



## Early Years Policy

Policy reviewed and updated in January 2026 by A Hardman, EYFS Lead, in consultation with EYFS and SLT staff. This will be reviewed every three years or earlier if required.

Date Policy approved by Governors:

### 1 Introduction

**1.1** The EYFS Statutory Framework 2025 applies to children in Elm Class. Each year the intakes vary, depending on the birth dates. Children attend Grange Primary School full time in the year they will turn five. EYFS is important as it prepares children for the Key Stage One Curriculum. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of EYFS.

**1.2** The Early Years education we offer our children is based on the following principles, adopted from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS):

- it builds on what our children already know and can do;
- it recognises that each child is unique and 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 activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- it provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- it values the importance of parents and practitioners working together in an atmosphere of mutual respect;
- it is grounded in our school ethos.

### 2 Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

**2.1** The principles from the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (2025) are embedded within our practice at Grange Primary School. These are:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- The importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

**2.2** The curriculum of the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

- personal, social and emotional well-being;
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards themselves and their learning;

- social skills;
- attention skills, persistence and resilience;
- language and communication;
- reading and writing;
- linking sounds and letters
- mathematics (problem solving, reasoning, numeracy);
- knowledge and understanding of the world;
- physical development (fine and gross motor skills);
- creative development.

### **3 Teaching and Learning in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

**3.1** Our policy on teaching and learning describes the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1.

- 3.2** The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:
- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
  - the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
  - the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
  - the carefully planned curriculum, focusing on the educational programmes, that helps children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
  - 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-regulation;
  - the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
  - the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children, which are regularly shared with parents;
  - the relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school (this includes play sessions, home visits and visits to pre-school)
  - the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
  - the regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Early Years class.

### **4 Play & Resources in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

**4.1** Through structured play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

**4.2** We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning through play and exploration. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

## **5 Inclusion in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

**5.1** In our school we believe that all our children are special. 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 (see our policy on school inclusion). Our Inclusion Manager/SENCo is Mrs R Harmer.

**5.2** In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

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

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- planning activities that take account of gender differences and children's individual needs (including Gifted and Talented, EAL and SEN children);
- 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.
- External support agencies are involved as necessary.

## **6 The EYFS Foundation Stage Curriculum**

**6.1** The curriculum for the Foundation Stage in our school reflects the seven areas of learning that shape activities and experiences as identified in the Educational Programmes. Our curriculum supports children's learning and helps them to work towards the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five. The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

**6.2** The Foundation Stage Curriculum provides the basis for planning for the Foundation Stage. Our medium term planning identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals, and for those working beyond. The planning incorporates teacher led activities and child initiated activities for outdoor and indoor.

## **7 Assessment in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

**7.1** Assessment, recording and reporting in the Foundation Stage at Grange Primary School is based on the aims and principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

**7.2** We use a range of assessments on-entry to help us quickly understand the strengths and areas for development for each child entering our Reception class. These assessments are presented in the form of games and puzzles. Our assessments include: on-entry assessment using Birth to 5 document and the statutory reception baseline assessment (RBA). We share this information with parents in the Autumn Term.

**7.3** We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observations (planned and 'catch as you can' noting significant incidental learning), children's recording, photographs, videos, focused meetings with all practitioners, talking with children and parents. This involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. We use the FFT Letters and Sounds online assessment tool to assess children's phonics progress every half term. We use Tapestry as an online journal and encourage parents to engage with school through these applications so they can see and share their child's achievements and progress.

**7.4** All children are regularly assessed against the Birth to 5 document throughout the year. These assessments are then ongoing and are recorded on cohort trackers which enables discussion of pupil progress with senior leaders in school and with parents throughout the year.

**7.5** These assessments form the basis of our 'gaps and strengths' analysis each term which then informs our planning for suitable and challenging provision for each child for the next term.

**7.6** The Local Authority receives a summary of each child's achievement profile in June each year. We share the Foundation Stage Profile information with parents and targets at the parental meetings throughout the year and in an end of year summary report in July each year.

**7.7** The child's next teacher uses assessment information to make plans for the year ahead. Children who have not achieved the Early Learning Goals will have the opportunity to work towards them in Year 1.

## **8 The Role of Parents in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

**8.1** We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We 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;
- the children having the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school (each intake of children are invited into school for play sessions).
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school, where parents are given welcome packs;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is an opportunity for parents to meet the teacher each term.
- having an induction programme enables children and parents to become secure, and by allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- arranging workshops over the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;

- we invite parents to curriculum and other special assemblies to share and celebrate the work that the children undertake.
- Meet the Teacher in the Autumn Term.
- Curriculum notes are sent out each term to inform parents about the parts of the curriculum being taught.
- Stay and Play sessions where parents come and take part in a range of activities with their child.
- Parents are also kept informed through school Facebook account, Studybugs messages and through the website.
- Tapestry is used to send regular messages to families and picture/ video updates of each child's learning journey.
- EYFS newsletters will be sent out as appropriate.

## **9 Induction into our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

- Open Day in Autumn Term - Parents have opportunity to look around the school, spend time in Elm class where they can talk to staff from the Foundation Stage before applying for a place.
- Induction information meeting with Head teacher and class teacher - Summer Term
- Parents sent an Induction Pack
- Class Teacher and teaching assistant visit children in their settings if necessary and offer home visits to all parents. Home visits are important to us as they help us understand the family's lived experience
- Class teacher attends any transitional meetings for pupils with SEN. Discuss pupils with preschool settings. Receive transitional document from all pre schools.
- Children attend 3 play sessions. Extra sessions offered to those children who are identified as needing additional transition support. This can be requested by the parent, pre-school and/or school.
- Transition to full-time can be arranged for children who need additional time to settle in to reception class.
- Open Door Policy
- Parents invited into school for celebration afternoons to work with the children in class.
- Encourage parents into the life of the school - supporting events, reading with children, helping with environmental work.

## **10 Transition into Year One**

**10.1** We understand that the Foundation Stage Curriculum captures the essence of good practice in the early years and the Profile captures the essence of good assessment in the early years. This is built upon in Year One using information from the Foundation Stage as the platform for learning.

The principles that underpin our transition are

- Planning should be based upon assessment information from the previous class/group/setting
- Styles of teaching and learning should meet the needs of children
- There should be a professional regard for the information from the previous setting/phase
- Children's emotional welfare, wellbeing and involvement should be assessed before and after transition.
- Children should enjoy the transition process
- The transition should motivate and challenge children
- Staff allocation for a period prior to, during and after initial transition should be made to maximise the comfort and welfare of the children.

- Effective transition takes time and is a process rather than an event.
- Parents and carers need to feel well informed about and comfortable with all transitions in their child's life.
- Transitions are not overlooked or left to chance but thought about and planned in advance.
- Time is planned for termly meetings between Reception and Year One for teachers to discuss on going assessment and Profile information (Pupil Progress Meetings)
- Reception children visit Year One (class swap days, themed weeks, class reading sessions)
- At least one joint project is planned between Reception and Year One each year.
- Arrangements are made for passing on information to parents about the transition to Year One.

### **10.2 Creating an appropriate environment**

- Year One classroom has areas of continuous provision to support and extend children's independence skills; based on children's needs if this is felt to be required
- All staff have received training on how to provide a high-quality learning environment
- Year One staff have visited reception to see how areas of provision provide support and challenge for children's current learning so that they can ensure future progress in the way they plan and organise their provision.

### **10.3 Building on what children know and understand**

- Reception and Year One staff meet to discuss assessment information, including attending relevant pupil progress meetings together in the summer term
- Reception teachers highlight those children who are still working at Foundation Stage level or may need a modified curriculum.
- Teachers maintain an ongoing dialogue to discuss individual children after the settling in period.

## **11 Safeguarding and Welfare in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

### **The statutory EYFS framework 2025 states:**

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe, secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the people caring for them.

#### **11.1 Keyworkers**

All children in our Early Years are allocated a keyworker - this is usually after they have had an opportunity to settle in. We observe to see where children will naturally seek out a particular adult and try to provide a keyworker whom the child is comfortable with. Your child will be designated a key worker and they will be your first point of contact if you have any questions, concerns or information to pass on. Your Key worker focuses on your child's learning and development, helping to track their progress and learning

#### **11.2 Supervision**

Supervision is provided for all EYFS staff. This is usually lead by a DSL, who has received training and support from the LA in leading individual and group supervision sessions. Annually, we also receive additional supervision from the LA Safeguarding Team as part of our enhanced SLA. Supervision ensures that there is safe working practice and also shows due regard for the mental health and wellbeing of staff and pupils.

### **11.3 Paediatric First Aiders**

At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate is on the premises and available at all times when children are present, and will accompany children on outings and during meal times.

### **11.4 Educational Visits**

Staff in EYFS follow the same local authority and school guidance and procedures with regard to planning and risk assessing visits and visitors.

### **11.5 Staffing & Class Size**

Because our EYFS is part of our maintained school status, it is subject to statutory infant class sizes. Therefore, there must be one teacher for a group of no more than 30 pupils. Our Reception class has a usual staff minimum of two adults (and often three adults).

Staff in Reception understand that ‘Children must usually be within sight and hearing of staff and always within sight or hearing’ and the teacher in charge will ensure that staff are always directed to be situated in the EYFS environment (which includes the outdoor area) so that this statement is fulfilled.

### **11.3 Safeguarding Policy and Procedure**

Safeguarding in our EYFS Foundation setting is covered by the same policies and procedures as the rest of the school. These policies and procedures form a Safeguarding Portfolio which staff are fully conversant with as a result of regular training and updates. All staff are also fully aware of their responsibilities as outlined in KCSiE 2025.

### **11.4 Ensuring the safety and well-being of children during mealtimes**

Ensuring the safety and well-being of children during mealtimes is of paramount importance. The revised EYFS framework (July 2025) provides additional clarity regarding safe eating practices. Whilst children are eating there should always be a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate. This guidance reinforces the commitment to creating a secure environment for children while they enjoy their meals.

*The Designated Safeguarding Lead for children in our Early Years is Miss Taylor, Co Headteacher and the Back-Up DSL is Mr Thackway, Co Headteacher.*