

Early Years Policy



Gorse Covert PRIMARY SCHOOL

Learn today, fly tomorrow

Recommended by	C Gilbert
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Record of changes

Date of change	Changes made

Early Years Policy

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) education provides the foundation for the National Curriculum. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. The quality of learning children experience in the early stages influences both their future attainment and their desire to learn.

Intent

At Gorse Covert Primary School we aim to inspire children through an imaginative and immersive curriculum that engages children's curiosity. The curriculum recognises children's prior learning from previous settings and their experiences at home. It provides first hand learning experiences, whilst allowing the children to build resilience, curiosity and responsibility. Every child is recognised as a unique individual and we celebrate and welcome differences within our school community. The curriculum promotes teaching and learning to ensure all children demonstrate a readiness for school, giving the children a broad range of knowledge, skills, values and concepts that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school. It is our priority that children are happy, safe and secure in their learning environment. This enables the children to develop the characteristics of effective learners which act as a secure foundation for all future learning experiences. We provide enhancement opportunities to engage learning and believe that the children's first experiences of school should be positive, enabling us to develop a lifelong love of learning.

Community involvement is an essential part of our curriculum as we celebrate a range of opportunities to work with different groups within school and the wider community. Throughout their time in EYFS, the children develop a sense of belonging to our school community and other local groups and are ready to transition to KS1 the following academic year. They have the confidence and skills to make decisions and self evaluate, make connections and become lifelong learners.

We intend:

- To work in partnership with parents and carers to encourage independent, happy learners who thrive and flourish in school and reach their full potential from the various start points.
- To understand and follow children's interests and provide opportunities throughout our EYFS curriculum to support learning, consolidate and deepen knowledge and ensure children meet their next steps.
- To ensure there is a sharp focus on children acquiring a wide vocabulary and have the ability to communicate effectively. During the first year the children gain a secure knowledge of phonics which gives them the foundations for future learning, especially in preparation for them to become confident and fluent readers.
- To create an indoor and outdoor environment that supports learning.
- To prepare children to reach the Early Learning goals at the end of the Foundation Stage and ensure children make at least good progress from their starting points.
- To support transition into KS1.

Implementation

Throughout EYFS at Gorse Covert Primary School, we follow the Early Years Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, updated March 2017, by the DfE. This framework specifies the requirement for learning and development in the Early Years and provides prime and specific areas of learning we must cover in our curriculum.

We have a curriculum that is child-centred and that is based upon the interests and topics which engage the children. We encourage active learning to ensure the children are motivated and curious. We take time to get to know children's interests prior to them starting school so we can

support learning. All areas of the EYFS curriculum are followed and planned for to ensure there is a broad, balanced and progressive learning environment and curriculum.

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

These seven areas are used to plan children's learning and activities. Planning for this curriculum is designed to be flexible so that a child's unique interests are supported. During each week, children will complete a range of teacher directed and supported work and a range of child initiated tasks through both the indoor and outdoor provision. A vital aspect in the development of essential knowledge and skills is the use of continuous provision. This means that children are using and developing taught skills throughout the year on a daily basis. Continuous provision practice and principles begin in EYFS and support children to develop key life skills such as independence, creativity, enquiry, resilience and problem solving. During the school day, children will have an opportunity to work independently, collaboratively with their peers and with members of staff.

Daily guided activities are also planned to cover different areas of the EYFS curriculum and allow children to develop their next steps in learning. Through observations and discussion, areas of need and next steps are identified for all children to ensure good progress is made. There are also a range of stimulating and engaging activities which the children can access independently and a variety of opportunities for child-initiated play. In planning and guided children's activities we reflect on the observations of the children's learning to ensure their next steps are met. These are collected in each child's online or paper learning journey. We regularly assess where the children are, using "Development Matters" and then ensure the planning, adult interaction and learning environment, (including continuous provision) support children to reach their next steps. We will include interventions for groups or individuals if and when necessary.

Children in EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside. Our outdoor areas are used all year round and in most weather conditions. We ensure activities support the Characteristics of Effective Learning to ensure learning takes place. These are:-

Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, and have a go;

Active learning – children concentrate and keep 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.

We share a range of healthy snacks and learn about the importance of a healthy, balanced lifestyle to maintain our own wellbeing. All of the children perform in a Nativity, a class assembly and celebrate weekly achievements during the school supersticker assembly. They also take part in a range of enrichment activities both at school and during trips linking to their learning.

To support our wider curriculum, we provide regular opportunities for parents and carers to come into school and work with their child, share their work and celebrate successes. We keep parents informed and we meet regularly to ensure children's transition into school and through the EYFS is happy and allows them to reach their potential and flourish. This includes transition days, nursery or

home visits, parent workshops, shared birthday assembly with Gorse Covert preschool, teddy bear's picnic. Parents also receive an annual report as well as more frequent informal communication to suit individual families.

We also support the transition into KS1 for both child and parents. We prepare children for Year 1 with visits to their new class, meeting the teacher, inviting their new teacher to read to them at story time. To aid transition the Year 1 class is set up with continuous provision, as well as more structured whole class learning. Parents have the opportunity to meet with new teachers and visit their child's new learning environment.

Impact

We strive to ensure that our children's progress across the EYFS curriculum is good from their varied starting points. We also strive for children to reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception and to be at least in line with National Expectations. We have exceeded this in the past few years. Evidence in children's learning journeys support all areas of the EYFS curriculum.

The impact of our curriculum is measured by assessment procedures and reported against all schools nationally. We measure the percentage of pupils achieving age related expectations throughout the academic year, put supportive interventions in place if and when needed. Class teachers use observations to make formative assessments which inform future planning and ensure that all children build on their current knowledge and skills at a good pace. Summative assessment compares children's attainment to age related expectation using month bands in Development Matters. This is tracked using Target Tracker to ensure rates of progress are at least good for all children, including vulnerable groups such as those with SEND, disadvantaged or summer born children. Our assessment judgements have been moderated both in school, within our academy and externally with other local schools. We also partake in local authority moderation which has validated our school judgement.