



## Gaglebrook Primary School Early Years Policy



### Overview

At Gaglebrook Primary School we are committed to meeting every child's individual needs. We ensure that the child's welfare is paramount and that they develop as young enthusiastic learners in a safe environment. We provide a range of opportunities for children to develop and engage through hands on learning and play opportunities. We encourage children to participate in a variety of activities; some are focused and led by an adult and others are provided to give the child a chance to be an active and independent learner. We believe this approach helps to build children's self-esteem and self-worth and increases independence and the ability to show initiative. We engage children in their learning through our creative and interesting environments, which encourage the use of both indoor and outdoor space. We encourage a strong partnership between home and school. Our ethos promotes children's all-round development and fosters the schools ACHIEVE values.

We have 4 main streams to our curriculum which we weave into learning.

These streams are:

**Enquiring Minds** – We promote the love for learning through our enabling environments which provides a range of opportunities for hands on exploration, learning and play/ We encourage children to participate in a variety of activities, some focussed and adult led, others open ended and led by the child, as we inspire them to be active and independent learners. We believe this approach helps to build children's self-esteem and self-worth and increases independence and the ability to show initiative.

**Knowledge and Skills** – We have a focus on a skills-based curriculum we strive to provide children with the wealth of opportunities to acquire more knowledge, to develop skills and to make progress in all areas of the curriculum.

**Rich Vocabulary** – Throughout their play and learning we support the children with their social interactions and introduce new language and vocabulary, developing children's confidence and oracy as these life skills are so important to ensure success through school and beyond.

**One Planet Principles and Values** – As an Eco School we feel it is vital that we help children our children to understand the vulnerabilities of out planet and how. If we “do our bit” and work together, we can make a real difference.

### Play and Active Learning

At Gaglebrook we believe play to be the means through which young children learn. It is through play that children can explore, question, develop and act out experiences using real life objects, helping them make sense of the world. There is a strong focus on communication for every child. Play helps children build up ideas, emotionally regulate and understand the need for rules. Children investigate and solve problems through talk, collaborative and

individual, discovery play. We encourage children to make be active in their learning, make decisions and take ownership of their play.

## **Planning**

Our ENRich planning has a focus of oracy driven by high quality texts. We teach carefully planned topics throughout the year to ensure every child is given a variety of different stimuli and skills. The topics covered are also supported by the child's interests; this helps to keep the children engaged and allows them to take ownership of their learning.

We offer the children a broad and balanced curriculum which follows The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. This enables the nursery and reception teachers to incorporate the seven areas of learning and development into a stimulating, creative, cross curricular approach, ensuring breadth.

The children are actively engaged in working towards the Early Learning Goals. The goals are made up of the Three Prime Areas and Four Specific Areas of learning:

### **Prime Areas**

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language

### **Specific Areas**

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Within these areas they are broken down into individual aspects which eventually lead towards the Early Learning Goals. Alongside this run the characteristics of effective learning and teaching. These move through the areas, they are:

- Playing and exploring,
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically.

The four themes of the EYFS underpin all the guidance. The document – Development Matters shows how these themes and the principles that inform them, work together for children in the EYFS. They are; a unique child, positive relationships, enabling environment and equal learning and development. None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on one another. These areas are explored through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. The child-initiated opportunities are where we provide the chances for the children to be independent learners, we have often modelled or joined in the play before. The adult led activities are introducing and teaching new skills. This is where children will work with an adult normally as part of a small group. Activities and role play opportunities inside and outdoors provide a means through which children can independently practice, apply, develop the skills and ideas with the support of the adults in the setting. At Gaglebrook we recognise that phonics knowledge is key to reading and writing.

In Reception we teach phonics using Little Wandle Letters and Sounds. The children then apply their phonics skills each day in and around the environment. We practice speaking and listening throughout the day through circle times and class discussions. In the Nursery the children follow nursery Little Wandle Letters and Sounds to ensure they are ready to start their work in Reception.

### **Assessment and observation**

When children begin Reception the class teacher will carry out the Government's Reception Baseline Assessment. Along with this information the teachers meet the children in their nursery setting or home and again during school induction visits and stay and play sessions.

Throughout the year the Nursery and Reception team will carry out observations of children and record their observations and take photos using Tapestry. This along with pieces of work and creations the children have produced contributes to the child's Learning Journey. Parents are able to log in to their child's account and see the wonderful things they have been doing in school. Children's development will be recorded on Arbor throughout the year and discussions held within school to ensure all children meet their full potential. In the final term we write a report to parents. Along with a personal comment, this will state their progress against the Early Learning Goals and the child's Characteristics of Effective Learning.

### **The Learning Environment**

At Gaglebrook we recognise the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The indoor and outdoor areas are well organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active and can be quiet. The environments are set up into learning areas where children are able to find and locate resources and equipment independently. Our learning environments operate a free flow system whereby the children can choose which area of the environment they would like to explore. This is around the adult led activities that take place throughout the day at various times.

The outdoor part of the environment has a positive effect on the children's development and at Gaglebrook Primary School we see it as an integral part of the children's learning. It acts as an extension to the indoor environment, allowing the children to be physically active and encourages the use of their senses. The outdoor area for both Reception and Nursery has been developed to allow children to progress in their physical development and to support all aspects of the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

### **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and tolerate a no discrimination philosophy. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or ability. All children and families are valued within our school. We recognise that all pupils bring different experiences, interests and strengths which influence the way they learn and we encourage all children to succeed and do their best. We aim to give each child the opportunity to experience success in their learning and ensure equal opportunities will be extended to all pupils. We encourage children to make their own choices and in giving reasons for decisions

and actions. 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, therefore we praise and encourage as well as celebrate achievements of that made in and out of school.

### **Special Needs**

Those children which are recognised as having special educational needs will follow similar programmes of study as their peers. However, the work, if necessary, will be differentiated to meet individual children's needs.

### **Welfare**

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. At Gaglebrook we ensure that we provide children with the opportunity to be healthy, stay healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, makes a positive contribution and achieve economic wellbeing.

### **Working in partnership with Parents/Carers**

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We appreciate 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 they start school
- Giving children have the opportunity to come into Nursery to spend time in the environment and get to know the staff along with their parents
- Reception children are invited to a transition morning for a stay and play session in the summer term before starting school
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before they start school
- Offering parents regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress in the class before and after school sessions.
- Encouraging parents to access their child's online Learning Journey
- We hold Parents Evening throughout the year to discuss progress
- Holding 'Learning showcase' events throughout the year so that parents can share in their child's learning.

### **The adults in the Early Years Team**

We provide the children with a safe and secure environment. We aim to develop good relationships with all children interacting positively with them and taking time to listen. We also model and support children in forming positive relationships and friendships with one another. All members of staff have access to continued professional development to maintain and extend their specialist expertise.