

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date of Policy: February 2017

Date of Review: February 2018

This policy was written by a working party consisting of the Head Teacher, EYFS Governor, Leadership Team, Curriculum Leader and in consultation with members of the EYFS team.

Aims and Objectives

This policy aims to promote consistency, high standards and achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). At Grangefield, the children and their learning are at the very heart of every decision made. We aim to develop learners with the desire to explore, to ask questions and ultimately to have an excitement and positive attitude towards learning. We greatly value the role that the EYFS (the Reception class) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. We feel it is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

Principles

Four guiding principles shape practice in Early Years settings. These are:

- 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 and at different rates.

Curriculum Delivery

The EYFS learning and development requirements comprise:

- the seven areas of learning and development and the educational programmes (described below);
- the early learning goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the Reception year; and
- the assessment requirements (when and how practitioners must assess children's achievements, and when and how they should discuss children's progress with parents and/or carers).

Areas of Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in Early Years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the *prime* areas are:

- communication and language;
- physical development, and
- personal, social and emotional development.

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

- literacy;
- mathematics;
- understanding the world; and
- expressive arts and design,

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their coordination, control and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces and measures.

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

In the Reception classroom a wide variety of interesting, exciting and relevant learning experiences are carefully planned. These activities enable children to explore, investigate, discover, create, practise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. Many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking. The curriculum is covered through planned and child initiated indoor and outdoor play activities.

Parents play a large part in their child's development and learning. Whenever possible and appropriate parents are encouraged to help in the Reception class, and to comment and contribute observations to their child's Learning Journey's. Parents are kept well informed of the curriculum and the ways they can support their child's progress.

Equality of Opportunity

All children will be given equal access to the Early Year's Curriculum irrespective of race, gender, faith, level of ability or nationality. Mutual respect and tolerance for all cultures will be promoted through the area of learning Knowledge and Understanding of the World, PSHE and Community Cohesion.

Assessment and Recording

Assessment is a key part in the learning and teaching process and all progress is measured against the Early Learning Goals. Early Years teachers and teaching assistants observe children during activities, noting achievement and areas for development. Notes, photographs and focused observations are used to inform future planning. All evidence is collected and kept on electronic Learning Journey's along with Writing and Mathematics books for each child. This is used as evidence towards the Foundation Stage profile at the end of the year.

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1 and is shared with parents.

The annual Grangefield report details progress and attainment in each Area of Learning within the Early Years Curriculum.

Safeguarding

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. The Early Years Team implement the statutory framework which sets out the legal requirements which cover safeguarding and ensuring children's welfare, staffing, suitable environment and equipment, organisation, documentation and reporting. Grangefield has a well-developed Safeguarding policy and procedure that applies to all children.

Resources

Reception children have access to a wide range of resources covering all Areas of Learning. The Early Years leader puts forward a bid to the Head Teacher outlining resource requirements for the forthcoming year. S/he is responsible for a budget. Spending is linked to the School Improvement Plan. Resources are renewed where possible.

Homework

We encourage parents/carers to listen to their child read each night, to practice words in their word wallet and comment on reading progress in the reading diary. Occasionally, other relevant homework may be set by the class teachers.

Role of the Early Years Leader

- Monitoring of standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in Early Years
- Reviews and monitors planning
- Supports colleagues in the teaching of Reception children
- Keeps up-to-date with current developments
- Provides a strategic lead and direction for Early Years
- Ensures balance, continuity and progression within the EYFS
- Monitors, evaluates and reviews the implementation of new initiatives to identify any INSET requirements and resource implications
- Maintains resources and gives advice on their use with reference to the Health and Safety Policy
- Prepares termly Rapid Action Plan (RAP) for Head Teacher – identifies strengths and weaknesses and indicates areas for further improvement.
- Responsible for establishing and maintaining links with pre-school settings

Health and Safety

Children are taught about Health and Safety issues and care of resources. All staff adhere to Grangefield's Health and Safety Policy.