

Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

At Galley Common Infant School we follow the EYFS statutory framework 2021. Within this framework there are four guiding principles which shape our practice.

These are:

1. **Every child is a unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
3. Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
4. Children **develop and learn 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).

We recognise and understand that the children in our school have a range of family backgrounds and early experiences. However, all of these children have the right to the best possible quality of education which they can both enjoy and achieve their potential.

'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 2021)

Aims of the Foundation Stage

At Galley Common Infant School we offer a curriculum rich in wonder and memorable experiences. We work hard to provide a stimulating environment that provides exciting opportunities, promotes challenge, exploration, adventure and a real love of learning. It is our intent that all children develop physically, verbally, cognitively and emotionally in an environment which values all cultures, communities and people. We aim for our children to be confident and independent, to believe in themselves and interact positively with others. We understand that play is an integral part of learning and this is at the heart of our early year's curriculum. We believe that the correct mix of adult directed and uninterrupted child-initiated play ensures the best outcomes for pupils. Warm and positive relationships between staff and children, consistent routines and strong relationships with parents are key. We recognise the crucial role that early year's education has to play in providing firm foundations upon which the rest of a child's education is successfully based.

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum

The EYFS curriculum is made up of seven areas of learning, which are reflected in our curriculum planning. There are 3 Prime Areas and 4 Specific Areas.

	Area	Aspect	
Prime Areas	Communication & Language	Listening, Attention and Understanding	
		Speaking	
	Physical Development	Gross Motor Skills	
		Fine Motor Skills	
	Personal, Social, & Emotional Development	Self-Regulation	
		Managing Self	
		Building Relationships	
	Specific Areas	Literacy	Comprehension
			Word Reading
Writing			
Maths		Number	
		Numerical patterns	
Understanding The World		Past and Present	
		People, culture and communities	
		The Natural world	
Expressive Arts & Design		Creating with materials	
		Being Imaginative and expressive	

Early

Learning Goals (ELG's)

Within the 7 areas there are 17 individual ELG's that the children are assessed against at the end of the year. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of **most** of the children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

In addition to the 17 ELG's there are also 3 areas that make up the Characteristics of Effective Learning – these share equal importance and form the basis of the end of year report in July. They are as follows

Characteristics of Effective Learning. Observing how a child is learning.	
Playing and Exploring <i>engagement</i>	<p>Finding out and exploring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing curiosity about objects, events and people • Using senses to explore the world around them • Engaging in open-ended activity • Showing particular interests
	<p>Playing with what they know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretending objects are things from their experience • Representing their experiences in play • Taking on a role in their play • Acting out experiences with other people
	<p>Being willing to 'have a go'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiating activities • Seeking challenge • Showing a 'can do' attitude • Taking a risk, engaging in new experiences, and learning by trial and error
Active Learning <i>motivation</i>	<p>Being involved and concentrating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining focus on their activity for a period of time • Showing high levels of energy, fascination • Not easily distracted • Paying attention to details
	<p>Keeping on trying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persisting with activity when challenges occur • Showing a belief that more effort or a different approach will pay off • Bouncing back after difficulties
	<p>Enjoying achieving what they set out to do</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing satisfaction in meeting their own goals • Being proud of how they accomplished something – not just the end result • Enjoying meeting challenges for their own sake rather than external rewards or praise
Creating and Thinking Critically <i>thinking</i>	<p>Having their own ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking of ideas • Finding ways to solve problems • Finding new ways to do things
	<p>Making links</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making links and noticing patterns in their experience • Making predictions • Testing their ideas • Developing ideas of grouping, sequences, cause and effect
	<p>Choosing ways to do things</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning, making decisions about how to approach a task, solve a problem and reach a goal • Checking how well their activities are going • Changing strategy as needed • Reviewing how well the approach worked

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None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others - they are equally important and depend on each other. We aim to ensure that all areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities.

The Learning Environment

The classrooms are organised for the children to access all areas of the curriculum. The outdoor classroom is carefully planned to support and develop the learning objectives being taught inside. The outdoor classroom enables children to investigate and create on a larger scale. The children have opportunities to develop their gross and fine motor skills and explore the natural environment using their senses.

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum provides the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Our medium term planning is completed termly.

Organisation & Timetable

Indoor provision

We have 2 Reception classrooms and an outdoor area. All environments are well-planned, high quality environments. They are organised and informed by how young children learn, what they like and what they need.

In the classrooms there are continuous provision areas such as; the reading corner, small world and construction, maths, writing, creative, physical, role play and physical stations.

Outdoor provision

The outdoor classroom contains large crates, pipes, blankets; large wooden blocks; small world soil/sand tray (with a choice of objects to add daily); a music area, a dressing up shed, a stage, a water area, a fenced off pond, a tyre obstacle course, bikes and scooters and a graphics table. Other areas are added as part of the topics throughout the year.

In addition to these opportunities, we have weekly PE, Write Dance, Physical activities, Music, and PSED sessions. The PSED sessions are linked to the PATHS programme, Protective Behaviours, No outsiders and Jigsaw. The children have daily circle time sessions linked to PATHS.

The Teachers and Teaching Assistants work alongside the children to support and extend their learning.

Teaching and learning style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage 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 achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- 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 and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the teacher and teaching assistant support children in all areas of provision;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school (for example, nursery and pre-school);
- the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- The regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

Playing & Exploring in the Foundation Stage

A key feature of the Foundation Stage is active play-based learning, both inside and outside. Through play and exploration our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and 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. We ensure that we plan and resource a challenging environment and support children's learning through planned play activity. We extend and support children's spontaneous play and develop children's language and communication through play.

Planning, Observation, Assessment & Reporting

The EYFS planning is based on child interests and needs. The medium term plans focus on the developmental stages of the children in relation to the EYFS curriculum. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for short term planning, however the teacher may alter these medium term plans in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children.

The reception Baseline Assessment is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. This along with teacher observations help to provide an on-entry assessment of pupil attainment.

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“Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners knowing children’s level of achievement and interests, and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge.”
(Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage 2021)

We make on-going assessments of children’s learning on a daily basis to make decisions on what children have learnt or can already do; this helps to form next steps for individual children. Teachers professional knowledge forms the basis of most assessment. We also use Development Matters and Birth to 5 to support judgements and next steps.

Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of:

- Photographic/video evidence with appropriate written explanations stored on Tapestry (see below)
- Cube sheets where the adult over a period of sessions, gains evidence of all children’s progress and achievement in a particular area
- Individual child observations (Focus is on one child/small group of children during child-initiated learning)

Tapestry

Tapestry is an online learning journal for each child. Both staff and parents have access to this document and can add photographs, short videos and comments about a child’s progress and achievements in all areas of the EYFS curriculum. As an assessment tool, staff highlight the area of learning and characteristics of effective learning that these observations demonstrate. Parents and staff can add comments about observations that have been added to the child’s journal. Children also have a Record of Achievement, which includes certificates awarded in school and outside school and examples of ‘Good Work’ that have been awarded a Head Teacher sticker. The folder is then passed on to the next class teacher to be added to. At the end of Year 2 it is given back to the child as a keepsake.

All of the above assessment methods inform our assessment and our future planning.

Additional Assessments;

- Half termly writing assessment – writing is collected in a writing progress folder (this has accompanying assessment and target sheets).
- Half termly phonic assessments.
- Recorded work is marked with the children and we discuss with the child what they need to do next, using verbal feedback (See marking policy)
- Termly assessments for each child in relation the curriculum areas and their progress.

Our judgements are also supported through moderation work. This includes each Teacher attending a local agreement trialling session to share and discuss judgements and evidence. Added to this, Teachers and Nursery staff from the local cluster meet for each half term to moderate the children’s progress and achievements.

In June the Foundation Stage Profile records are completed and sent to the LEA. The Foundation Stage Co-ordinator then compares the baseline data with the end of year and Easter data to analyse the value added and to evaluate our practice.

The children are given a final judgement against each Early learning Goal. They can be EMERGING or EXPECTED within the ELG.

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- Termly Pupil Progress Meetings are held with the Head teacher to discuss how children are progressing, and identify support which may need to be put in place for some pupils.

Good Level of Development

This is the achievement of the EXPECTED Level in the 3 Prime Areas of Physical Development, Communication & Language and Personal, Social & Emotional Development, and the Specific Areas of Literacy and Mathematics – this accounts for 12 Early Learning Goals.

Parents receive an annual report that gives the final judgment against each ELG – and whether they have achieved a ‘Good Level of development’. It offers comments on their child’s ‘Characteristics of Effective Learning’, progress in Communication & Language, PSED, Literacy and Mathematics with next steps for their learning. There are also Teacher and Head Teacher comments specific to each child. A comment is included from each child too. We complete these in June and send them to parents in early July each year.

Inclusion in the Foundation Stage

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 most achieve the EXPECTED level by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, 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. Children that are described as EMERGING or those who have not reached a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the Foundation Stage will receive additional support in Year One and will be placed on the school provision map. (See our Special Educational Needs policy.)

We aim to 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. This involves speech therapy for some of our children.

The role of parents as partners

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their children and we value the contribution that they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children and helping them to succeed.

We aim to build positive relationships with parents and encourage them to support their children through:

- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts full time school - talking to parents about their child before they start school
- Sending the children a 'welcome to school' card in the Summer holidays with a photo of the Teacher and Teaching Assistant inside.
- Having flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parents to become secure, and by allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- Children attend school on a part time basis for the first two days to enable them to become familiar with school routines of lunchtime.
- Inviting parents to a meeting about Phonics and Reading so they know how they can best support their child.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk with us about their child's progress in our reception class or about any concerns they may have.
- There is a formal meeting for parents in the Autumn and Spring term and an optional meeting in the Summer term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private. We encourage parents to tell us about their child's achievements at home, which they can display in their child's online Tapestry learning journal and contributes to the school's assessment of their child.
- We invite parents to curriculum daytime sessions to see and discuss the kind of work that the children undertake in the reception class.
- We send a half-termly topic map outlining the stories and topics for each week.
- We send home letters so parents know how to support their child and develop the work in school.
- We arrange a variety of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents. These include 'Dads in school day' around Fathers' Day, DT days, Science days, Sharing the children's learning, Food tasting, and the 'Pretend wedding' in the summer term.
- Ensuring parents receive a written end of year report on their child's attainment and progress
- All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with parents, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

Links with pre-school providers

We have meetings with the main pre-school providers which include an LEA Nursery and private day care facilities. Information is shared about the children with particular reference to any special educational needs. We receive the Foundation Stage Profile records from most of the pre-school providers which give information about the child's achievements and stage of development.

We have regular meetings with the Galley Common Nursery staff. We plan areas for development and attend some training sessions together. The Reception teachers then plan work with the Nursery Staff and work with the Nursery children. In the Summer Term we plan an induction programme for the children who are starting school in September.

Monitoring in the Foundation Stage

We monitor the effectiveness of the Foundation Stage through:

- Class observations by the Head Teacher, Link Inspector and other lead professionals;
- Foundation leader will lead the FS team in evaluating planning and moderating recorded work and assessment records;
- Feedback from parents through questionnaires and input at parent consultation meetings.
- Sharing good practice through Foundation Stage cluster meetings and training opportunities

Role of the Foundation Stage Leader

To support the Head Teacher in the leadership and management of the school and in securing Learning improvement related to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The foundation stage leader will:

- co-ordinate the planning and implementation of the curriculum;
- liaise with pre-school providers and Key Stage 1 co-ordinator;
- monitor the progress of pupils work;
- lead moderation between the two classes;
- analyse data from the Foundation Stage Profile;
- write the priorities for the coming year after FS team discussion;
- co-ordinate the deployment and welfare of support staff;
- Take part in cluster meetings to moderate and share good practice.
- Manage the purchase and deployment of resources.

Reviewed: September 2022

Next Review Date: September 2023

Signed: L Gordon