



Early Years Policy

"The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad" Psalm 126:3

Great Barton C of E Primary Academy

Early Years Policy

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Reviewed By -

Signature

Date-

Comments-

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The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life. (*Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage 2021.*)

In our school, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

1.1 Aims:

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress from their starting point.
- A close working partnership between staff and parents/carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

1.2 Curriculum

Four guiding principles shape practice in early years.

These are:

- **A Unique Child**
- **Positive Relationships**
- **Enabling Environments**
- **Learning and Development**

1.3 A Unique Child

At Great Barton CE Primary Academy, 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, 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/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

1.4 Positive Relationships

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

1.5 Enabling Environments

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. The role of both the indoor and outdoor environment in learning/organisation of learning provides opportunities for child-initiated activities reflecting the topic where they can develop gross motor skills, social skills etc. We provide

stimulating resources which are accessible and open-ended so they can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways.

1.6 Learning and Development

At Great Barton Primary Academy, we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected. The children have time and freedom to become deeply involved in the activities and their learning.

1.7 Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of **three prime** area of learning:

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

There are **four specific areas** of learning:

- English – reading and writing
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

1.8 Planning

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities to ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area at the appropriate developmental level.

Our long, medium and short- term plans, are based around a theme. These plans are used in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. In each area there are Early Learning Goals that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

1.9 Play

Play underpins learning and all aspects of children's development. Through play, children develop language skills, their emotions and creativity, social and intellectual skills. Play takes place indoors and outdoors and it is in these different environments that children explore and discover their immediate world. It is here they practise new ideas and skills, they take risks, show imagination and solve problems on their own or with others in a safe, but challenging environment that support and extend learning and development.

2.0 Characteristics of Learning:

The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics are;

Playing and Exploring (engagement) - *Finding out and exploring things and are willing to 'have a go'.*

Active Learning (motivation)- *Being motivated, involved and concentrating on their learning. Keep trying and enjoying achieving what they set out to do.*

Creativity and Critical Thinking (thinking) -*Having own ideas, making links and choosing ways to do things*

2.1 Inclusion

At Great Barton Primary Academy, we believe that all children matter and value the diversity of individuals within the school, irrespective of their special educational need(s), disability, gender, race, religion or abilities creed or ethnicity. All children at Great Barton Primary Academy are treated fairly and their families are valued within our school. 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 EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of all children, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups 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 to provide support as necessary.

(We adhere to the school's Equality & SEND policy)

2.2 Teaching and Learning

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 2.

Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;

- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
 - the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence, resilience and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.

2.3 Assessment

At Great Barton, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

Reception Baseline Assessment – RBA (Statutory from September 2021)

The RBA is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. The RBA assesses a child in early mathematics, literacy, communication and language. The purpose of the RBA is to form the starting point for cohort-level school progress measures. Data from the RBA is compared to key stage 2 outcomes 7 years later to form the overall progress measure for a school. The RBA is not used to make judgements about early years provision, either current or retrospective. It is solely intended for use within the primary school progress measure.

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The ELGs should not be used as a curriculum or in any way to limit the wide variety of rich experiences that are crucial to child development, from being read to frequently to playing with friends. Instead, the ELGs should support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development, and their readiness for year 1. *(NEW STATUTORY FRAMEWORK 2021)*

2.4 Working with Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make, and the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We feel it is important to establish good relationships with parents to also make the children's transition into school as smooth as possible.

We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- the teacher will visit children in their nursery/pre-school setting prior to their starting school;
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transition afternoons and move-up morning;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Share sessions, Christmas plays, Sports Day etc;
- inviting parent into the class to look at all the work their child has been doing during the term.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the Teaching Assistants. We have good links with Pathways Preschool. Regular visits are undertaken by the EYFS teacher. The EYFS teacher meets with staff to discuss new intake children. Staff and children from preschool are regular invited to school events (Outside visitors, Christmas productions etc.).

2.5 Welfare & 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.

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. 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 well-being of all children. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' statutory guidance and adhere to the school's health and safety and safeguarding policy.

We are a healthy school and participate in the free fruit and milk for under-fives scheme. Reception children who stay for lunch are eligible for the universal infant free school meal or they can bring a healthy packed lunch.

2.6 Monitoring

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy. The governors will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. The Head teacher and Deputy Head teacher, as well as subject leaders, will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.