

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

1 Introduction

Statement of Intent

The governors and staff of Grangewood Independent School fully recognise the contribution it makes to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm.

All staff and governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment, which promotes the social, physical, moral and spiritual development of the individual child. The school recognises the importance of working within the framework for Every Child Matters: Change for Children and the five outcomes outlined within it:

- To be healthy
- To stay safe
- To enjoy and achieve
- To make a positive contribution
- To achieve economic well-being

- 1.1 Early Years extend from the age of three to the end of the Reception Year. Entry into Grangewood is during the term after the children are three (although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday).
- 1.2 Early Years is a crucial stage during which our children are prepared for later schooling.
- 1.3 Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been learning in one of the various educational settings that exist in our community. 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 ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged
 - 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

2 Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 2.1 The curriculum of the **EYFS** underpins all future learning by promoting and developing the following strands within the six main learning areas:
 - *Personal, Social and Emotional Development*
personal, social and emotional well-being

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positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning
social skills
attention skills and persistence

- *Language, Literacy and Communication*
language and communication
reading and writing
- *Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy*
- *Knowledge and Understanding of the World*
- *Physical Development*
- *Creative Development*

3 Teaching and learning style

3.1 The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the **EYFS** just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 or 2.

3.2 The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the **EYFS** are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Years Foundation Stage goals
- 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 and self-management
- the support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents via appointments and at our parental consultation evenings
- the exchange of records between Grangewood Independent School and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the Early Years Foundation Stage

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4 Play at the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 4.1** Through play our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express emotions and experiences, in controlled and safe situations.

5 Inclusion at the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 5.1** We believe that all our children matter. 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 we are planning for their learning (see also Inclusion Policy).

- 5.2** At the **EYFS** we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the EYFS goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We help them do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are precocious, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

- 5.3** We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively
- offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued
- employing resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid 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 providing support as necessary

6 The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum

- 6.1** Our curriculum for the **EYFS** reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.

- 6.2** We deliver the curriculum using the EYFS guidelines as stated in the Statutory Framework. We deploy traditional and modern approaches to teaching the curriculum.

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- 6.3** Teachers use themes to plan for age appropriate work at the EYFS. Our weekly plans and daily plans state intended learning, with outcomes, for all the children and show differentiation for individual needs.

7 Assessment

- 7.1** The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations. At Grangewood Independent School, the Foundation Stage Profiles are updated every half-term and this information is used to inform target setting for the next half term and to summarise pupils' progress. It covers each of the six areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Early Years takes the form of observation, involving both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. Children are observed in both adult-led and child-initiated activities. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.
- 7.2** During the first three weeks in the reception class the teacher assesses the ability of each child, using the Foundation Stage Profile. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the class, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. We share the information contained in the Foundation Stage Profile at our parental consultation meetings.
- 7.3** The teacher, after continuous assessment of the children, updates the Foundation Stage Profiles. At the end of the final term in Year Reception we send a summary of these assessments to the LEA for analysis. There are 13 summary scales. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information too at parental consultation meetings.
- 7.4** The teacher keeps observation notes, as well as examples of each child's work. This evidence can be shared with parents at parental consultation meetings.
- 7.5** Parents receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each 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. We complete these in June, and send them to parents in early July each year.

8 The role of parents

- 8.1** We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We therefore recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:
- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school
 - opportunities given to the children to spend time with their teacher before starting school (for example, during their assessment/induction session and in a

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class-swap afternoon in the summer term where each child in the school spends time in the class that they will join in September)

- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
 - offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class
 - encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
 - having flexible admission arrangements, and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances
 - encouraging parents to stay if there are any settling-in problems with the child
 - offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents
 - provision of various activities that involve parents, i.e. regular communication with home through the child's school bag, and inviting parents to meetings in order to discuss the kind of work that the children are undertaking
- 8.2** There is a formal meeting for parents in the autumn and spring terms at which the parents discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher.

9 Resources

- 9.1** We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. Materials are clearly labelled and accessible. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

10 Monitoring and review

- 10.1** This policy is monitored by the Early Years Co-ordinator, and is reviewed by the staff and Governing Body every two years.

Last Review Date: September 2012

Next Review Date: September 2014

Signed:

Member of Governing Body:

Date:

Chair of Governors:

Date:

Reviewed: