

Greenway Primary
& Nursery School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date approved: 17 November 2022

Date of review: Autumn 2023

“I enjoyed the fire station role-play; it was fun to pretend to be a firefighter!”
(Nursery child)

“I like learning about numbers because it helps me count.” (Reception child)

“I like reading because it is fun. My phonics helps me to read new words.”
(Reception child)

“I liked playing with all of the dolls in the doll’s house. I can make up stories with them.”
(Nursery child)

“I liked learning about Harvest. We learnt a song called The Big Red Combine Harvester!”
(Reception child)

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfill 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, Department for Education.)

1. Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. Children join the Nursery class in the September following their third birthday. Children join the Reception class in the September following their fourth birthday.

Parents have the option for summer born children (children born between 1st April and 31st August) to defer their Reception start date. This does not mean that they will get a place at Greenway, it is simply deferring their application to join Reception.

The Nursery and Reception curriculum follows the statutory guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage; this sets the standards that all EYFS providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

2. Intent

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four overarching principles:

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

At Greenway Primary & Nursery School ('Greenway'), 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 and motivators to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning as well as developing appropriate behaviours for learning.

Our intent is to:

- have happy, healthy, settled children, who are all developing a life-long love of learning
- build on a child's prior learning from home and other Early Years settings.
- provide secure transitions through working in partnership with parents, carers and previous settings to provide the best possible start to school life, enabling each child to reach their full potential from their different starting points.
- provide a curriculum based on children's interests, life events (including weather & seasons), their learning environment, relationships with families and community and planned topics. The curriculum will take into account the context of the school by emphasising cultural diversity.
- provide a curriculum that has a particular emphasis on personal, social and emotional development and enriching communication and language, including Oracy.
- plan the curriculum so it is securely sequenced so that pupils have opportunities to practice what they have already learned.

- ensure children’s learning is achieved through both adult led and child initiated experiences.
- provide safe, happy, stimulating and enabling environments where every child is curious to learn and thrives.
- promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of all children.
- begin preparing children for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of later life.
- promote British values of democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty.
- develop and celebrate a culture of respect, tolerance and collaboration across our local and global communities.
- ensure that at the end of Reception all children will have made good progress from their individual starting points and developed the skills and knowledge to support a smooth transition into Year 1.

3. Implementation

Transition

We participate in the Herts For Learning ‘Supporting Smooth Transitions’. Our EYFS staff also liaise with Pre-School providers to discuss each individual child, support their transition into school, and when possible, meet with children in their EYFS setting.

New Nursery children and parents are invited to visit their class before the summer holiday and each child is invited to attend our Nursery for one hour with a parent/carer the day before they start Nursery at the beginning of the autumn term. Similarly, children starting in Reception, have a visit morning in the summer term and slowly build-up to attending full days at the beginning of the autumn term.

In the Nursery class, the class teacher completes a Herts for Learning ‘Settling in’ form for each child, which includes The Leuven Scale for Well-being and The Leuven Scale for Involvement. It also includes the three Characteristics of Effective learning; playing and exploring, active learning, creating, and thinking critically. The Reception teacher also completes this information for children that are new to the school when they join her class.

We follow The Statutory Framework Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage, which provides prime and specific areas of learning that must be covered in our curriculum. It specifies that ‘All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected’.

The three prime areas ‘particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving’ are:

- Communication and language - Listening, Attention, Understanding & Speaking.
- Physical development – Gross Motor and Fine Motor.
- Personal, social and emotional development - Self-Regulation, Managing Self and Building Relationships.

The four specific areas, ‘through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied’ are:

- Literacy – Comprehension, Word Reading and Writing.
- Mathematics - Number and Numerical Patterns.
- Understanding of the world – Past and Present and People, Culture and Communities.

- Expressive arts and design – Creating with Materials and Being Imaginative and Expressive.

Cross-curricular links are planned across the curriculum. Staff and children adapt resources as children play and learn, using them to practice skills linked to all areas of the curriculum; Personal Social emotional Development (PSED), moral, spiritual and cultural awareness are interwoven throughout all areas of learning and planning in the EYFS at Greenway.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

We use the 'Development Matters', 'Birth to Five Matters' and 'The Characteristics of Effective Learning' as a foundation for planning, monitoring and assessment.

The planning within the EYFS is based on the skills within the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. These plans are flexible so that teachers can respond to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Our school uses the Graduated Approach Model: Assess, Plan, Do, and Review (ADPR).

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways and contribute to the child's individual 'Learning Journey' profile folder.

We use the WellComm resource to screen children's language and understanding when they start Nursery and for those children who are new to our Reception class. Children are re-assessed termly to monitor progress following speech and language interventions and targets. We are also required to carry out a Baseline Assessment on children entering Reception Class within their first six weeks.

At the end of the Reception year in school, the child's progress is recorded through the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

Our curriculum is a process, which the EYFS staff discuss as a team. This includes, for example; where a child is in their development, where in the curriculum they are and why, how it is working, next steps of learning, experiences a child has at home or does not experience, where we want a child to be, what we need to add/change, etc. This is supported by ongoing observations, formative and summative assessments, reflection and consequent adjustments made to the provision, support offered and the curriculum.

The curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced. We also follow: the Jigsaw PSHE Programme, the Jigsaw Discovery R.E programme, the Read Write Inc. Phonics Program by Ruth Miskin, the Herts for Learning (HfL) Essential Foundations For Counting and Number Blocks from the National Centre For Excellence in The Teaching Of Mathematics (NCETM).

Teachers are experienced and trained in Early Years and their subject knowledge is strong. Early Years staff share information, updates, ideas and recent training they have completed and experienced, etc. within the team and wider school staff. Similarly, EYFS staff benefit from whole school training and feedback from relevant training gained by staff in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

Teaching and Learning Style

We recognise that features of effective teaching and learning in 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 adjustments, extend, and develop play and talk;
- 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.

Play

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn self-regulation 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. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. We deliver learning for all of the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Active Learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Children should be given an opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Enrichment:

Children are provided with an enhanced curriculum with visitors coming into school for topic enhancement. For example, a dentist, a nurse, a Mum with her new baby, Hearing dogs for the Deaf, etc.

Children from Year 6 come to help support Nursery children, on a rotating timetable, at lunch times and all children in Reception are paired up with a Year 6 Buddy. Once settled in their new class, they meet once a week to share books and other activities. This is invaluable for integrating our younger children into school and the older children can positively role model personal, social and Oracy skills as they listen and chat with our children in Early Years. Obviously, these experiences are equally beneficial for the Year 6 children.

In the summer term both Nursery and Reception children enjoy the excitement of Educational Visits. For example, to College Lake to further develop their learning and understanding of mini-beasts and their natural habitats or to Whipsnade Zoo to further develop previous learning on butterflies.

Parents have the choice to use their 30HRS of funded sessions in Nursery or to pay for afternoon sessions, if they do not qualify. Children benefit from chatting over lunchtimes with their peers and staff – and the children are so keen to brush their teeth afterwards with their friends, etc. Different activities are planned for the afternoons, but the staff remain the same.

Parents as Partners

We use children's and parent's/carer's voice to shape our curriculum and practice, beginning with the children's interests and fascinations.

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in Early Years meeting them at home, and/or through a visit to school.
- offering both parents and children the opportunity to spend time in the EYFS before starting school.
- inviting parents to an EYFS meeting in the summer term, before their child starts school and in September, when their child is settling into Greenway. A lot of information is shared with parents/carers at both meetings to aid their child's transition into school and themselves as part of the 'Greenway family'. A Nursery/Reception Coffee Morning is also held for parents/carers once their child is in school.
- asking parents to complete an 'All About Me Form' on their child's visit day, which includes what the child would like to learn, what they as parents would like their child to learn and how we can best support their child to settle in to their new class.
- operating an open door policy for parents with any queries.
Sharing the children's 'Learning Journey' profile folders and valuing the ongoing contributions to these from parents.
- involving parents/carers in fun, home learning activities through 'Google Classroom' on a fortnightly basis. Parents upload their child's learning to share with the teacher, who then provides positive feedback on the child's learning.
- offering two parent/teacher consultation evenings per year, an additional opportunity to discuss their child's EYFS Profile and an Open Morning where children can show their parents/carers round their learning environment and engage in play and learning activities together.
- sending a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year.

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, providing a sense of security so children can become confident, independent and capable young learners. EYFS staff meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, talking to the parents when appropriate, and working in partnership with them.

At Greenway, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely, safely and independently. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet and creative etc.

Nursery has two spacious classrooms inside which also supports children staying in the afternoon (30HRS) to have a separate rest/quiet area. Each class has specially designed furniture that supports children's independent learning as they can easily find and access resources. Both classes also have access to a good outdoors area and both have covered areas, which enables learning outside in most weathers. Being outdoors offers the children

opportunities for experiencing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. They are able to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be more physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and all children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school, we believe that every child matters. 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 and interests of our children. 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.

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 by making adjustments and adaptations for learning.
- 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.
- EYFS Pupil Premium is used to support the child. E.g. by enabling a child to attend 30HRS for one afternoon a week in Nursery during the summer term or to access play therapy.

Welfare

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. (See Greenway's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies).

At Greenway, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children;
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill;

- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs. (See Greenway’s therapeutic Pupil Behaviour Policy).
- ensure the suitability of all adults who have contact with the children.
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose;
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs;
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.
- we fulfil statutory safeguarding duties and ensure any safeguarding issues arising within the EYFS setting are identified and followed in accordance with the school’s separate Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies.

The Jigsaw programme provides a mindful approach to PSHE education and RE. It has been adopted by our whole school because it compliments and builds so well on our therapeutic approach to learning and on the importance we place on well-being at Greenway.

3. Impact

- Children are happy, resilient and settled in their Early Years classes.
- Children feel a sense of belonging and being part of an EY and school community and local and global communities.
- Children are enabled to socialise and form healthy, happy relationships with other children and adults as well as identifying and understanding how and when to seek help/support when needed.
- Early Years staff ‘know their children’ as individuals.
- All children make progress from their starting points.
- All children are able to access the curriculum.
- Children are provided with a wide range of knowledge and skills as a foundation for future progress and the ability to maximize their potential.
- Early Years staff have good relationships with all the children in their class.
- There is good and regular communication between Nursery staff and parents/carers.
- We receive positive feedback from parent voice through Parent Forum, their child’s end of year report feedback slips and regarding their child’s progress in and through the EYFS at Greenway.
- We hear positive child voice on their experiences and learning in Early Years at Greenway – children are excited to engage in activities and learn, developing, consolidating and deepening their knowledge, understanding and skills across all the areas of learning in the EYFS.
- The curriculum is well adapted to meet the needs of all the pupils, including children with SEND, Looked After and disadvantaged children.

Children are supported to work towards and achieve our ‘Overarching Curriculum Ambitions’ that are personalised to this cohort and Greenway. For example:

- To settle in and become a happy, active and motivated member of our school community.
- To further develop their self-help skills. E.g., so they can independently change their shoes.
- To find their name for self-registration.
- To hold scissors correctly, and effectively, to cut to a line.

- To listen to, create, read or retell a story to a group using words, signing, pictures/symbols or writing.
- Sing favourite songs and rhymes and create their own made-up versions.
- Prepare their own snack with their peers.
- To use language/signing/symbols to describe and retell events with a variety of vocabulary.
- Write their name and other words, using a comfortable and effective pencil grip and the correct letter formation.
- To draw or paint a picture.
- To independently create a 3D model from playdough, clay and/or construction, etc.
- To recognise dice patterns (subitise), match quantities to numerals and engage in problem-solving.
- To pedal a trike/ride a balance bike and steer it through and around obstacles.
- To climb up and over the indoor A Frames and travel across/under a horizontal ladder.
- To be confident and take risks, responsibly.

Children will have been taught and practiced the skills needed to attain the Early Learning Goals (the knowledge, skills and understanding children are assessed on at the end of Reception).

At Greenway, there is smooth transition between both Early Years classes and also into YR1. This is obtained through good communication between staff, parents and children and the transition visits of children and staff between classes in the summer term.

Monitoring and Review

The delivery of the EYFS Curriculum is monitored by class teachers, the Head teacher, the EYFS Lead and the EYFS nominated Governor through, learning walks, pupil/staff/parent voice and observations, etc.

Children's development in Early Years is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

Class teachers also have a Class Review every half term with the Head teacher and our INCO (Inclusion Coordinator) to discuss children's progress and provision in all areas of learning.

Children's progress will be shared with parents through parent consultations and end of year reports.

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body on an annual basis to ensure that it remains up to date and that school practise remains compliant. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing Body.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following additional Greenway policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy and Pupil Behaviour Policy