

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Friar's Grove Primary School



2024-2025

Approved by:

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EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

“When we give every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow.”

Development Matters Document – first published 2020 and revised 2023

INTRODUCTION

The Reception curriculum has been developed in accordance with the latest version of the ‘Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)’ (January 2024). The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are important and interconnected:

- **Communication and language**
- **Personal, social and emotional development**
- **Physical development**
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

The first three areas in the list above, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children’s capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

EYFS PRINCIPLES AND PHILOSOPHY

Four guiding principles shape our practice in the Early Years at Friar’s Grove:

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

At Friar’s Grove Primary School, we ensure that these four commitments remain a focus in all aspects of our provision.

In the Reception classes the children are cared for, and provided with a stimulating and challenging environment to prepare and encourage them to be confident and active learners for life. We hope that children will develop into independent, caring and responsible citizens who are able to apply their skills and talents in a variety of adaptable ways. Our expectation is that every child is very much involved with their own learning; making decisions, asking questions, and focusing on tasks.

ADMISSIONS, INDUCTION AND TRANSFER

We believe that both the child and their family’s first introduction to Friar’s Grove Primary School should be as smooth and enjoyable as possible.

At Friar’s Grove Primary School, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five (one intake). We have two ‘parallel’ classes which have an equal combination of children in relation to gender and age. During the term before the children start, parents and carers are invited to a welcome meeting where they have the opportunity to meet the staff and find out more about the school. Children are also invited to visit on two occasions (morning and afternoon sessions); when all children due to start in September come to spend time with each other and their class teacher.

On entry to school, the children are full time. Therefore, the routine of the school day is introduced slowly, especially those aspects which take the children away from their environment – for example PE and Assemblies. Expectations of, for example, listening, focus and attention are considered due to the age of the children and so the length of ‘carpet time’ and activities are adjusted accordingly.

Please see the Transition Policy 2024 for Nursery – Reception – Year 1 for more detail.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first educators, and we value having a positive relationship with them in their child's education through:

- Making contact with parents/carers before their child starts school at our parent tours, induction sessions and nursery visits, and providing them with a detailed welcome pack.
- Inviting parents/carers to attend an induction evening prior to the children starting.
- Operating an open-door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if EYFS staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Sharing photos, updates, learning support and 'wow moments' through learning journals and message services.
- Offering two parent-teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child's progress and wellbeing is discussed.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment, progress and attitude at the end of their time in reception.
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits and photographs etc.
- Inviting parents/carers to a range of activities throughout the school year such as special events, workshops, Christmas productions and Sports Day etc.
- Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school as a volunteer to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Reception class teachers and LSAs work in partnership and deliver an equal curriculum to all children whilst still taking into account the strengths and interests of individual children within those classes. The outdoor environment is an essential aspect of the children's learning, with all children having access to this throughout the school day where possible.

We believe that the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning that are set out in Development Matters 2023 underpin all learning. These 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 achieving.

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

The Reception curriculum is ambitious and aims to teach all children the skills and knowledge in order that they reach the seventeen Early Learning Goals described in the Early Years Statutory Framework. We teach through a range of teaching methods including child-initiated learning, whole class teaching, group teaching, investigations and problem solving together, and independently. Where possible, activities are play-based; however, there is also a need for direct teacher-led activities to ensure children gain essential knowledge and skills from their teacher.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

During the first term in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using a mixture of the statutory government baseline and through teacher observations. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. We record each child's level of development throughout the year and record whether each child is on track or not on track to meet a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the academic year.

Children will be assessed at either an emerging level or an expected level in each Early Learning Goal. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning and adult to child interactions reflect identified needs.

Assessment in Reception takes the form of both formal and informal observations and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher, learning support assistants, parents and children, as appropriate.

We record each child's level of development throughout the year. At the end of the final term in Reception, we assess whether each child is emerging or expected in each strand within each area of learning and submit this data to the Head teacher and to the DfE at the end of the academic year. This information is also shared with the child's next teacher who uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information at parental consultation meetings and in the end-of-year report.

We actively engage with local schools in monitoring and moderation events (across prime areas of learning), as well as attending Local Authority briefing and moderation events.

INCLUSION

At Friar's Grove Primary School, we believe that all our children and families matter and we value the diversity of individuals. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations, with the intention that all children meet most of the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage.

We plan to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

This is achieved through quality first teaching on a daily basis and activities which are adapted accordingly. In addition to this, where children have been identified as having a specific need, intervention programmes will be implemented. Teachers and LSAs plan programmes together and, where needed, in liaison with the Special Needs Co-ordinator.

It is important to us that all children feel 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why these exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this life skill. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children, and all members of staff in the school undertake regular Child Protection training.

'Children learn and develop more from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives. If children are at risk of falling behind the majority, the best time to help them to catch up and keep up is in the early years. Every child can make progress, if they are given the right support.'

Development Matters Document – first published 2020 and revised 2023

SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE PROCEDURES

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 such rules exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We help children to self-regulate and manage their emotions appropriately and Personal Social and Emotional Education is at the heart of everything we do.

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. We know that children learn best when they are healthy and safe, when their individual needs are met and when they have the chance to build positive relationships with the adults around them and their peers.

'Children learn best when they are healthy, safe, secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.'

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework – January 24