



**GREAT FINBOROUGH
CHURCH PRIMARY**

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five 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 together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

- “Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage” Department for Education 2021

Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

A unique child: We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement as well as celebration and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning.

Positive relationships: We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

Enabling environments: We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children’s development. Through observations we assess the children’s interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

Learning and development: Our EYFS environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The environment is set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Great Finborough Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS for children is from birth to five years of age. All children begin school with a wide variety of experiences and learning and it is the privilege of the adults working in EYFS to accept the task of building upon that prior learning experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning ensuring that

parents and carers, support staff and the EYFS team work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children in their care.

Aims

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well being. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these five outcomes. We recognise the importance of playing and exploring for young children and provide lots of opportunities for our youngest children to learn through play during the school day. This play is supported by high quality interactions from the adults, encouraging our children to problem solve, persevere, take risks and develop independence. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

At Great Finborough Primary School, we aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child including children with special educational needs and development.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers and value their contributions ensuring that all children are heard, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability.
- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.
- Provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs, which are inclusive rather than parallel.

Our Curriculum

We deliver our curriculum through a balance of adult led and play based activities based on the EYFS Framework 2021, Development Matters 2021 and children's interests. Our curriculum is a top-level plan of what we want our children to learn and the experiences we aim to provide during their time in EYFS. Our plans are flexible in recognition that young children's learning is often driven by their interests.

Learning and development is categorised into three prime areas of learning:

- Communication and language.

- Physical development.
- Personal, social and emotional development.

Additionally there are four specific areas of learning:

- Literacy.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding the world.
- Expressive arts and design.

Achievement of these prime and specific areas of learning is through the characteristics of effective learning:

- Playing and exploring.
- Active learning.
- Creating and thinking critically.

We devote significant time in our daily timetable for the children to play and explore by allowing them to experience things first hand, and to embrace physical experiences through 'having a go'. Through these uninterrupted periods of active learning the children are able to concentrate and persevere if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements. This child led time allows the children the opportunity to develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs.

The planning within the EYFS is based around the children's interests. These plans are used by the EYFS team as a guide for weekly planning. However, we may alter these in response to the needs of the children.

Our EYFS curriculum provides a wide variety of rich learning experiences that are crucial to child development and these experiences are not limited to the achievement of the Early Learning Goals outlined in the Statutory Framework. The ELGs support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development, and their readiness for year 1. When forming a judgement about whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, teachers draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. Formative assessment and responsive practice takes place during every interaction with the children. Teachers do not wait for formal assessment periods to put into place learning experiences

and support for children to achieve, this is done in the moment or as soon as possible after an interaction. A summative assessment in each area of learning will be made at the end of each half term when the Teacher will meet with the Head teacher to discuss each child and flag any areas of concern. During each half term each child will be observed during an extended period of learning and assessed using Development Matters 2021.

The Early Years Framework 2021 states that this professional judgement is sufficient evidence to assess a child's individual level of development in relation to each of the ELGs. Sources of written or photographic evidence are not required, and teachers are not required to record evidence. The delivery of our EYFS curriculum is dependent on Teachers' knowledge of the child and pedagogical expertise and our Teachers are committed to quality interactions with the children and therefore we prioritise this over excessive documentation and recording.

However, we recognise that observations and assessments can be a valuable and useful way of sharing information about a child with other practitioners, parents and inspectors, as well as the children themselves. Half termly observations of children will be shared with parents, via the Tapestry system, and other practitioners and retained to document the child's learning journey during their time in our EYFS. At the end of each week the parents will be updated on the learning the class as a whole have experienced during that week using the Tapestry system. The parents and carers are given the opportunity to meet with the EYFS team each term and, at the end of the third term, we provide a written summary in relation to the children's early learning goals to parents and carers.

Learning through Play

At Great Finborough Primary School, we do not make a distinction between work and play. Children learn through planned play activities and staff will decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities.

The Induction Process

During the Summer Term prior to starting school the following September the following visits are conducted:

- Parents will be invited to an Induction Evening where the transition process will be explained and questions answered.
- EYFS staff will visit pre-school settings from which September's intake will be taken.
- Where possible, EYFS staff will visit each child in their home environment.
- Each child and their parents and carers will be invited to our 'Come and Join in' Sessions in order to familiarise themselves with both the staff and the EYFS environment.
- Each child and their parents and carers will be invited to attend a Woodland Walk Session with the current EYFS Class and their teacher.

Home and School Links

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we aim for the schools and parents and carers to work closely together during the children's time in the EYFS. This can have a very positive impact on a child's development but relies on a two-way flow of information and knowledge.

We will develop this working relationship between the school and parents and carers as follows:

- We will outline the school's expectations in the Home School Contract.
- We will hold a parent consultation early in the year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- We will encourage parents or carers to record outstanding achievements via Tapestry.
- We will publish a termly newsletter detailing the areas of learning and the overarching theme of the term.
- We will operate an "open door" policy that will allow parents and carers to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner. Conversely, if EYFS staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- We will conduct workshops for parents and carers to enable them to be familiar with the teaching methods used in school to make it easier to emulate them at home.
- We will conduct a further parent consultation late in the year to inform parents and carers formally of a child's results and overall progress.
- There will be opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning.
- At the end of term, we will invite parents and carers to visit the school informally in order to fully appreciate the work that has been produced in that term.

Pre-school and School Links

We recognise that children's early learning experiences with local childcare providers such as Pre School, Nursery and Childminders settings are important. We know that working closely with these settings allows us to develop valuable knowledge of the children to support their transition to school. We aim to develop this working relationship between the these settings and school as follows:

- During the Summer term prior to starting school, we will visit each child in their early learning setting and will discuss each child with their nominated key worker in that setting.
- Throughout the academic year, we will share information with the staff from our main feeder pre school setting(s), and visit the(se) setting(s) to build relationships with the children.
- There will be opportunities for setting staff to accompany the children when visiting the school.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Children with special educational needs and development will be supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Individual Support Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support commensurate with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. The school's SEND Co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to staff and parents and for arranging external intervention and support as necessary.

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head Teacher will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring process. EYFS staff will attend moderation for their cluster.