



EYFS Policy

Signed:

Chair: S. Gribbin

CEO: R. Swindells

Chair of LGC: N. Bentley

Executive Head: R. Williams

Date: 16 October 2025

Review date: October 27



Here at the Goldstone Federation (Cheswardine Primary and Nursery School and Hinstock Primary School) the Early Years Foundation Stage is a very important stage in our children's school life. The EYFS is the foundation for a child's learning, as we support their holistic journey as well as their educational journey.

The Intent of our EYFS Curriculum:

Across the Federation, we greatly value the importance of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development. We ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

We intend that our curriculum educates all the children in knowledge, skills and understanding to be effective, inquisitive, curious, independent learners and influence their wider thinking across all areas of the curriculum. As an Early Years team our aim is to support children in becoming happy, independent and ready to learn, whether that is through independent learning, play based learning or collaborative learning and teamwork.

The way we do this is to:

- *Provide a happy, safe and respectful environment.
- *Give the children a varied curriculum that supports their want and need to learn, including using their interests.
- *Develop open and friendly relationships with parents and carers.
- *Ensure that the learning environment is one that is inclusive to every single child and their needs.

There are four main purposes to this policy:

- To establish an entitlement for all children in the EYFS with equality of opportunity;
- To establish expectations for all staff working with children in the EYFS to ensure quality and consistency;
- To state the Federation's approaches to the EYFS curriculum in order to promote parents' and carers' understanding of the curriculum;
- To promote continuity and coherence across the EYFS.

The importance of the Foundation Stage

'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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

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, 2025).

Expectations

For most children, the end of the reception year will be the end of the Foundation Stage, when the expectation is that children will achieve the 17 early learning goals (ELGs). Although the early learning goals are intended for children at the end of reception, younger children will be provided with experiences which will support them in reaching the goals at the appropriate time. A priority will be placed on each individual child's unique needs, interest and stage of development.



The aims of the EYFS curriculum and how these contribute to the school's aims

EYFS Principles

The EYFS principles which guide the work of all practitioners are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

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

Effective practice in the EYFS is built on these four guiding themes. They provide a context for the requirements and describe how practitioners should support the development, learning and care of young children. This policy outlines how we meet each of the four themes.

- **A Unique Child**

We recognise that every child is a competent learner from birth 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 parents/carers and practitioners; we use appropriate levels of challenge, praise and encouragement and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

- **Positive Relationships**

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

- **Enabling Environments**

We recognise that the learning environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We view the environment as a 'third teacher', as resources and areas of learning are set out in such a way which encourages children to make independent and considered choices during their play. Children learn and develop well in enabling environments because they respond to their individual need.

- **Learning and Development**

We recognise that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. We aim to cater for all children by providing an inclusive setting.

Curriculum

The school aims to ensure that the curriculum for the EYFS underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's skills across the 7 areas of learning and by supporting them to develop characteristics of effective learning.

The 7 areas of learning are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

These prime areas will be strengthened and applied through:

- Literacy (reading and writing)
- Mathematics (number and numerical patterns)



- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Provision

Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

Our aim is to help and guide the children to become independent, enquiring and evaluative learners. Using half-termly themes we take account of children's interests and the skills they need to develop, in order to fully engage them in their learning.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- active learning - children concentrate and keep on 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.

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DfE 2025)

Learning and teaching

Children participate in whole class, small group and individual activities, with increasing times as the year progresses in order to accommodate children's needs and stretch their learning.

In order to promote effective learning the teaching will provide opportunities and experiences for children to:

- have access to a wide range of opportunities and experiences which will allow them to explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their knowledge skills and understanding;
- initiate activities that promote learning and enable them to learn from one another;
- have time to explore ideas and interest in depth;
- feel secure in order to become confident and independent learners;
- make links to other areas of learning;
- undertake creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of language. Adults taking an active role in modelling and extending vocabulary used.
- Daily singing and story sessions
- Develop initial sounds and early reading habits through activities related to 'Letters and Sounds', Singing phonics and Beat Baby, extending pre-schoolers in the Summer term ready to take on daily phonics teaching in Reception following Bug Club Phonics in Hinstock and Read, Write, Inc in Cheswardine.
- Develop an understanding of early number through quantities and daily repetition and have opportunities to explore different patterns.

Nursery Health and Nutrition:

The children in each Nursery are provided with milk and snacks (am and pm) daily. In line with the new Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance varied snacks aim to include all four main food groups – fruit and vegetables, starchy



carbohydrates, dairy and protein over time. The children are encouraged to taste different healthy foods not only during snack but as activities including tasting and cooking. Our Nurseries focus on exposing the children to new and healthy foods and talking about why we eat healthy foods and that some foods are eaten in moderation. As well as milk during morning snack all children have all day access to water. In Reception healthy snacks are available in the morning – milk and fruit, and any snacks brought in from home are encouraged to be healthy. Work on food groups and some food in moderation as well as opportunities to taste different foods occur regularly over the course of the year.

The staff will:

- work in partnership with parents and carers;
- promote children's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable;
- teach skills and knowledge;
- understand that children learn in different ways and at a different pace to each other;
- use rich and varied language to help children develop linguistic structures for thinking;
- plan both indoor and outdoor provision to maximise opportunities for children's learning.

Inclusion

Planning will meet the needs of both boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children with disabilities, children from all social, cultural and religious backgrounds, children from different ethnic groups including travellers, refugees and asylum seekers and children from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

It is the school's intention to provide:

- a safe secure learning environment in which all children are valued;
- a wide range of opportunities to motivate support and develop;
- planned opportunities that build on and extend children's knowledge.

For those children with special educational needs, the focus will be on removing barriers to learning for children. Children's learning difficulties will be identified at an early stage and teaching will respond quickly to areas of difficulty. This will involve working closely with parents and developing an effective strategy to meet these needs. This may involve working with staff from other agencies in drawing up individual education plans.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS follows the statutory **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE, 2025)** and is informed by the non-statutory guidance **Development Matters (2020)**.

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's learning in order to help make future plans, address next steps and provide for children effectively.

We use tracking to highlight children's development across the EYFS to enable us to identify what age and stage bracket they are working in. We can then make a judgement whether they are emerging or expected for their age. The data is then used as a basis for pupil progress meetings with SLT and for planning interventions and future teaching.

Within the summer term, a report for parents is provided with a commentary on children's attainment, progress and characteristics of learning. Information about individual children is then shared with Year 1 staff to ensure smooth transition.

We encourage all parties to contribute to discussions, assessment and children's learning. Parents are encouraged to write in their children's 'magic moments' books on a regular basis.



Baseline Assessment

On entry to Reception, all children complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) within the first six weeks of school. This is used alongside teacher observations, nursery information and parental input to provide an accurate picture of each child's starting points.