

Graiseley Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy September 2023

Context of the school

Graiseley Primary School is a nurturing, diverse, community school. It is a school where everybody wants to be, everybody is welcome and enjoys success.

Each year we welcome children from all over the world and pride ourselves on our inclusiveness.

We endeavour to meet the needs of all our pupils; our motto is "Guide, prepare and succeed."

We guide children through their early education and prepare them for each stage of learning so that they can enjoy success.

We work hard to build skills and attributes in all our learners which will ensure that every single learner has the ability to learn effectively throughout life.

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and the community providing a fun and meaningful education, with high standards in everything that we do.

School Aims

- ✓ To provide a safe, **welcoming**, stimulating and creative environment for all children, parents and staff, with a strong sense of community and where everyone feels valued
- ✓ To promote good physical and mental health for all children, parents and staff
- ✓ To be inclusive and embrace and celebrate all regardless of age, gender, disability, race, religion or belief
- ✓ To **guide** and **prepare** inquisitive, resilient, persevering, collaborative and questioning life-long learners (staff and children) who are confident to share their unique interests and talents
- ✓ To **prepare** pupils and staff with the necessary skills to thrive and **succeed** in a technologically advancing world
- ✓ To provide a range of learning experiences which equip all with the skills for life-long learning and **success**
- ✓ To develop the skills to communicate well and feel confident to ask for help
- ✓ To model and encourage positive attitudes and behaviours
- ✓ To **guide** and **prepare** all to enjoy **success**
- ✓ To have fun!

This policy aims to ensure that:

- children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the wide range of knowledge and the skills needed to progress through school and life.
- there is quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress, and no child is left behind
- children make progress across all 17 areas of learning
- there is a consistent approach across the Early Years and that our curriculum is matched to the children's needs and interests.

Structure of the Early Years

The EYFS applies to children from birth to 5. At Graiseley, children can join Nursery once they have turned 3, they can join Reception class in the year they turn 5.

The capacity in Nursery is 30 and the capacity in Reception is 30. Across EYFS the children are supported by two class teachers and 3 support staff.

Legislation

This policy is based on the requirements set out in the 2023 Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

We use the Development Matters Document as a curriculum tool to provide guidance for planning in Reception and Nursery. Our detailed planning identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals, and for those working towards national age-related expectations.

The curriculum is centred on the three Prime areas of learning:

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

The curriculum also supports children's development through the Specific areas, which build on the development gained through the Prime areas. The Specific areas reflect individual children's life experiences including their cultural and social backgrounds.

The four Specific areas are:

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

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. We adhere to the Statutory Framework (2023) of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings. These are:

A Unique Child

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that children make good progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of children regardless of gender, disabilities, social and cultural backgrounds, ethnicity and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We meet the needs of all 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.

We ensure we cater for the individual needs of the children in our care. Some children may require additional support and early intervention can take different forms:

- from supporting parents
- developing co-regulation within the environment
- scaffolding up to support children's independence and not differentiating down
- support for children's wellbeing and mental health
- involvement of outside agencies such as Special Needs Early Years Service (SNEYS)

As part of our curriculum, we follow the SCARF programme for PSED which promotes positive behaviour, mental health, wellbeing, resilience and achievement.

Positive Relationships

Before your child starts their journey at Graiseley staff will make a home visit in order to get to know your child well and begin to build positive relationships right from the start.

At Graiseley all staff aim to develop strong relationships with all children through high quality interactions. We take a genuine interest in what children share with us and we use our knowledge of the children to tailor our curriculum to meet their needs and interests.

In Nursery children are put into Key Worker groups in order to help establish a familiar group in which the children feel safe and secure. This helps them develop a positive relationship with a familiar adult and also develop friendships with their peers.

We believe that all parents/carers have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents/carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We encourage our parents to:

- attend an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- talk to class teachers if they have any concerns or worries
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns
- attend parents evening
- join in with Stay and Play
- ensure children come to school, on time, every day
- to send children in the correct uniform and PE Kit
- ensure they are signed up to School Ping communication app
- ensure they are signed up to Class Dojo
- listen to their child read every day

Enabling Environments

At Graiseley we understand that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's learning opportunities. We have embedded continuous provision across EYFS. Children routinely have access to basic provision: the resources and learning opportunities accessible to them at all times which invites them to interact, explore and learn, even without adult support. Much of this provision is in defined spaces such as: a home corner, construction area, water play etc. Continuous provision is open-ended and allows children to follow their interests. The basic provision is regularly enhanced by resources that reflect the current learning topic. We have a balance of interactive, colourful displays and more neutral displays. We ensure that all 7 areas of learning are represented with the environment. The environment is language rich, with adults routinely modelling language expectations and supporting children in building their vocabulary. The open-ended resources children access also support language development in encouraging children to learn new words and engage in back-and-forth conversations. The outdoor environment also reflects this philosophy and we follow the principles of 'free-flow' allowing children to move from indoor to outdoor play according to their interest. Children from Nursery and Reception access the same outdoor provision and are able to mix and learn from one another. Provision

in the environment is regularly reviewed, enhanced and updated in order to continuously meet the needs of the developing children. Parents are routinely invited into the EYFS to take part in celebration and learning events.

Learning and Development

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Based on these characteristics we have built and designed a relevant and appropriate curriculum that considers the cultural capital of our community. We first prioritise getting to know our children, so that we are understanding of the knowledge and experiences that they already arrive to us with which we can then build upon.

We have carefully mapped out the relevant key skills and knowledge that are to be developed across the year and we deliver these through three broad and overarching themes which run in Nursery and Reception:

- Me and My World
- Changing World
- Wonderful World

At Graiseley we plan a progressive and responsive curriculum based around the philosophies of Alistair Bryce-Clegg who promotes a play-based curriculum. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. 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. Adults use co-play to enhance the children's experiences and facilitate their learning. We plan to create an environment that supports effective play where adults are on hand to:

- Play alongside
- Give children hints/suggestions/prompts to extend their learning
- Model and demonstrate when necessary
- Provide resources
- Provide feedback
- Ask questions

In order for children to develop high levels of engagement, our routines allow for a minimum of 60 minutes of uninterrupted play, for children to freely explore their environment and enjoy maximum engagement. During this time, children can independently choose their activities from a wide selection of open-ended resources, extending their thought process and following their interests as they desire. All staff at Graiseley believe in creating a balanced curriculum with opportunities throughout the day for children to explore both independently and with the support or direction from an adult through:

- Child-initiated activities - children make choices from within the learning environment to meet their outcomes for learning

- Adult-led activities - practitioners provide the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning which children can then independently choose to access
- Adult focussed activities- children engage in planned activities to meet specific outcomes
- Supported co-play - playing alongside children, modelling play

As children develop the balance shifts from an emphasis on child-initiated activities to adult-focused activities to promote readiness for the more formal teaching of Key Stage 1.

This planning is constantly revised to meet the needs of the children, taking into account next steps for learning, interventions and the interests of the children.

In Reception, children are exposed to daily English and mathematics opportunities. We use a fully resourced curriculum to support learning in Maths (Ark Mastery) and Phonics (Read, Write Inc.) and Understanding of the World teaching is supported by elements of Plymouth Science. Charanga is used to support teaching and learning as part of expressive art and design and Scarf enhances PSED provision. These resources are seen as a curriculum tool and not a resource to follow to the letter. We also have a specific focus on Communication and Language in the Early Years and run a number of programs and interventions to help raise attainment in this area including: Helicopter Stories and WellComm.

Assessment:

At the start of Reception each child is part of the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). The RBA is a short task-based assessment. Pupils use practical resources to complete these tasks and teachers record the results on a laptop, computer or tablet. It is not used to label or track individual pupils. We are required to carry out the assessment within the first 6 weeks of pupils starting reception.

In Nursery and Reception, we also evidence children's learning and progress through the use of Floorbooks. We have one floor book for topic (including English) and one for Maths. These show the journey for the week (unit of work) and include a mix of photographs, child and adult voice. They begin with a mind map of what is already known and then turn to a double page spread of the learning journey for the week. Children's work is also displayed within the classroom.

Termly Pupil Progress Meetings are also held to discuss the learning and progress of individual pupils, the SENCO attends these meetings. Termly assessment data is collected indicating whether children are 'on track' or 'not on track' against our planned curriculum and progression document.

At the end of EYFS children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals and whether they have achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD).

Parents receive an annual report (in both Nursery and Reception) that offers brief comments on each child's progress. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress.

Transition into Nursery and Reception

Nursery:

Children can attend Nursery from the age of three and for as many as six terms (dependent on birthdate) before becoming school age. We ensure a smooth transition into Nursery by:

- Practitioners making home visits to all children
- Children being allocated a key worker

- An initial one hour session is offered prior to the official start date
- A tailored induction to accessing the full session taking into consideration the child's social, emotion and well-being needs.
- Stay and Play sessions for parents and carers

Reception

We ensure a smooth transition into Reception by:

- Practitioners making home visits to all children
- Meetings with parents and offering visits to the Reception Class
- Having regular meetings as a Foundation Phase to discuss children's needs and progress
- Making joint decisions regarding environmental and curriculum resource needs
- Planning opportunities for Nursery children to join the Reception class for experiences in the Summer Term and to experience lunchtimes.

Year 1

Some children need to continue with their EYFS journey for a little while at the start of Year 1. During the Autumn Term of Year 1 children are able to access more play-based curriculum reflective of their experiences in EYFS, as the term progresses children transition to the more formal approaches of Key Stage 1.

Safeguarding and Welfare

The EYFS Framework (2023) states '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...Providers must take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well'. Wellbeing and mental health takes priority and is further explored as part of the SCARF PSHE programme delivered in school.

Daily provision provides opportunities for children to explore feelings, self-regulate behaviour and build positive relationships with others. We encourage children to lead a healthy and active lifestyle and teach them the importance of a range of health issues, such as oral health, throughout our personalised and ambitious curriculum.

Please see our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy September 2023.

Attendance

We promote good attendance for all children at Graiseley Primary School regardless of age. The reasons for children to attend regularly are to support their learning and development, to make sure that children are kept safe, their wellbeing is promoted and they do not miss out on their entitlements and opportunities. Good attendance promotes good outcomes for children. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late and research has shown the negative effect of absence.

Appendices

EYFS Framework 2023

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1169916/EYFS_framework_from_September_2023.pdf

Development Matters 2021

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1007446/6.7534_DfE_Development_Matters_Report_and_illustrations_web_2_.pdf

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2023-24

