

# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

## **Introduction**

*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. We recognise that 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 (Muddy Boots Nursery and Reception) work closely together to provide the highest 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, 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.

Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;

- 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.

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 2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

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

Planning the EYFS Curriculum

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Indoor/Outdoor environments

Planning

Observations, assessment and record keeping

In The Moment Planning

Partnership with parents and families

Transition

Safeguarding and Welfare

Admissions

## **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

Our curriculum also encompasses the specific changes and modifications from the revised framework such as a whole school approach to the Zones of Regulation and the emphasis on teaching about oral health.

## **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 Muddy Boots 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 a shared outdoor area with sand or water, climbing equipment, writing opportunities, mud kitchen, construction and role play. It will also have areas to ignite investigation and curiosity through child led learning. 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. The children will also have the opportunity to access the Wildwood (Forest School) throughout the year, enabling children to access it in different seasons.

### **Planning**

- **Long term:-** This is informed by our curriculum and the Early Learning Goals in Reception. We use Birth to Five as a guide and professional dialogue to help identify any areas of concern.  
**Medium term:-**We use overviews by Warriner MAT as a guide to help inform the seven areas of learning and, along with Maths and Phonics, is linked to current topics and developmental milestones. These plans cover the half term topic work each year group will deliver.  
**Short term:-**The weekly Whiterose, RWI and Tales Toolkit (if relevant) 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 provide challenge and those that need additional help are supported either in intervention groups or individually.

### **Observation, Assessment and Record Keeping**

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. Weekly meetings between Early Years staff ensure that progress is discussed and any areas of concern for the children are considered and next steps are planned to pick up and not catch up the children. A 'When I grow Older Folder' and ClassDojo Portfolio are used to record the learning that occurs over the children's time.

During the first six weeks, 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.

Summative assessment at the end of Reception occurs in the form of the Statutory Early Years Profile (see below).

### **Two-Year Check**

Muddy Boots Staff complete the Two Year Check in line with the statutory framework requirements and share these with parents and carers. If the child is at another setting this will also be shared to the key worker. Muddy Boots also offer a two year check parent meeting to raise any concerns or give the parents or carers the opportunity to discuss the child's development at 2 years and if they have any concerns.

### **Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) and Language Link**

We carry out the RBA within the first six weeks of the child starting Reception. Reports are generated and this will be used for tracking their development through school to Year 6. We also assess each child using the Language Link program and will assess the Speech Link if it is deemed appropriate.

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 (expected)
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

### **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.

A 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 throughout the year including the Harvest Festival, Christmas performances, Easter/ Spring celebration and Sports Day. There is a Toddler group that is run by volunteers.

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.

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 Muddy Boots Nursery and Reception.

Reception has a parent/teacher consultation meeting in the Autumn and Spring Term.

There are Foundation Stage tour visits 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.

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.

A daily record booklet is sent home in Muddy Boots with the children's activities and food record. Parents are invited to comment in these if they would like to.

Leaflets and informative websites are shared with the parents regularly about courses and information they can access through Bucks County Council services.

### **Transitions**

In the Summer Term, children in both Muddy Boots 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. However the children who transition from Muddy Boots to Reception will be very used to the staff owing to working so closely as a unit throughout the year before.

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 2021)

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 2021.

To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;

Promote good health; including oral health care

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)

[Click here](#) to access 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.

Adopted December 2022

*It is due for review during December 2023*

**Foundation Stage Leader: Jess Cort**

**Nursery Manager: Nicky Smith**