



GATEHOUSE SCHOOL

EARLY YEAR FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

Introduction

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Gatehouse School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

How We Teach

The first seven years of a child's life are periods of the most rapid physical and intellectual growth. At Gatehouse we recognise that these earliest years are the crucial foundations laid for future development.

Young children learn in a variety of ways: through experimenting, exploring, watching, practising, listening, talking and playing. They learn in a variety of social situations, alone, in pairs, and in large groups. Above all they learn at their own pace, building on knowledge and skills already developed. Our teaching methods and the organisation of the day and equipment are designed to meet these learning needs. We provide an exciting, inclusive and stimulating Nursery environment.

In the Nursery we believe that play is the young child's vehicle for learning, it is largely through play that young children begin to learn about the society in which they live. Children acquire skills and knowledge through interaction with their environment. This includes people, materials and their physical surroundings.

Aims & Objectives

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

At Gatehouse School, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and enable choice, as well as fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child.

The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;

- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes:

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

A Unique Child

At Gatehouse School 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 and 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 rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at Gatehouse School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

At the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations aimed to the needs of our children, so that everyone has the opportunities to achieve the learning goals by the end of the stage. We do this 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;

- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources which reflect diversity;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of all our children;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary (such as referrals to speech therapy) as necessary;
- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.

Positive Relationships

At Gatehouse School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, positive relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first educators and we value discussion with them regarding their child's education.

Enabling Environments

At Gatehouse School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor environment that is set up in discreet areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff.

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interest. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

The EYFS Curriculum

Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Years Goals.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early year's settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas. They require a balance of adult led initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. The aspects for each of these are listed under each area.

These three Prime areas are;

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

MR (making relationships)

SC & SA (self-confidence and self-awareness)

MF & B (managing feelings and behaviour)

- Communication and Language

L & A (listening and attention)

U (understanding)

S (speaking)

- Physical Development

M & H (moving and handling)

H & SC (health and self-care)

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

- Literacy

R (reading)

W (writing)

- Mathematics

N (numbers)

SS & M (shape, space and measure)

- Understanding the world

P & C (people and community)

W (world)

T (technology)

- Expressive arts and design

EMM (exploring and using media and materials)

BI (being imaginative)

Children's development stages are assessed throughout the year.

However, if a child's progress in any area gives cause for concern parents will be invited to a meeting to discuss this.

Reception pupils also participate in a daily phonics session, following the guidance from the RML Literacy Scheme.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Playing and exploring – children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- Active learning – children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically – we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Planning

The Early Learning goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. The planning is based upon themes with phonics, maths and reading directed teaching. A long term overview is provided for parents to share the curriculum. Medium term planning is completed on a half termly basis and a weekly plan is on display for parents which has more detailed activities.

Observations

Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning.

Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's profile books.

Assessment

Nursery children are tracked using external assessment Aspects on entry to Nursery after 7 weeks of settling. Assessment in Foundation Stage takes the form of both long and short observations, photographic evidence and through adult led and child initiated activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

The teacher keeps records and examples of each child's work in the profile books. These progress books contain a wide range of evidence that we share with parents at each parental consultation meeting.

ELDR's (Early Learning and Developmental Records) are completed at the end of each term. These share your child's interests and inform parents on progress and targets for the future development. Teachers choose a band 22-36, 30-50, 40-60 and indicate using a B – Beginning, D – Developing and S – Secure to identify their development within the band. At times, some children will remain in a band for longer than a term. It is important to note that children need time to develop and do this at different rates. Teachers will always make the most accurate judgement of progress and will share this with parents as they meet to sign their ELDR's.

Early Years Foundation Stage Tracking grids and O-Track are completed with a baseline level on entry to Nursery and Reception. Our entry level in Nursery is 22 - 36 developing, while individual levels are recorded for Reception children depending on their past learning journey. Tracking is updated in Nursery 3 times a year, in October, February and May half terms. In Reception, progress is updated 6 times a year, every half term and end of term. This provides a summary sheet for each child, which feeds into the whole school assessment and tracking process.

At the end of the final term in Reception we send e-profiling scores to the Local Authority for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information at parental consultation meetings and in the end-of-year early learning development record.

Parents receive two written reports, one in the Autumn and one in the Summer term, on their child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's

strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress.

The Learning Environment

The Foundation Stage classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, quiet and creative.

Children have access to both inside and outside areas and this has a positive effect on the children's development.

Teaching and Supervision

Children are taught by a qualified teacher in their nursery class and supported by a Level 3 Nursery Assistant. Children in the nursery also benefit from having specialist qualified teachers from the Junior School to teach them Music, Gym, Dance, French and Library sessions. For children aged three and over in registered early years provision where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children and at least one other member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification. At Gatehouse school, we supervise children in a ratio of 1:8.

Arrival and departure of children

Children attending the nursery should be handed over to the staff via the playground entrance. Children should be collected from the same door at hometime. Staff members are unable to hand children over to any adult unless they have authority to collect that child.

Transition

In the Summer Term, Nursery children are prepared for transition to Reception through our topic, "Moving On". We spend time playing in the main school playground, visit the classrooms and toilets in the main building and meet Sue in the school office. The children are introduced to a reading buddy from Year 5, who will support with the building of friendships. The children will be allocated house groups in the second half of the Summer Term and will attend a house assembly and general assembly in preparation for the year ahead.

Behaviour Policy

Aims

This policy aims to set out basic guidelines of behaviour that we feel are acceptable in order for the Nursery to be a happy and productive environment for all the children.

These are the guiding values for every child:

Respect

Be honest - tell the truth

Respect others and their property - do not waste or damage things

Care for the environment - keep the school tidy and follow the Eco Code

Respect yourself - look smart at all times

Accountability ***Work hard and try your best*** - do not waste your or others' time

Listen to people - do not interrupt

Concern

Be gentle - use gentle hands

Be kind and helpful - do not hurt people's feelings

Be thoughtful - treat others as you would like to be treated

Mobile phones

Mobile phones should not be used in any area of the school where children are present and **MUST** be completely switched off when visiting or working in the Nursery or Reception classroom areas.

As mobile phones cannot be used, copies of the weekly plans or of children's work will be provided for parents, if requested.

Aileen Reidy
Head of Nursery

This policy was last reviewed in January 2020
This policy will be reviewed in January 2021

Please also refer to the Nursery Information Booklet and the following:

Staff Code of Conduct Policy
Behaviour Policy
Safeguarding Policy
Intimate Care Policy
Supervision of Pupils Policy
Missing Child Policy
Medical Needs Policy
Administration of Medicines Policy
Educational Visits Policy
Homework policy-EYFS

