



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

“All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.”

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education, updated 2024

Our Vision

At Galley Hill Primary School, we are committed to providing a high-quality early years' education, which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning. We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework.

At Galley Hill the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) incorporates children in our Nursery and Reception class (children aged 3-5). Children in Nursery can access 15 hours a week either in a morning session or afternoon session. We also provide 30 hour provision in Nursery for the children who's parents qualify for the additional funding.

The Foundation Stage must provide every child with a feeling of security, being valued and the confidence to explore new learning. The Foundation Stage lays the foundations for the rest of a child's school life.

The EYFS is based on four overarching principles:

- *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. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Characteristics of Effective Learning

These principles are based upon dispositions towards learning in which children are taught the skills, awareness and options available to support themselves and others to make effective learning choices.

They are:

Playing and exploring, being engaged;

Active learning, being motivated;

Creating and thinking critically, being thinkers

Galley Hill Foundation Stage Aims and Principles

- To ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued
- To develop positive relationships with all children and their parents/carers
- To support children in developing positive relationships with each other and develop the necessary skills and dispositions to work and play cooperatively
- To promote the characteristics of effective learning to ensure children are engaged, motivated and thoughtful learners who display perseverance and are not deterred by getting things wrong
- To provide a relevant and engaging curriculum for our children which responds to their interests, meets their needs and engages them in learning
- To provide a learning environment that develops children's imaginations, encourages curiosity and a desire to explore, and enables children to express their ideas and feelings
- To be aware of the holistic nature of young children's learning and to make natural links between different areas of the curriculum with the emphasis being on learning through play
- To recognise the importance of quality interactions with children and to promote speaking and listening skills in all areas
- To ensure children are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to make a successful transition into Year One.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate our children on the 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 wellbeing of our children. (See Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy).

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

(Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2024)

We understand that we are legally required to comply with the welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for early Years Foundation Stage 2024. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, good hygiene and take appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the child's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure staffing arrangements are organised to ensure safety and to meet the needs of the children.

- Ensure that all staff who look after the children or have unsupervised access to the children are suitable to do so.
- Ensure visitors and parent helpers wear visitor stickers
- Ensure outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, equipment and toys are safe and suitable for their purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences appropriate for their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the setting.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements through

- Using the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy;
- Having secure premises;
- Using the school's SEND Policy;
- Ensuring that all necessary paediatric first aid qualifications are up to date.
- Using the school behaviour policy;
- Ensuring everyone who works directly with the children is DBS checked;
- Following the staff to child ratios set out in the statutory framework;
- Carrying out appropriate risk assessments in the indoor and outdoor areas;
- Planning to meet children's needs;
- Keeping up to date records of children on our setting.
- Following the school's Educational Visits Policy.
- Using the School's Intimate Care Policy.

Planning and Organising the Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development that must provide a framework for planning, teaching and assessing in the EYFS. All areas of learning and development are inter-connected.

The Prime Areas are fundamental and work together, providing the foundations upon which subsequent knowledge and skills are built.

The three Prime Areas are:

- Communication and Language – children will be given lots of opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- Physical Development – children will be provided with opportunities to be active and interactive; to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children will be taught the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – help children develop a positive sense of themselves and others; forming positive relationships and develop respect for others; develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and have confidence in their own abilities.

There are also four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- Literacy – children will be taught to hear sounds in words, to blend and segment sounds and to begin to read and write. Children will share a wide range of quality stories, poems and rhymes to promote their love of reading.
- Mathematics – children will be provided with opportunities to develop a confident understanding of number and an ability to apply this to solving problems, including adding, subtracting and sharing. They will develop their understanding of space, shape and measure and be able to use appropriate vocabulary to describe this.
- Understanding the World – Children will 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 – Children will explore and play with a 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.

'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned purposeful play and through a mix of adult led and child-initiated activity.'

Planning

Planning focuses on children's needs, their interests and their stages of development. We recognise that the seven areas of learning cannot be treated in isolation and seek opportunities to make links between them. We aim to deliver the curriculum through planned, purposeful play and present new concepts in meaningful contexts that enable the children to build on what they already know.

Long Term Planning

Our long-term planning identifies the themes and knowledge we intend to teach over the year and any planned visits or special events. The long-term plan enables us to ensure that all learning areas are covered.

Medium Term Planning

Our medium-term plan is based around a different topic each half term, though this is dependent on the children's needs and interests. We aim to ensure that the intended skills are developed and knowledge gained each half term, but we may change the topic through which this is delivered depending on the interests and needs of the children involved.

Short Term Planning

Short term planning identifies the skills and knowledge being taught over the week. It identifies adult focused activities and enhancements to continuous provision. Planning is based on observations and assessments from the previous week and it is flexible and responsive to children's needs.

Teaching staff plan short daily phonics and maths sessions in Nursery and Reception.

Effective Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide an attractive, challenging learning environment that offers high quality learning opportunities for children to learn through play, both indoors and outdoors. There is a range of continuous provision available in Nursery and Reception and the space is organised to offer open ended, practical learning opportunities. Children are supported to think creatively and imaginatively and to be independent and resourceful. The provision is enhanced with additional resources based on observations and the children's needs and interests.

The environment supports the children in initiating their own activities as well as engaging in directed activities; staff support children in this, providing additional resources or support and extending children's learning through appropriate discussion or questioning.

The children will also take part in adult led activities based on the different areas of learning and development; this could be whole group, small group or one to one. The children have allocated hall time for P.E. sessions or to take part in activities such as parachute games.

In Nursery the children take part in a daily group time with a phonic /number focus. In Reception the children take part in short phonics and maths sessions on a daily basis.

As the children move through Foundation Stage the amount of time spent on adult led activities gradually increases preparing the children for more formal learning, ready for Year One.

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We will use personalised intervention to support children who are not making expected progress, or children we have identified as having a specific area of need which is preventing them from making progress in other areas, for example poor fine motor skills.

Assessment and Record Keeping

'Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support.'

'Assessment should not involve long breaks from interaction with children or require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. Practitioners are not required to prove this through collection of any physical evidence.' EYFS Framework 2024

We use a range of strategies to gather information about the children's learning and development and use this information to ensure that our planning meets the needs of all learners. Staff observe children involved in their own or teacher directed activities and note significant information, this may be recorded on Tapestry. This information is used to plan next steps or to identify whether a child needs extra support in a particular area. Working with the children, extending their learning and addressing any misconceptions as they occur is our priority; we aim to only record significant observations and learning.

Staff assess understanding throughout guided activities and adjust planning accordingly.

All the children have a Tapestry Journal where observations are gathered and this builds up a picture of learning over time. Children in Reception also record some work in Literacy and Maths books.

Reporting to Parents/Contribution by Parents to Assessment

We view parents as important partners in their child's education and value the contribution they make towards our understanding of their child. We will always talk to parents about any concerns and endeavour to share their child's successes with them as well. Parents have the opportunity to share their child's achievements on Tapestry and to view their child's Tapestry Journal. We encourage parents to talk to the children about the things they have been doing in school to further their understanding; Tapestry provides a stimulus to do this.

Parents/carers are always welcome to talk to staff, and staff will arrange a time to talk to parents if it is not possible to talk properly at the end of a session/day. Parents are invited to attend a consultation evening each term and receive a written report at the end of the academic year. We would always share any concerns as they occur rather than waiting for a consultation evening.

We use Tapestry to keep parents informed about what the children are doing in school. We also used social media to share what the children are doing in Early Years and post photos and comments on our school Facebook page.

Reception children take home a reading book and reading record. Parents are asked to comment on how their child read and their understanding of the story. Staff will also write relevant comments after reading with a child to inform parents and make suggestions to support reading at home.

Entry to Nursery Baseline

On Entry to Nursery children will be assessed using the Redcar and Cleveland Nursery Baseline. Assessments are mainly on prime areas and are based on observations of the children over a three-week period. We believe it is important to give the children time to feel happy and secure in Nursery in order for these assessments to be accurate.

Entry to Reception Baseline

Within the first six weeks of starting Reception staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

Children's stages of development are reviewed regularly to ensure they are making good progress. Termly data is recorded on Arbor.

Foundation Stage Profile

During the last term of Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting the expected levels of development or are not yet reaching expected levels of development (emerging).

Foundation Stage staff will take part in moderation events with other Trust schools as well as internal moderation.

The profile provides parents/carers and teachers with a well- rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected standards, and their readiness for Year One.

The results of the profile will be shared with parents/carers and they will have the opportunity to discuss their child's profile with the class teacher.

The results of the Profile will be shared with the local authority.

A copy of the Profile along with a short commentary of each child's skills and abilities will be shared with the Year One teacher. These will form the basis of a discussion about each child's stage of development and learning needs and will assist the Year One teacher in planning for the children in the coming academic year.

Community Links/Cultural Capital

Over the year we arrange visits from members of the local community to enhance the children's learning. We also arrange trips for the children in the EYFS within the local community, for example visiting the local library, Forest Walkway or community play area. The children take part in educational visits linked to their topic work e.g. visits to farms or local museums. Film clips, non-fiction books and artefacts are used to introduce new concepts in real life contexts. We aim to develop the children's awareness of other cultures by finding out about different countries and celebrations, for example Diwali and Chinese New Year.

Fundamental British Values

Fundamental British Values are embedded within our everyday practice in EYFS through our daily routines and planned purposeful play activities.

Democracy (We all count)

All children are given time to talk about their interests and share their ideas in circle times and daily discussions; one of our golden rules is to listen to each other. Children are encouraged to see themselves as part of the Foundation Stage/school community and everyone is expected to contribute to looking after our school e.g. tidying up, treating things carefully and taking part in Foundation Stage and whole school events. We teach the importance of taking turns, cooperating with each other and sharing equipment and space. We take account of children's interests when planning topics and new areas and the older children will often vote on which story to have or which game to play. Children throughout the Foundation Stage are regularly encouraged to make choices e.g. choosing a filling for their pancakes. We also value parents' opinions and hope that you feel you can tell us what you think and that you are listened to.

Rule of Law (We know the rules)

The Foundation Stage children are involved in creating their own golden rules and thinking about why we need these rules; the rules help to create a happy, safe environment where everyone can learn and everyone feels valued. We teach the children the importance of right and wrong through stories, circle time and everyday interactions and talk about how our actions and words affect others.

Individual Liberty (We are all special)

We aim to build children's confidence and help them maintain and develop a positive self-image. Children are given lots of opportunities to talk about things they have done or made and to share experiences from home. We always welcome certificates, badges etc and the children talking about their Home/School diaries. We focus on the language of feelings in circle time and everyday activities so that the children can express how they feel and say why they are happy or upset. The children are encouraged to think for themselves; to feel confident about expressing their own opinions and to recognise that these might be different from someone else's and that's okay.

Mutual Respect

All children are encouraged to share their views and opinions and talk about things they have done; the children are taught that if it is someone's turn to speak then everyone else should listen. We share stories that reflect the diverse nature of society and staff will talk about (in an age-appropriate way) any gender, cultural or racial stereotypes that arise. We teach the importance of being kind to others and helping others if we can; we praise children when they do show kindness or are helpful to others. Staff and children are expected to treat each other in a respectful way, and we teach the meaning of respect by teaching children how their words and actions affect others; we ask the children to think about how they feel if someone hurts them or says unkind things to them.

Tolerance

We teach the children that we are not all exactly the same and we don't all like the same things and that's okay. We will talk about families and favourite things, from food to out of school activities and encourage the children to see differences and similarities. We also help the children to recognise similarities and differences in the wider community by finding out about different cultural and religious festivals; some of these like Christmas, Shrove Tuesday, Mothers' Day and Easter are very familiar to them, others such as Diwali and Chinese New Year are less familiar. By finding out about festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year we help the children to develop understanding, appreciation and a tolerant attitude towards cultures and traditions that may be different from their own.

Behaviour Management

Please see the school's behaviour policy.

In the Foundation stage positive behaviour is expected and encouraged. We promote expected behaviour and regard for others through our PSED curriculum. The children are taught about our school rules and these are explained in an age appropriate way.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We have a responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference. We can support each child's needs by:

- removing or helping to overcome barriers where these already exist.
- being alert to the early signs of need that could later lead to difficulties and responding quickly and appropriately, involving other agencies as required;
- stretching and challenging all children

All areas of provision will be made accessible to all children regardless of age, sex, gender, creed, ethnicity, or ability.

Safeguarding Children

Please refer to the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for further details.

Special Educational Needs

The Foundation Stage follows the SEND code of Practice.

A child has special educational needs if they have a learning disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Care is taken to assess the needs of each child from starting Nursery onwards and care and support is provided within school where possible. Parents will always be consulted if staff have concerns about a child and their permission will be sought before any involvement from an outside agency. Please refer to our SEND Policy for further details.

Key Person Approach

The class teachers are responsible for the wellbeing of all of the children in their class. The class teacher is the children's 'key person'.

The key person's responsibilities include:

- helping the child to become familiar with the setting
- building a relationship with each child's parents, working in partnership with them to ensure that the child is being cared for appropriately for each family.
- responding sensitively to the child's needs, feelings, ideas and behaviour.
- ensuring that the learning opportunities on offer meet the needs of each child.

Starting Nursery

Parents and children are then invited to a play session to help familiarise the children with Nursery and provide an opportunity for staff and children to meet prior to starting.

Transition from Nursery to Reception

The Nursery children will visit the Reception classroom on a weekly basis during the summer term in order to become familiar with the new area and get to know the staff. Any children who are joining the Reception class from a different setting will be invited to come to these sessions. We hold a transition meeting for new parents in the summer term, where we outline daily routines and expectations. Our transition programme works well, and the children are able to start Reception as a whole group.

Transition from Reception to Year One

In the summer term, we begin a programme of transition to support the children with their move to Year One. This involves visits to the Year One classroom, discussion with current Year One children and opportunities to ask any questions about the next year. Parents are invited to an information meeting.

Food and Drink

Children in Foundation Stage have a daily snack time. The children have a piece of fruit daily but this may be supplemented with snack such as bread sticks and crackers. Snack time provides an opportunity to reinforce good manners and to talk about making healthy food choices. Nursery children can choose to have milk daily and Reception children have access to milk through most of the year. Children have access to water bottles at all times.

Information about children's dietary needs is sought when they enter the setting. Any specific dietary needs are kept in the classroom and also in the school kitchen to ensure all staff are aware of these when giving out food and drink or when planning a cooking or food tasting activity.

First Aid and Medical needs

Please refer to our First Aid Policy and Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy.

Complaint Procedures

Should you have a question or a concern, we would always recommend you speak to the class teacher in the first instance. If you feel your complaint or question has not been answered then we would ask that you contact the school office to arrange a meeting with Mrs Coverdale, Headteacher. You can find further information in our Complaints Policy on the Galileo Trust Website.