



## **Early Years Policy**

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### **School Values: A culture of achievement where all can succeed.**

At Guildford Grove, we

- are responsible and respectful members of our diverse community
- are empowered to make safe, informed choices
- have high aspirations and a “can do” attitude to learning and we
- develop and foster our individual abilities and interests.

At Guildford Grove, our curriculum develops language, ensures learning sticks and places reading at its heart. We want our Nursery and Reception pupils to have access to a broad and balanced EYFS curriculum which prepares them for now and for the future. Following personal interests and individual needs, we plan opportunities throughout our EYFS curriculum to support all children’s learning and development and to help children to achieve their full potential.

### **1. Aims**

This policy aims to ensure quality and consistent practice so that:

- Pupils are happy and secure individuals who feel safe, supported and nurtured in the school environment.
- Pupils develop into skillful communicators who connect with others through language and play, ensuring that they play in a vocabulary rich environment.
- Pupils develop into independent and creative learners who are curious about the world around them and begin to develop good learning habits to help them to achieve their best.
- Pupils have the best possible start in life and are well prepared for future learning.

## 2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2025 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for group and school-based providers.

## 3. Structure of the EYFS

At Guildford Grove Primary School, we have nursery classes and reception classes within our early years provision.

### Nursery

Our nursery takes children from the term after their third birthday. Children can attend for 30 hours or 15 hours per week. Parents/carers can choose their preferred class, subject to availability.

Children that attend nursery for 30 hours will be in Monday-Friday from 9am until 3pm. This is called the Daffodils class.

Children that attend nursery for 15 hours can choose to be in Sunflowers class (Monday 9-3pm, Tuesday 9-3pm and Wednesday 9-12pm) or Daisies class (Wednesday 12-3pm, Thursday 9-3pm and Friday 9-3pm).

Our Lead Nursery Practitioner is responsible for the day-to-day running of the nursery. This is overseen by the teacher in charge of the nursery.

### Reception

Children in Reception will be taught by a qualified class teacher and supported by a teaching assistant. Timings are in line with the school day with children starting at 8:40am and finishing at 3:15pm.

## 4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2024 EYFS statutory framework.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas 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.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics

- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

#### **4.1 Planning**

Staff plan engaging, relevant activities and experiences for children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff refer to Development Matters (non-statutory curriculum guidance) to ensure all areas of the EYFS framework are included and linked to the whole school curriculum. In addition to this, staff implement whole school schemes such as Little Wandle and White Rose Maths in line with the rest of the school. Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging, relevant and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, liaising with the school SENDCo and linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice, including opportunities to develop the Characteristics of Effective Learning. Teachers at Guildford Grove value first-hand experiences and plan for children to learn through these. This includes daily access to the extensive outdoor learning environment, as well as local visits.

#### **4.2 Teaching**

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. Children enjoy selecting their own resources during choosing time to extend their play. Staff promote the development of language and play skills through modelling and positive interactions in the indoor and outdoor learning environment. Pupils begin to develop good learning habits, in line with the rest of the school, and are taught vital self-regulation strategies so that they can access the varied curriculum on offer.

In reception, children take part in whole class, small group and individual learning opportunities, such as phonics, number time and group reading. In nursery, children access whole class and small group learning according to their age and stage of development. This improves their knowledge and understanding whilst also preparing them for learning in reception.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

### **5. Assessment**

At Guildford Grove, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations

shared by parents and/or carers. The Tapestry online learning journal system is used across nursery and reception to share observations and achievements with parents and/or carers and vice versa.

In nursery, at the end of each term, key workers complete 'all about me' reports which detail what the child has enjoyed doing that term, an achievement they are proud of and their next steps for the following term. Parents are invited to discuss these at termly stay and play sessions.

In reception, staff will administer the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) within the child's first six weeks of starting school.

Teachers in reception and nursery will use observational checkpoints to make judgements at the end of each term as to whether a child is 'on track' or 'not on track' for the expected level of development. This helps to inform their final early years profile judgement.

For children who are not making expected progress against the observational checkpoints, practitioners will consider how best to support the child. For some children, that may mean further intervention is required within the provision through specialist interventions delivered by staff in the setting. These children will be flagged to the SEND team and the graduated response will be followed to enable to access the support required (see SEND policy).

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other Learning Partners trust schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority and parents receive a letter with the final assessment information.

Individual end-of-year reports are written and shared with parents/carers at the end of the summer term in reception. They provide detailed information regarding the characteristics of effective learning, as well as particular strengths and areas of need across the EYFS.

## **6. Working with parents**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. This begins at the home visit where our Home School Link Worker and teacher/nursery practitioner visit the child and family in their home before starting at Guildford Grove nursery. Once at school, we share information during informal discussions, planned parent consultation meetings and via the end-of-year written report.

In nursery, each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate. They invite parents/carers to stay and play sessions at the end of each term and discuss children's achievements and next steps as they move through nursery.

In reception, parents and/or carers are invited to parent consultation meetings twice a year. They are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through regular contact with the class teacher and access to their online learning journal.

We value partnerships with families and encourage them to attend school events, such as class assemblies and nativity performances. We also welcome parent volunteers to support with reading and on school trips. We communicate regularly with parents using year group email addresses, Tapestry and via MCAS.

Our Home School Link Worker is available to provide families with support on a range of topics

## **7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

We recognise that children learn best when they are healthy safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff:child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

- For children aged 3 and over in Nursery: we have at least 1 member of staff for every 8 children.
- For children in Reception, we comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils.

We determine ratios guided by all relevant ratio requirements and by the needs of the children within the group.

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required. For nursery, all of our qualified staff members of staff hold a valid paediatric first aid certificate. When children are eating, they are closely supervised by a qualified paediatric first aider.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general in the early years by offering a healthy snack each day, teaching physical education weekly and prioritising healthy lifestyles through our curriculum.

Staff in EYFS prioritise the safety and welfare of all pupils and take all reasonable steps to ensure staff and children are not exposed to risks. More details on our risk management can be found in the 'EYFS Risk Assessment' policy.

Any further safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's child protection and safeguarding policy.

## **8. Transition**

At Guildford Grove we pride ourselves in our secure transition to nursery and school. We work closely with our families to ensure we have detailed information about the children prior to them starting nursery. Our home school link worker completes home visits alongside nursery practitioners to allow us to further understand how best to support the child. Children are then offered a personalised transition to Nursery including visits with their family and shortened sessions to familiarise themselves with the new environment and form positive relationships with new peers and adults.

When children join our school in reception, they are offered multiple 'stay and play' sessions prior to the summer holidays where they can get to know their peers, the staff and other families joining in September. We liaise with local pre-schools to ensure we have all relevant information about the children, as well as completing home visits for our new families.

As the children prepare to enter KS1, the Year 1 teachers observe the children in the early years setting during the summer term. The early years teachers also meet with the Year 1 teachers to discuss the end of year data within a Pupil Progress Meeting in order to ensure a smooth transition into Year 1. These discussions help the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

## **9. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Early Years Phase Leader annually.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

## Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

| Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS                                  | Where can it be found?   |
|---|--|
| Safeguarding policy and procedures  | See child protection and safeguarding policy                   |
| Procedure for responding to illness   | Follow whole school procedures                                 |
| Administering medicines policy  | See administering medicines policy                             |
| Emergency evacuation procedure  | See premises risk assessment                                   |
| Procedure for checking the identity of visitors                             | See Single Central Register & Safeguarding policy KCSIE (2022) |
| Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children | Follow whole school procedures                                 |
| Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints                          | See complaints policy  |