



Policy: Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Approving committee: Learning, Teaching & Standards

Glossary:

CPD	Continuous Personal Development
DfE	Department For Education
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
Tapestry	Online learning journal used by Reception Year to record the activities of children both in the home and school setting.

Great Abington Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

At Great Abington Primary School our Early Years provision is underpinned by the principles and requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This is a statutory framework for all children from birth to 5 years of age which provides a secure foundation for all future learning. Development Matters guidance material is used to further support each individual child's learning and development pathway.

Aims

Children entering our Reception year bring with them a diverse range of experiences and we believe every child deserves the best possible support to achieve and fulfil their potential. Therefore our Early Years provision is guided by the following aims:

- To provide a curriculum which takes account of, and responds to, the children's developmental needs and allows them to make progress related to their differing abilities. "What the child can do" will be our starting point.
- To value the importance of play, which we know underpins all development and learning for young children.
- To provide well planned experiences based on children's spontaneous play and a balance of teacher led and child initiated activities appropriate to the individual's stage of development.
- To provide quality learning experiences (including Next Steps) that allows children to not only extend their skills but ensures that children have positive experiences of success at their own levels, in order to give them confidence and motivation for future learning.
- To make teaching and learning fun, through a mix of stimulating opportunities both indoors and outdoors, which are structured, balanced, relevant to the child and related to the real world.
- To deliver a curriculum which provides equal learning and development opportunities for all, ensuring no child is excluded or disadvantaged.

Early Years Foundation Stage

The overarching aim of the EYFS is to provide a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum which addresses the children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, moral and cultural development. There are seven areas of learning covered by the EYFS curriculum, 3 Prime and 4 Specific, all are important and depend upon each other to support a rounded approach to child development. At Great Abington Primary School all seven areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

The Prime Areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) – These goals focus on how children learn to work, play, cooperate with others and function in a group beyond the family, encouraging the development of personal values and the child's understanding of themselves and others.
- Communication and Language (CL) - This area of learning includes communication, speaking and listening in different situations and for different purposes. By story-telling, singing, rhymes, and talking we aim to extend the children's vocabulary and understanding.
- Physical Development (PD) - The children's physical development is encouraged by giving them opportunities to run, climb, jump and practise skills with pencils, brushes, scissors, coat fastenings, etc. We promote positive attitudes towards a healthy and active way of life.

The Specific Areas:

Mathematics - A wide variety of practical activities enables children to become confident and competent in various aspects of mathematics - matching, sorting, counting and ordering. Relevant mathematical language and an understanding of basic mathematical concepts are developed.

Literacy – This area encourages the children to develop the early skills of reading and writing through “Letters and Sounds” activities and mark making opportunities.

Understanding the World – In this area of learning, children develop the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for later work in science, design and technology, history, geography, and information and communication technology.

Expressive Arts & Design - Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another and so extend their understanding. It develops skills of self-expression and imagination through art, music, dance, role play and imaginative play.

The role of parents/carers

At Great Abington Primary School we recognise the valuable role that parents and carers have played and their future role as educators. We encourage parents/carers to share as much information as possible about their child (as they know them better than anyone) and we strive to develop a close relationship with parents and carers, ensuring a smooth transition from home to school for their child.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. Effective learning requires high quality teaching. It is an experience in which there is exploration, investigation, rehearsal, repetition and consolidation of children’s developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage these aspects of learning can be brought together through playing and talking in a stimulating environment. To ensure the promotion of effective learning we will:

- Work closely on developing a close partnership with parents / carers to ensure our children feel happy and secure and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- Provide a stimulating environment where all children can explore at their own pace and give children time to explore ideas in depth.
- Embrace the outdoor learning opportunities we have in our area.
- Include collaborative learning strategies which encourage children from all cultures to work together.
- Provide well-led adult directed and well-resourced child initiated activities.
- Understand that children learn in different ways and at different rates.
- Provide creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of language and, through our own speaking and listening, examples of the conventions of conversation and discussion.

Effective teaching involves helping children to learn so that they can make connections in their learning and go forward as well as reflecting on what they have already learned. To achieve effective teaching we will:

- Ensure that all staff have a thorough knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. We will develop this knowledge and understanding through CPD and staff discussions.
- Provide activities and experiences which are challenging but achievable.
- Strive to provide good role models. We will be polite, punctual and well prepared. In our interactions with the children we will use encouraging and supportive approaches so that the children will be motivated to concentrate and persevere.

- Use conversation and effective questioning techniques to assess children's learning and challenge their thinking.
- Use teaching approaches which are sensitive to pupils' differing cultural backgrounds.
- Use language which is rich and grammatically correct so that the children's language may be extended. We will show respect for the home language where English is a second language.
- Teach skills and knowledge directly where appropriate.
- Plan the indoor and outdoor environments so that full use is made of the available space. High quality resources will be made available in a stimulating way for all children.
- Use effective observation and assessment techniques to monitor children's progress and inform our planning.
- Use continual formative assessment to monitor the quality of the provision and assess future training needs.

Assessment

Assessment in the EYFS needs to encompass all areas of learning. It is used to help teachers plan for personalised learning and development. Observation is a major tool for assessing children's progress. Observations take place during child initiated and adult led activities and these observations inform future planning and 'Next Steps'. Assessments of children are based upon both planned and spontaneous observations during their time in the Foundation Stage. This allows Key Workers (Teachers and Teaching Assistants) to make an accurate assessment of the child's interests, achievement and possibly difficulties and therefore to plan effectively for personalised learning and development. Observations are recorded in different ways, in each child's individual Tapestry online journal, in the Maths and English books and the School's Half Termly Tracking Grids covering all seven areas of Learning from the EYFS Development Matters. Parents / carers are actively encouraged to share in these observations. Parent/carers receive an initial half term parent consultation to discuss the settling in period, a further spring consultation and end of year report that offers information on each child's progress in each of the 7 areas of learning. This information highlights the child's strengths and development needs, celebrating the progress they have made.

Quality Improvement

We recognise that high quality experiences in the Early Years have a significant impact on children's social, emotional, physical and cognitive development and, therefore we are continually looking for ways to improve the quality of learning, development and care we offer at Great Abington Primary School. Children have a right, spelled out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to provision which enables them to develop their personalities, talents and abilities irrespective of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities or gender.