



GWINEAR SCHOOL

EYFS POLICY

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Agreed with Headteacher: Lee Gardiner and full governing body

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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 EYFS, 2017).

Aims

Every child is **unique** and constantly learning. They can be resilient, capable and confident when provided with an **enabling environment**, in which their experiences respond to their needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers. All children **develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**, learning to be independent through **positive relationships**. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these outcomes.

At Gwinear we aim to:

- Provide a safe, caring and challenging environment that is sensitive to the needs and interests of all children.
- Provide quality learning experiences, using a consistent approach, so that every child makes good progress.
- Provide a broad, stimulating and creative curriculum that will set in place secure 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, irrespective of their ability or background have the opportunity to reach their potential.
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills, such as co-operation and sharing.
- Support children to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

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, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise, encouragement and class rewards, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning. When planning/guiding children's learning, staff reflect on the ways children learn and reflect these in practise, utilising the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically.

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. Valuing parent/carer's knowledge and views, working in partnership to support children both at home and school.

Enabling environments – We aim to create a supportive and stimulating learning environment, where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to a free-flow between the indoor and outdoor environment that is set up through purposefully planned continuous provision for the areas of learning. Through observations we assess the children's interests and stages of development and learning needs before planning enjoyable, challenging and achievable activities to extend their learning and development. These observations are recorded in the children's individual online learning journeys. Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning. In addition to providing some adult led activities, responding to emerging needs.

Learning and developing – The early years learning environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. Building their confidence through problem solving and taking appropriate risk. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The seven areas of learning are defined so that children are able to find, locate and utilise equipment and resources independently.

The Curriculum

Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage Document (EYFS) which is available at:

https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2017/03/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf

This clearly defines our teaching and the following policy details the specifics of our setting. The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (DfE 2014: 1.3), they support children's learning in all other areas, they are known as the prime areas.

The prime areas are;

Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Making relationships, Managing feelings and behaviour and Self-confidence and Self-awareness

Communication and Language – Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking

Physical Development – Moving and Handling and Self care

The specific areas of learning, develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. The specific areas are:

Literacy – Reading and Writing

Mathematics – Numbers and Space, Shape and Measures

Understanding the World – People and communities, The world and Technology

Expressive Arts and Design – Exploring and using media and materials and Being Imaginative

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning, all activities planned within the Reception class are done so with these characteristics in mind. They 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 – 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.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Quality planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows that the principles of 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. All staff who work in the Foundation Stage are involved in this process.

The planning within the EYFS is based around the children's interests. These plans are used by the EYFS team as a guide for daily and weekly planning. Planning is often altered in response to the needs of the children. We make regular, on-going assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects the identified needs from both staff and parents. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of regular recorded observations and this involves the teacher and teaching assistants. These observations/assessments are recorded and used towards children's individual online learning journeys, which are shared with parents regularly. It involves observing children's level of achievement, interest and learning styles, in order to shape their learning experiences. At the end of Reception a written report is made for each child and sent home to parents who can then come to talk about their child's progress with the teacher.

Learning Through Play

At Gwinear we believe in the importance of learning through play in our Early Years classroom. We believe that children learn best from experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children, as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate, problem solve and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play

through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child initiated play (which is purposeful and at time guided) and adult led activities is very important to us.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Children with special educational needs 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 provision maps (IEPs) identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support commensurate with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy.

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. For children's whose home language is not English, staff provide opportunities to use their home language in play and learning around the classroom. 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.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we aim for the school and parents and carers to work closely together. 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 school and parents/carers as follows:

- We will outline the school's expectations and curriculum offer on the school website.
- We will hold parent consultation meetings three times per year to discuss progress and how the child is settling in (or by request).
- Early years staff will send home a half termly homework activity sheet for parents to do with their children. They will also send home weekly activities, based on the current learning (e.g. phonics, spellings, maths). As well as daily reading/sounds.
- We will publish our PSHE themes for each term on our website and on the parent notice board.
- We will operate an open door policy that will allow parents and carers to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner. Conversely if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- We will conduct workshops, open afternoons and topic outcomes for parents/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 provide parents with support materials to aid children's learning at home. Including 'phonics booklets', explaining our scheme and way of learning.
- There will be opportunities for parents and carers to visit school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning.

Transition

Prior to a child's entry into the Reception class at Gwinear, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition:

- **Stay and Play** - At the beginning of the summer term prior to the children starting school, the Reception teacher runs a weekly 'Stay and Play' session. The children are invited with their parents to spend 1 hour 15 minutes in the classroom to participate in continuous provision type activities followed by a story. This has proven to be a good opportunity for the children to meet peers, parents to meet other parents and classroom staff to start to build a relationship with the children and their parents/carers. After a few sessions the teacher will encourage the parents to leave their children for the session to support their transition further.
- **Pre-School Visits** - The Reception teacher will visit children in their setting to talk to their Key worker and the children. If the children are in more than one setting the teacher aims to visit them all to gain a bigger picture of the child.
- **Parent Meetings** - In the July prior to starting school the parents of the new intake children are invited to an afternoon in, in which they will be given lots of information regarding what to expect about school, the FS curriculum and general advice. In addition, this is a time to ask any questions, meet the Food Services and order any school uniform.
- **Home visits** – In the summer term, parents of the new intake children will receive a letter in order to arrange home visit. This enables the early years staff to get to know children in their own environment, in an attempt to provide children with a smooth transition from home to school.
- **Trips** – Children new to reception are invited on a day trip out (as part of our school activity days), with the current Reception class, based on the summer term topic.
- **Meeting for parents** – At the end of the Summer term parents will be invited into school for a brief meeting with the class teacher to discuss the daily routines of the class and answer any questions parents may have.

Intimate Care

This is any care that involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However depending on the age and stage of a child's development, they may need some support, for example, dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear and clothes following an accident.

Parents inform staff of those children likely to require such care and a discussion takes place regarding how their needs can be met as closely in school as they would be met at home. Parents will always receive a phone call if a child requires such care during the day, although if the parents are unable to come to the school, staff will meet the care needs by using clean clothing, provided by parents. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child.

Privacy is maintained as far as possible and staff are always encouraged to change a child in the presence of another member of staff. Intimate care is given to children who need it in line with our school policy. Parents are always informed when this care is given.