

What is the EYFS?

The Early Years Foundation Stage is the term used to describe the time in your child's life between birth and age 5. It is a statutory framework that sets the standards all childcare providers in England must meet in order to ensure that children learn and develop well, are kept healthy and safe, and have the necessary knowledge and skills to thrive in school and prepare them for their future learning and successes.

During their early years, children will learn and develop through exploring, playing and interacting with the world around them. This is not an automatic process and depends on positive relationships to enable each child to learn and develop successfully. Experiences in the early years can have a major impact on life outcomes, so providing a safe and secure childhood will help to give children a good foundation for the rest of their lives.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning describe behaviours children use in order to learn;

- **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.

Children are powerful learners from birth. They can develop strong habits of mind and behaviours that will continue to support them to discover, think, create, solve problems and self-regulate their learning. Children need consistent lived experiences of autonomy alongside support for their growing awareness and control of the processes of thinking and learning. Play, time, space and freedom to follow their intentions, sustained shared thinking, and experiencing the satisfaction of meeting their own challenges and goals all contribute to development as curious, creative, resourceful and resilient learners.

Statement of Intent at Great Abington Primary School

Children in our Early Years Phase follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS). Every child is recognised as a unique individual and we celebrate and welcome differences within our school community. The ability to learn is underpinned by the teaching of language, basic skills, knowledge, concepts and values. We provide continual enhancement opportunities to engage learning and believe that childhood should be a happy, investigative and exciting time in young lives, where there are no limits to curiosity and there is a thirst for new experiences and knowledge.

We promote positive attitudes to learning which reflect the values and skills needed to promote responsibility for learning and individual success. We believe that cultural capital is about giving our children the best possible start in life and their future successes, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. We know that children arrive at our setting with different experiences than others and that building communication between home and school, engaging our parents at the earliest opportunity, is vital to the continuing development of our young children. Throughout their time in the EYFS, children develop a sense of belonging to both our school and the wider

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community. They build the confidence and skills which enable them to make decisions and self evaluate, make connections and become lifelong learners.

We work in close partnership with parents to encourage independent, confident, happy learners and ensure that they thrive in school and reach their full potential. We strive to understand and follow children's individual interests throughout our EYFS curriculum, providing high quality, structured play and new and meaningful opportunities which develop their knowledge and skills. We consolidate prior learning and ensure that all children meet their next steps. Our learning environment both indoors and outdoors stimulates children's imagination, curiosity and creativity. We have enhanced our outdoor learning opportunities, making extensive use of our local area, visits to Abington Woods and access to our outdoor learning spaces. We work hard to prepare children for their next stage in education and to ensure a smooth and seamless transition from EYFS to KS1.

The 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) are a main feature of the EYFS as they provide a summary of the knowledge and skills that young children are expected to have gained by the time they reach the end of the Reception year. The ELGs are organised into seven areas of learning and development, which are divided into prime areas and specific areas. These 7 areas made up of prime and specific areas are used to plan your child's learning and activities to extend and enhance their development. The professionals teaching and supporting your child will make sure that the activities are suited to your child's unique needs. They follow a holistic, progressive curriculum which is carefully sequenced and designed to be extremely flexible so that staff can follow your child's individual needs and interests and use these to inform and plan the next steps in their learning.