school settings, parents and childminders. Most of our children have attended our nursery which helps to facilitate this process.

At the end of EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected level of development
- Exceeding expected levels or,
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

Nursery observations on Tapestry include:-

- Settling in observations during the first half term
- Learning stories and extended observations including annotated photographs of child initiated learning
- Annotated photographs of group activities such as cooking, Christmas party
- Evidence of play and learning at home
- Samples of e.g. mark making
- Grids highlighting children's progress in the areas, based on Development Matters Statements and linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

Reception Learning Journeys include:-

- Photographs, particularly those demonstrating the process of learning
- Individual observations, both planned and on the spot
- Reading records, Literacy and Numeracy books
- Evidence of play and learning at home
- Foundation Stage Baseline assessment

Partnerships with parents and families

In the Early Years Foundation Stage we believe that partnership with parents and families is paramount. To develop this partnership we provide the following opportunities:

Visits to school:-

- All Nursery and Reception children and parents/carers are invited to meet their teacher and their class prior to their admission.
- An objectives meeting for Nursery and Reception parents/carers is held in the Summer term, prior to the children starting in the class in September.
- Parents/carers are invited to come to a range of events through the year including the Harvest Festival, Christmas performances, Easter Bonnet Parade and Sports Day.
- Nursery have a 10 minute 'open door' policy where parents are welcome to stay for 10 minutes at the beginning of each session to see how their child settles in and interacts in the environment.
- Reception hold 'drop in' sessions where parents and carers can visit the classroom to see what has been happening, look at the children's Literacy and Learning Journey books and have an informal chat with the class teachers.
- Open Mornings are offered for parents and carers to visit for a morning to see how the class runs in a 'normal session', interact with their children at play and then have the opportunity to ask questions about what they have seen in a question and answer session.

Meetings with parents:-

- Foundation Stage staff are available to speak to parents/carers before and after school for Nursery and Reception.
- Reception have a parent/teacher consultation meeting in the Autumn and Spring Terms.
- There is a Foundation Stage open day for parents and carers to come and visit their child's new class and find out about what happens in a day.

Information sharing:-

- Parents/carers are encouraged to become involved in their child's learning, (e.g. supporting their child at home with reading letter sounds).
- Nursery and Reception reports go out in the summer term, with a brief report in Autumn and Spring
- A questionnaire is sent out to Foundation Stage parents/carers.

- Half termly Home Guides are on the website to inform parents/carers about the activities and topics that are being covered.

Transitions

In the Summer Term, children in both Nursery and Reception begin activities to support their transition to their next classes. A structured programme of activities and events begins to expose the children to experiences from their next school year to support a smooth transition. Activities undertaken will include:-

- Learning walk- children walk through their new year group classrooms with their current teaching staff.
- Story time- children visit classes in the new year group for stories and rhymes.
- Teacher swaps- teachers from other year groups visit classes to get to know the children.

The children's next classes will involve more adult led and adult initiated activities, alongside some outdoor and child initiated ones. The balance of activities will be adapted to suit the needs of the particular cohort, but the aim is to extend children's concentration through more focused sessions.

Safeguarding & 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.' (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014)

At Grendon Underwood Primary School and Muddy Boots Nursery we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014. ·

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

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. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (More information can be found in the school's safeguarding policy)

Admissions

The school's admission arrangements are as described by the Buckinghamshire Education Authority for all County schools. Arrangements for Admission to the school should be made either directly to the school or through the Education Authority Office, County Hall, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 1UZ.

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Jayne Myers, EYFS leader every year. At the review, the policy will be shared with the governing body.