



Great Easton Voluntary Aided
C of E Primary School's

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Our school vision for our children:

We are God's children and global citizens. We will be bold enough to use our voices, brave enough to evoke change in the world and strong enough to stand up for what is right. We are valued and are part of a Christian family that grows together in faith, love and kindness.

This policy was shared with staff September 2019

Ratified at the Full Governing Body meeting on 17th September 2019

To be reviewed annually

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Aims

To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning;

To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences;

To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.

To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development;

To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere;

To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;

To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

The Curriculum

Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available from the school office or to download at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/299391/DFE-00337-2014.pdf This clearly defines what we teach. The following policy details the specifics of our setting.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (DfE 2014: 1.3), they support children's learning in all other areas, they are known as the prime areas.

The prime areas are:

- **Communication and Language** - Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking
- **Physical Development** - Moving and Handling and Self care
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** - Making relationships, Managing feelings and behaviour and Self-confidence and Self-awareness.

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. The specific areas are:

- **Literacy** - Reading and Writing
- **Mathematics** - Numbers and Space, Shape and Measures
- **Understanding the World** - People and communities, The world and Technology
- **Expressive Arts and Design** - Exploring and using media and materials and Being Imaginative

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The Reception teacher plans activities within the Reception classroom with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics 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 achievements
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Teaching strategies

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible. Adult directed tasks also help the children to prepare for their transition to year 1.

Play

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years' classroom. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practice skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child initiated play, which is guided by the activities set out, and adult led

activities is very important to us.

Teaching

We include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood and taken on.

Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered together on the carpet as a class. In these slots we focus on our project work, maths, literacy, phonics, and stories. These sessions help to develop vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, sitting still etc...

Reading and story play an important part of the day. We want to make sure our children have a love of books and will leave the EYFS with a bank of stories they know well, both traditional and modern classics. We make sure there is always time for whole class story every day but also that there are many opportunities to enjoy books at other times. Every day each child is given a new reading book to take home and read with a parent or other adult. They also read at school or share their book at least twice a week during individual reading and guided reading sessions. We encourage children to choose books from the library to enjoy at home as well.

Planning

We believe projects are a great way to capture children's imaginations. The Early Years and Key Stage One (year 1 & 2) have a three year project cycle. Projects are linked to the Prime and Specific areas of learning and are flexible to ensure they also follow the children's interests, school themes and local or national events e.g. the Olympics. Every half term staff plan the next project and spend time beforehand finding out what the children would like to learn about.

Staff plan in more detail on a weekly basis using daily notes, observations and interactions with children to inform where the learning journey should move to. Although class teachers are responsible for writing plans, the EYFS team (Learning Support Assistants, trainee teachers, Reception and Key Stage One teachers) plan together where possible.

Visits and Visitors

The part that visits and visitors play in the curriculum at Great Easton Primary is given great emphasis. We aim to plan at least one trip per term to enhance the children's learning within school. These can range from a visit to the local wood or P&A Wood Rolls Royce garage to travelling all the way to a Hindu Temple in London! We actively seek parental support on trips. For safety reasons we say no to younger siblings coming along on school trips.

As part of our daily worship assemblies, we are visited by members of our local churches every Thursday who share stories from the Bible which teach the children about

Christianity and the Gospel values.

Visitors also really enhance a project and we like to have 'experts' coming in to talk to the children, a nurse for example. We often ask parents or carers if they are able (and brave enough!) to share knowledge or a skill, be it cooking, building a compost bin out of pallets or working on science experiments.

Classroom Organisation

Our Reception classroom has defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure children can access them easily. The classroom is set up in a way to provide children with experiences and activities in all of the seven areas of learning. The classroom has a writing area, maths area, creative area, book corner, role play area, construction/small world area, extensive outdoor area and carpeted teaching area. A variety of activities are planned for and set up in the different areas each day. The adults work in a variety of ways; with a small group on an adult led activity, enhancing child initiated learning and play whilst making observations on Tapestry, or working with children on a one to one basis focusing on developing Literacy, phonics and Maths skills.

The outdoor area is an important part of the classroom with many children choosing to learn outside for much of the day. We try to ensure that the range of activities outside reflects the different curriculum areas, for example setting up quiet spaces for a maths game, reading, physical play and for construction.

Each child has their own labelled peg and tray in the classroom. We encourage children to develop their independence and take responsibility for keeping their clothes, book bag and work safely in one place!

Assessment, Observations and Portfolios

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

To ensure we have evidence of a child's progress in the EYFS we use a range of strategies (such as Literacy and Maths books, project books, High Frequency Word books, Funky Phonics books, Magical Maths books, reading records as well as online learning journals using Tapestry) all of which come together to form a detailed picture of the child. Where appropriate, we include individual next steps for children's learning. These next steps are discussed by the EYFS team in informal meetings after school each day and in the weekly planning meetings and these next steps inform planning for the next day and week ahead. Teachers have their own school iPads which are used to capture and note observations and next steps for learning.

Parents have access to Tapestry (the children's online learning journals). They are encouraged to make observations of their child's achievements at home and play a significant part in helping their child consolidate key skills (recognising and applying sounds, reading HFW and working on their Early Maths Challenges

https://greateastonprimary.co.uk/js/plugins/filemanager/files/2015_2016/curriculum/maths_challenges_aut_14.pdf).

On entry to Reception we carry out baseline assessments for each child. Throughout Reception the class teacher shares end of term assessment data with the Headteacher, English and Maths subject leaders showing each child's development across the seven areas of learning. At the end of Reception the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the Reception child's end of year report.

Role of Staff

All EYFS staff ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs and help the children feel happy at school. All adults within the Early Years setting actively seek to form positive respectful relationships with the children in their care. The formation of healthy relationships between adults and children is essential in enabling children's well-being and their future successes.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. As well as Reception induction days with their Year 5 buddies we offer an opportunity to revisit school and staff at the end of the summer holiday. This gives children the opportunity to play together, make themselves familiar with the school environment, particularly the Reception classroom and the outdoor area. This is also a valuable opportunity for parents to get to know each other. We are aware that most parents will be part of the school for the next seven or eight years and want them to get to know their child's peers and their families. A few weeks into September we hold a 'Family Fun Friday' after school whereby existing families and staff come together to welcome new children and their families. During the autumn and spring terms we hold parents' consultations to discuss the children's progress, well-being and happiness. Every half term the parents are invited to attend an open classroom session where they can join in with their children's learning and observe teaching strategies that can be reiterated at home. In addition, books are sent home weekly for the children to celebrate their learning with their parents. This also enables parents to maintain an up to date picture of their child's learning and be able to support them to be SMART learners at home.

When a child gains a place at Great Easton Primary, we ask them to attend a session at the school alongside all other children who will be starting and with their parents. Over the first few days at the school we encourage parents and carers to settle the children. In our experience very few children don't love coming to school, however on the rare occasions a child has been upset we will always contact them to let them know their child has settled and is happy. We have a staggered entry into Reception. The children attend morning sessions for their first week, morning sessions and lunch for their second week and then stay for the whole day as of the third week. However, if parents would like a more delayed start for children born in the spring or summer terms or for their child to attend full days from the second week, this can be arranged. Parents, grandparents and other family members are always welcome to join us for lunch throughout the year. This can be arranged through the office. We hold an open door policy and welcome parents to come and talk with the Reception staff at the start or end of the day.

Health & Safety and Safeguarding

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with their peers and the adults caring for them. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in section 3 of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2017)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596629/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf as well as the DFE's guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2019)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/830121/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_060919.pdf. We also follow our school Child Protection policy which can be found on our school website

<https://www.greateastonprimary.co.uk/statutory-information-policies-and-useful-docs.html>

It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal electronic devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal devices. This is in line with our Child Protection Policy. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads or cameras to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs may be uploaded onto the children's online learning journals, used on class displays or on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

We have received the Enhanced Healthy School's award and our children receive free fruit and milk from a Government scheme which is available to the children throughout the day. Rather than having a set time for snack, we have a rolling snack throughout the day where children are encouraged to wash their hands and have their snack and drink at the snack table whenever they wish. Although we offer fruit and water, the children are eligible for free milk until their fifth birthday. If parents wish for their child to have milk once they are five they can do so for a small fee. Children are welcome to bring in their own healthy snack from home. Snacks brought into school from home must be either bread or fruit based and must be nut free.

All children in Reception and Key Stage One are entitled to a free school dinner. We offer a wide variety of healthy options which are freshly cooked at school. Our kitchen staff work hard to ensure that meals are adapted where possible for children who suffer from food allergies.

We take all accidents seriously and always log and contact parents if a child bangs their head. We have cold compresses and first aid kits stored in the classroom. All staff in the Reception classroom are paediatric first aid trained.

We acknowledge that young children may have 'accidents' (i.e. wet themselves) and have stocks of spare clothes for anyone who needs it. We ask parents to help keep our stocks of clothes high by returning anything their child has borrowed. Children are supervised by two members of staff and encouraged to change independently if possible.

All play equipment and areas are regularly checked by the headteacher, caretaker and all

members of staff and there is an annual external check of equipment.

We work hard to help children understand the importance of keeping safe. Fire alarms are held termly in line with whole school policy and we work with all children to teach them how to assess possible risks whilst playing (for example in the Den Building area) as well as other dangers or hazards they may come across. Teaching the children how to stay safe online and developing their awareness of stranger danger is something we take extremely seriously and care much about at Great Easton.

We follow whole school procedures for child protection (see separate policy). Claire Jackman, Head Teacher, is the named Child Protection Officer. Sharon Scott (Business Manager) and Holly Miles (Assistant Headteacher) are Deputy Designated Persons.

We have separate policies for Medicine in school and Educational Visits.

Our Early Years vision is to ensure that children have the very best start to their primary education and develop a 'Love of life, learning and living' as stated in our school prayer which lies at the heart of our school ethos.