



POLICY: Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Last updated:	November 2019
Date of next review:	November 2020
Member of staff responsible for the policy:	Elaine O'Shaughnessy
Dissemination of the policy:	Management Committee, staff, website

Introduction

'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.'

Aim

At GHES (GRH School Room or the Outpatients Team where applicable) we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children, thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents, carers and their home school teachers to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential. Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

Principles

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to end of Reception year. We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings;

A Unique Child

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 positive praise and encouragement to inspire children to develop a positive attitude to learning. We identify any need for additional support. We endeavour to keep children safe. All children and their families are equally valued and respected, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation or ability. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all abilities or any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.

Positive Relationships

GHEs 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 aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment (where medically possible). Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interests. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current enthusiasms and experiences. Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by teaching staff and play therapists. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning by;

- Communicating and modelling language
- Showing, explaining, demonstrating
- Exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling
- Providing a narrative for what they are doing
- Facilitating and setting challenges

Learning and Development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

There are 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) relating to 7 areas of development, of which 3 are the "prime areas" and 4 "specific areas".

All the 7 areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These 3 areas are the **prime** areas:

- **Communication and Language**
Listening and attention
Understanding
Speaking
- **Physical Development**
Moving and handling
Health and self-care
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
Self-confidence and self-awareness
Managing feelings and behaviour
Making relationships

Children are also supported through the 4 **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- **Literacy –**
Reading
Writing
- **Mathematics -**

Numbers

Shape, space and measure

- **Understanding the World -**

People and communities

The World

Technology

- **Expressive Arts and Design -**

Exploring and using media and materials

Being imaginative

The EYFS Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on the EYFS Early Learning Goals. Activities are based on our observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and in some cases exceed the Early Learning Goals.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development. We respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

The planning within EYFS is based around the needs, interests and ideas of the child.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS.

'Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities.'

The EYFS framework also highlights critical characteristics of effective teaching and learning :

- **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

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated play and activities which are planned by the adults. During children's play, staff interact to stretch and challenge children further. There is a gradual shift during the year towards a greater proportion of adult led activities to prepare for more formal learning in Key Stage 1. However we recognise that at this early stage of learning and development play based learning should be made available for all children throughout all of the Foundation Year.

We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out, where possible.

Observation, Assessment and Planning:

When GHES have EYFS pupils, part of our daily practice is to observe and assess children's development and learning, to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey, which are shared with

parents (for those that are long-term or frequently admitted to hospital or for those with the outpatients' team). Consideration is given to the most effective ways to support the child to strengthen and deepen their current learning and development and this is integral to planning next steps which identify the needs and interests of the child.

These assessments and observations are shared with other relevant partners and inform the completion of the EYFS Profile Please refer to the **GHEs EYFS rationale of planning document** for further information on our planning processes.

At the end of the Foundation year, when the EYFS profile is completed, each child is assessed in relation to the 17 ELG s as 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding' and a narrative statement is written in relation to the 3 characteristics of learning. A written summary is shared with parents.

Children are defined as having reached a good level of development at the end of the EYFS if they have achieved at least the expected level in:

- The early learning goals in the prime areas of learning (personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language) and
- The early learning goals in the specific areas of mathematics and literacy.

Safety, child protection and safeguarding

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety. Please refer to **GHEs Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures for more detail**. We promote good health through our Wellbeing lessons and the general philosophy of GHEs.

From 1 July 2015 all schools are subject to the Prevent duty (under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015) and have to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism." GHEs have considered how this duty applies to EYFS pupils. Key staff have been trained to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know what to do when identified. We build resilience in pupils by promoting fundamental British Values. The fundamental British Values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs are already implicitly embedded in the 2014 Early Years Foundation Stage and these are drawn out during lessons with pupils.

Staff have regard to the government's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015' and to the government's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' .

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents / carers, play therapists and other agencies.

Parents as Partners and the Wider context

"Everyone is an educator. Children, parents, grandparents and other professionals all have

something they can contribute (teach) in any scenario.” (Teaching and Play in the early Years – a balancing act?’ OFSTED July 2015)

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child’s learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child’s education and care in numerous ways. Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children’s experiences by inviting members of the community into our setting as appropriate. At the GRH School Room we have a range of visitors including a storyteller and a music therapist as well as a yoga teacher.

Transitions

If requested, GHES staff support the child’s home school in the transition from Reception to Year 1.

Intimate Care Policy:

“Intimate” care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. In the hospital setting it is generally the medical staff that carry out this care if the child is unable to do this independently. (GRH School Room have an Intimate Care Policy which should be read in connection with EYFS Policy). For the Outpatients team all intimate care is the responsibility of the parents who have to be present if tuition is taking place. Please read the GHES home visits policy and parent/carer health and safety agreement for full details (provided to parents on induction).

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

GHES child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures
GHES EYFS rationale of planning document
GHES GRH intimate care policy and intimate care plan guidance

KEY Reference documents for EYFS teachers and leaders:

- ‘Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.’ Department for Education,
- Development Matters in Early Years
- The report of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education, Children’s Services and Skills 2015 Early Years (Ofsted)
- ‘Teaching and play in the Early Years – a balancing act?’ (sample of good practice from 48 settings – it dispels the myth that play and teaching are different and that good practice is a seamless progression of the two elements of teaching and play) July 2015 (Ofsted)
- ‘Early Years inspection handbook’ June 2015 (Ofsted) Updated September 2019
- ‘Early Years foundation stage profile’ 2019 handbook.
- Pie Corbett’s Reading Spine

