



# **Grove Vale Primary School**

## **Early Years Foundation Stage and Curriculum Policy**

**October 2021**





## **Grove Vale**

### **Early Years Foundation Stage and Curriculum Policy**

Written October 2021

*“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. 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 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children’s ‘school readiness’ and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.”*

*Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage . Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five 31 March 2021*

#### ***Our Intent***

***To support children to develop the key life skills of independence; confidence; articulation; innovation; creativity, enquiry; analysis and problem solving whilst making learning fun and encouraging a love of learning.***

#### **We aim:**

- To provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs
- To provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond
- To provide opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development
- To use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress
- To take into account child interest when planning activities and experiences to encourage engagement and enthusiasm
- To ensure children make progress towards early learning goals by taking on different characteristics of effective learning.
- To enable choice and decision-making, fostering independence and self-confidence
- To work in partnership with parents/carers and value their contributions
- To ensure that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability,



have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.

### ***The Curriculum – Early Years Foundation Stage***

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, children join our preschool, part time or full time, as soon as possible the term after they are three. They begin attending school full time at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

The EYFS Learning and Development requirements comprise of Educational Programmes and Early Learning Goals (ELG's) and assessment requirements.

### **Developing our Curriculum**

This is built around our Grove Vale children and begins by discovering and valuing what they bring to our school – their families, their interests, their experiences and their home learning environment including their languages and cultures. We combine this with our baseline reflections of the confidence, self-care, physical competence and the communication skills shown by our children to form the starting point of our curriculum. We can then identify the skills and knowledge we want our children to have and use the Educational Programmes to plan out our curriculum

### ***Areas of Learning***

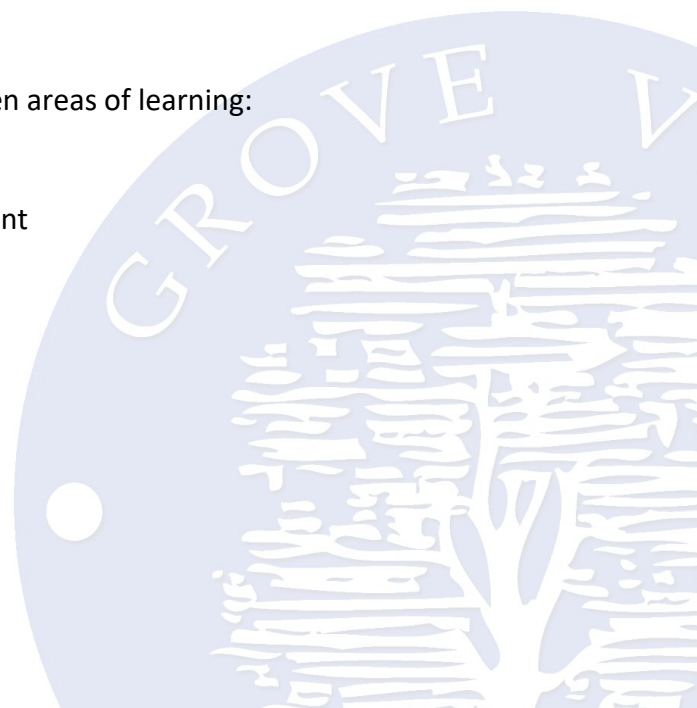
The Educational Programmes are made up of seven areas of learning:

Three Prime areas

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

Four Specific areas

- Literacy
- Numeracy





- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other (although we understand that the prime areas are important in order for children to be successful in the specific areas). All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

### ***Learning through Play***

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. They have opportunity through their play to think creatively and critically, alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them.

### ***Characteristics of effective learning***

There are 3 characteristics of effective learning; Playing and exploring, Active Learning and Creating and Thinking Critically. We ensure children have the opportunity to engage in all of these types of learning as well as monitoring which of the characteristics they adopt during child initiated time.

### ***Core Values***

As part of our whole school approach to teaching and learning the children are introduced to our School Drivers. This is done through the Characteristics of Effective Learning, where children are encouraged to think about how they and others are learning. The characteristics are in child friendly language so that they learn through the following:

- Be Ambitious
- Be Resilient
- Be Creative
- Be Curious

These lead on to our core values of:

- G** Greater Depth Thinking
- R** Relationships for Collaboration
- O** Outstanding opportunities to make progress
- V** Valuing Ourselves and Each Other
- E** Engaging Learning







- V Visually Stimulating
- A Attitudes to learning
- L Love of Learning for everyone, everyday
- E Empowering All Learners

### ***Enabling Environments***

Our EYFS setting is organised across four areas to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. We have four Hubs – Curiosity Hub, Imagination Hub, Creativity Hub and Exploration Hub. Within these we have different learning zones. We have a large variety of levelled continuous provision set up to ensure all that children are able to practise their basic skills in all 7 areas of learning. The provision areas across the setting are changed to reflect the needs of each cohort and are changed each term to ensure progression and challenge for our children, as well as allowing them to consolidate their learning. This is based on the findings of our Reflection on Learning. All resources are clearly labelled and accessible to children throughout the day. Our provision areas at present include a Time Travellers zone, Globetrotters zone, Tech zone, Investigators zone, Let's Pretend zone, Design and Make zone, Cookery zone, Music zone, Gardening zone, Workshop, Sand and Water zone, Activity zone, small world and construction . Reading, writing and maths provision is then incorporated throughout all of these areas. The provision areas may change to reflect the needs of the cohort throughout the year.

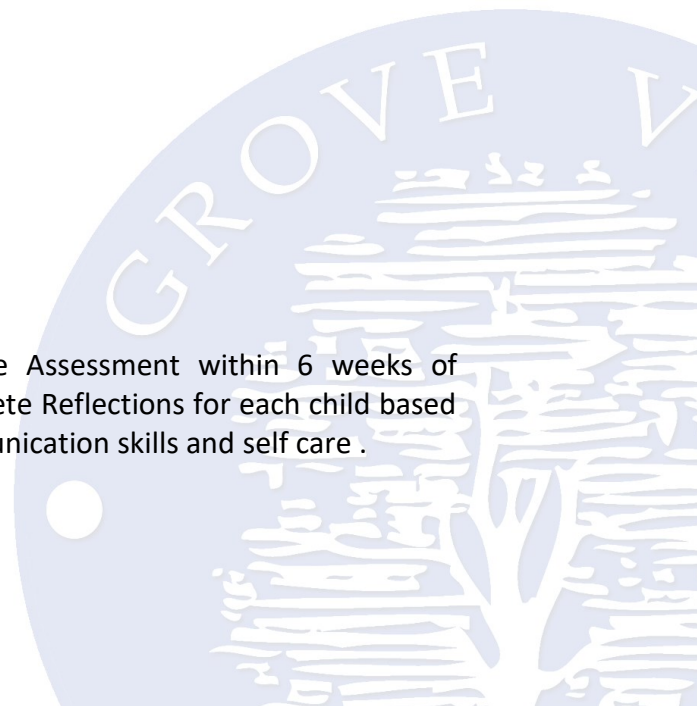
During child initiated time we operate a free flow system to allow children to decide where and how they are going to learn. They have access to all four hubs throughout this time. Staff are able to facilitate learning and child interests by acting as play partners. Enhancements are provided to develop their interests or to give children additional access to develop their skills, understanding and knowledge. The enhancements are both part of our 'in the moment' planning and part of our teacher initiated planning (objective led planning)

### **Assessment, Observation and Planning**

#### ***Assessment***

##### ***Baseline Assessment***

We complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment within 6 weeks of children starting school. Alongside this we complete Reflections for each child based on their confidence, physical competence, communication skills and self care .





We have a robust and informative way of baselining children to ensure we are aware of each child's individual starting points. We observe and interact with our children and then complete discussions with all members of staff. We are then able to identify next steps and plan accordingly. These baselines are collated and moderated with all EYFS staff to ensure they are accurate reflections.

Each half term we then have Pupil Check ins to identify any areas of concerns within the 7 areas of learning. Interventions, support and challenge are then planned for each child as needed. The impact of these are reviewed at the next Check in.

### **Assessment of the Early Learning Goals**

Assessment is at the end of the EYFS – the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) Each child's level of development must be assessed against the early learning goals. Staff indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile.

### **Observations**

Observations are made by staff and are recorded using Tapestry. This is a secure online Learning Journal to record photos, observations and comments, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. These are used to support Reflections and the tracking of concerns at the Pupil Check ins. They can be analysed to show strengths and gaps, identify groups for support and challenge and show next steps. There is also the facility to share these observations with parents and allow parents to contribute to the Learning Journey as they are able to share observations they make at home.

### **Planning**

#### **Long and Medium Term Planning**

In the EYFS our children learn through a balance of teacher and child led activities. We use the Grove Vale School drivers (Be Ambitious, Be Creative, Be Curious, Be Resilient) when planning teacher led and teacher initiated activities and ensure that provision during child initiated time allows our children to develop these qualities.

A long term overview is used for our teacher led activities. Our Long Term Overview is taken from the Educational Programmes within the EYFS framework, we identify skills and knowledge that our children need and enhance our curriculum to reflect the many and varied additional opportunities that Grove Vale offers to our children. These are organized into the three terms. Within in this there are six topics and these are text based. Our Medium Term Topic Plans and knowledge organisers detail in more specific terms the skills, knowledge and understanding that is covered in these Teacher Led Topics. This is supported by monthly expectations which show how the provision, planning, assessment and timetables change to meet the needs of the children. Each area of provision also has a long term plan to show how it



promotes key concepts, skills, attitudes and knowledge. These Provision Plans also plan for intended activities, resources and the Early Learning Goals they promote. Our Environment Plan reflects how the setting has changed over the year in response to the needs of the cohort. In addition we explore seasonal change and celebrations through stories and real life experiences across the year. For child led activities we follow and respond to children's interests and therefore enhancements are flexible throughout the year, based on our key skills overview for each Area of Learning and are planned 'In the Moment'.

### ***Short Term Planning***

#### **Teacher Led/Directed Activities**

There are specific times in the day when teachers lead the learning. These are called Teacher Time Sessions. They are planned for weekly and are responsive to the needs of the children.

Phonics, Literacy and Maths are the main focus of our Teacher Time sessions but others areas of learning are also covered in these times. Planning for phonics follows the school's Phonics Progression Document and is taught as a whole class activity. Reading is taught in our daily Reading and Rhyme Time sessions. Writing and maths is taught during our Jolly Jobs sessions along with the other Areas of Learning. Our Quick Teach sessions have a maths focus. There are additional opportunities to revisit phonics, literacy and maths throughout the day within our SODA and circle time sessions. There are opportunities to teach and develop Communication and Language during our Picture News sessions and in our weekly Tapestry Time session. Feel Good Friday allows children to develop our core values, with a focus on well being, character education, relationships and diversity and equality. This is done through planned activities which include Special People, Commando Joe, yoga and mindfulness, games and physical challenges.

#### **Objective Led Planning**

Objective led planning (OLP) is delivered within Child Initiated time. Adults go into the child's play in order to teach specific objectives that have been identified through curriculum coverage, observation or assessment. The teaching focus is then delivered using 'in the moment' planning. Here staff will join in with the children's interests by acting as play partners. Adult will enhance the provision in order to facilitate the teaching of the skill within the child's play. The length of time taken to deliver the OLP is flexible. Sometimes a 'starter activity' may be planned to encourage higher levels of involvement.



### ***Reporting***

A short commentary provided on completion of the Reception Baseline Assessment is shared with parents.

We use Tapestry to record progress throughout the year commenting on whether children are at the expected level or if there are areas of concern. These are prompts for prompts for professional dialogue at our Pupil Check ins.

At the end of the year we will report on whether children are emerging or expected in each of the 17 Early Learning Goals.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's.

### ***Inclusion, SEN and Equal Opportunities***

At Grove Vale 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, 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/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Grove Vale are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school 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 planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children.

We meet the needs of all our pupils 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 to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from 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 taking action to provide support as necessary.

Please see our Inclusion and SEN policy.

### ***Health and Safety and Safeguarding***

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)

### ***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."

We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the revised Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. We understand that we are required to:

- Take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well
- Be alert to any issues for concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere (in such situations the Child Protection policy will be referred to)
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- To ensure that any staff medication is kept in a location out of reach to children
- To ensure child to adult ratios are always accurate for age of children
- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- To ensure all staff are aware of children's health and dietary requirements
- To ensure fresh drinking water is constantly available and accessible at all times and healthy eating is promoted and snack preparation is completed by an individual with food hygiene certificate
- To ensure a first aid box is available at all times and any accidents or injuries are dealt with effectively, recorded and reported to parents on the same day



- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.
- Ensure at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate must be on the premises and available at all times when children are present, and must accompany children on outings.

It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal devices. Members of staff do, however, use school I-pads and cameras to take photographs for observations. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school's website.

We acknowledge that children will sometimes wet or soil themselves. We have a stock of clean clothes in school and change children in an open area outside the toilets. If the children have wet themselves, we will change their clothes as appropriate and inform parents at the end of the day. If children have soiled themselves we will encourage them to clean themselves as much as possible, parents will be phoned and informed.

We follow the Grove Vale Health and Safety Policy in regards to administering medication in school and Sandwell's Management of Children with Medical Needs.'

### ***Parents as Partners***

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

- We talk to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- Before children start Nursery or Pre-School, they may receive a home visit. This may also occur for Grove Vale Reception (see Home Visits Policy). If home visits are unable to go ahead provision is made to have these discussion in school or online.
- We invite all parents to an induction meeting before their child starts school;



- We offer parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class and allowing free access to the children's 'Learning Journey' folders;
- Parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- We offer a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: parent workshops, parent drop in sessions, curriculum meetings, assemblies, Sports Day etc;
- We encourage all parents to contribute to their child's learning journey as they are sent observations made in school via Tapestry. They are able to comment on these observations and contribute to their child's Learning Journal by uploading comments, photos and videos from home.

### ***Homework***

We send the following home throughout the year

- Reading books, Library books and high frequency words.
- Math Games/Activities - these are sent fortnightly, from the Spring Term onwards. Parents are encouraged to complete these games/ activities with their child.
- Tapestry Project –we set 7 projects related to the early learning goals that are to be completed at home. Parents and children are encouraged to do something together and then upload it onto Tapestry for us to share with the class.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS Teachers/Learning Support Practitioners act a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, initially in smaller groups and then in their class group.

### ***Monitoring and review***

It is the responsibility of staff to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The SLT and EYFS Phase Leader/ Subject Leaders will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring and evaluation cycle.



### ***Information for Additional Policies and Procedures***

Information for the following policies and procedures can be found in the whole school policies

- Safeguarding policy and procedures - See child protection and safeguarding policy
- Procedure for responding to illness - See health and safety policy
- Administering medicines policy - See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Emergency evacuation procedure - See health and safety policy
- Procedure for checking the identity of visitors - See child protection and safeguarding policy
- Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children - See child protection and safeguarding policy
- Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints - See complaints policy

Review date: November 2023

Signed:

Dated:

