



Grangewood School

A learning community

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

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Key Principles

The early years education we offer the children at Grangewood is based on the following key principles:

- Each child as a unique individual having the right to grow up safe, healthy, and achieving their personal best.
- Grangewood provides many opportunities for learning and these are designed to build on the starting points of the children. The content is personalised to match the need of the child.
- There is a significant emphasis on play and the children are offered an extensive range of play opportunities in the many rich and stimulating environments across the school. In each of these environments pupils are encouraged to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experiences to make sense of their body, their emotions as well as the world around them.
- All children are included and all have access to the whole curriculum. This inclusive setting offers each child the opportunities to learn in ways that best suit them.
- All staff have high expectations of the children.
- Children with a secure foundation of skills to use throughout the rest of their lives.
- All learning is assessed and reviewed regularly to ensure that all children make progress and any barriers to their learning are identified.
- Good communication systems are in place to ensure staff and parents work closely together to ensure that each child's needs are met and the best possible progress is made.

Aims

Seven curriculum areas form the Foundation Stage curriculum used in all Early Years settings. The aims for all children in the Early Years setting at Grangewood for each of these areas are:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

- Have good relationships with adults and peers.
- Maintain attention and be motivated to learn.
- Be as independent as possible throughout the school day.
- Become confident learners.

Communication and Language

- Listen attentively and show understanding in a variety of contexts.
- Confidently express their wants and needs to others, using a communication 'system' of their choice.

Physical Development

- To reach their full potential in physical development both in gross and fine movements.
- Be aware of space, of themselves & of others through music and movement activities.
- Develop water confidence through small group sessions in the hydrotherapy pool.
- Understand and where possible help with self-care routines.
- Have some control over their movements to make marks and use tools, if appropriate.

Literacy

- Show an interest in stories and rhymes.
- Show an understanding of familiar stories by anticipating events and/or exploring familiar props.
- Recognise key photos, symbols or objects as meaningful.
- Begin to have an understanding of sounds and where appropriate gain some phonic knowledge

Understanding the World

- Develop their knowledge and understanding of the world by engaging in topic activities.
- Enhance awareness of the traditions and celebrations of all cultures and communities.
- Take notice of similarities, differences, patterns and change.
- Anticipate the consequence of their actions.
- Know and participate in daily routines.
- Use ICT within their school day.

Maths

- Anticipate number names, the order in which they come and changing quantities.
- Be aware of different shapes, how they fit together and understand that objects can move in different directions.
- Begin to problem solve at all levels.
- Explore properties of objects including size, shape & capacity.
- Gain an awareness of mathematical concepts and language.

Expressive Art & Design

- Confidently explore colour, texture, shape and space.
- Recognise familiar sounds and songs and link with actions or activities.
- Engage in independent and purposeful play.

- Participate in drama games & role play.

Learning & Development (Curriculum)

We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop, personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to reach their full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and planning is personalised so that pupils can progress at their own pace.

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum so planning takes place in the seven areas outlined above. Each term every pupil has a personalised set of learning outcomes which will be covered using all areas of the Foundation Stage Curriculum. Learning outcomes are closely linked to each child's EHC Plan. These are kept in their 'My Learning Journey' folders which are accessible to all. Therapists work closely with teachers to ensure outcomes are aspirational and personalised.

To ensure breadth and balance of the curriculum there is a termly topic. A smaller topic may run alongside the main topic. The topics follow a two-yearly cycle.

Assessment, Recording & Monitoring

On entry children's current level of attainment is assessed using the age related *EYFS Development Matters* document. Baseline assessments are forwarded from previous placements for any children who join the Early Years later in the academic year.

Progress towards these targets is monitored termly and recorded annually. Children are reassessed towards the end of the academic year. The child's attainment in the Foundation Stage Profile is recorded at the end of reception year.

Pupils' achievements are observed and recorded daily. Evidence is recorded in the individual 'My Learning Journey' folders. All staff working with the child contribute to evidence gathering. Photographic evidence is also used to record achievement.

The school uses Classroom Monitor (an electronic system) to support classroom recording and monitoring.

Within six weeks of entry into Early Years each child has a progress meeting. Parents receive a short report and are invited into school to meet with the class teacher and the Head of School.

An annual review of the EHC plan is held each year.

Organisation

There are two Early Years classes with nursery, reception and some KS1 children in each group. The department is managed by the Early Years coordinator who is also the lead teacher. The larger class is supported by a trainee teacher who has some responsibility for the daily planning and running of the class.

All the activities within the class are based around the seven areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Every day has a structure incorporating daily routines. Within this structure the children have opportunities for independent learning, learning in small groups and participating in whole class activities. Learning is through play based activities both utilising indoor and outdoor spaces. The Early Years children access all the other areas in school for specific sessions.

Confidence, curiosity and independence is encouraged in all learning opportunities.

Home School Links

Before a pupil starts in the Early Years a member of staff and the family services coordinator make a home visit to meet the parents and child. Together a simple personal questionnaire is completed to ensure a smooth transition into school.

Once pupils have started school parents receive regular updates from class staff via the daily home school link book and phone calls when necessary. A newsletter specifically for Early Years parents is sent home at least three times a half term to update parents on school activities, information about topic work and information about planned events. The parents will also receive emails and diary notifications via the Grangewood newsletter.

The school family services coordinator is based one day a week in the Early Years class and also makes home visits to parents who would like some support in the home environment.

Multi-professional approach

At Grangewood we have a range of professionals who support the class staff. These include speech and language therapists, physiotherapists and occupational therapists, creative therapists, visiting specialist teachers for the visual and hearing impaired, educational psychologist, a school nurse and a specialist teacher to support children with autistic spectrum disorder. Programmes written and devised by these specialists are integrated into the daily routine as required. Each of the Early Years classes has a member of the SALT team assigned to them who works both in the class environment and with small groups focusing on more specific areas. Each class also has an assigned OT who works in a similar way.

There is a team of music therapists, drama therapists and a dance therapist based in school who offer a range of therapies to individuals or small groups. When appropriate, individual joint parent and therapist sessions can be set up with a therapist for parents working with their own child.

Staff Development

There are regular training sessions across all disciplines for all staff to develop their skill set and their knowledge and understanding of the specific needs of different pupils as well as completion of statutory training.

The classes hold weekly class meetings to keep all staff informed about good practice and the day to day classroom management.

Integration

Links have been made with other schools within the academy to provide a small group session one afternoon a week and the school has close links with Coteford Junior School who share the same site.

Admissions

See admissions policy.

The transition process for new pupils in September begins with an introductory parents' meeting in July and a short after school 'come and play' session for children and parents to come and have an informal look around the Early Years area. All children will have a home visit before they begin school.

Reviewing and evaluating the curriculum & provision

The curriculum & provision is reviewed and evaluated regularly in order to consider breadth and balance and to improve the quality of teaching. This is done by regular discussion between the EYFS staff and the senior leadership team.