

GOLDINGTON GREEN ACADEMY



Early Years Policy

Safeguarding

Goldington Green Academy recognises it has a statutory duty under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to ensure arrangements are in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and that school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Our school will endeavour to support these pupils by providing an ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment, providing a sense of being valued.

All staff, governors and volunteers must be made aware of, and adhere to the safeguarding policy and procedures within the school.

At Goldington Green we recognise our legal and ethical duty to keep pupils safe from radicalisation and extremism. As such we incorporate the principles of the PREVENT agenda into all practice including the curriculum. Additionally, we ensure that all speakers are carefully vetted by senior staff and that all material available in school, both electronic and otherwise, is suitable. We also ensure that sufficient training is in place so that all staff understand what radicalisation means and why people may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism as a consequence of it. Staff know what measures are available to prevent people from becoming drawn into terrorism and how to challenge the extremist ideology that can be associated with it. Any concerns are dealt with in line with our safeguarding policy working in conjunction with Bedfordshire Police and other agencies as appropriate.

Equal Opportunities

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for staff to discriminate directly or indirectly, or to harass staff or pupils due to any of the nine protected characteristics.

Goldington Green Academy aims to create a culture that respects and values each other's differences, that promotes dignity, equality and diversity, and that encourages individuals to develop and maximise their true potential.

Everyone within the school community has a responsibility to ensure that this statement is adhered to. Senior Leaders in particular, should lead by example, identify any inappropriate behaviour when it happens and take prompt action to deal with inappropriate behaviour.

We aim to remove any barriers, bias or discrimination that prevents individuals or groups from realising their potential and contributing fully to our school's performance. In removing these barriers, we aim to develop a school culture that positively values diversity.

We are committed wherever practicable, to achieving and maintaining a workforce that broadly reflects the local community in which we operate.

Every possible step will be taken to ensure that individuals are treated fairly in all aspects of their employment, engagement or whilst volunteering at our school

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the academic year in which a child has their fifth birthday.

The EYFS is statutory and is detailed under the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* and the *Practical Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage*.

Intent

We follow the statutory framework and guidance detailed in the EYFS using our extensive experience we observe, plan and teach children in early years.

- At GGA we offer a curriculum rich in wonder and memorable experiences.
- We work hard to provide a stimulating environment that provides exciting opportunities, curiosity, promotes challenge, exploration, adventure and a real love of learning.
- It is our intent that all children develop physically, verbally, cognitively and emotionally in an environment which values all cultures, communities and people.
- We aim for our children to be confident and independent, to believe in themselves and interact positively with others.
- We understand that play is an integral part of learning and this is at the heart of our early year's curriculum. We believe that a balance of adult directed and uninterrupted child-initiated play ensures the best outcomes for our pupils.
- Warm and positive relationships between staff and children, consistent routines and strong relationships with parents are key.
- We recognise the crucial role that early year's education has to play in providing firm foundations upon which the rest of a child's education is successfully based.

Implementation

- Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning throughout our school. These features equally apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS.
- Within the EYFS the development of a holistic learner is recognised based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to humanitarian values such as compassion.
- We prioritise creating a 'language rich' environment through the use of songs, nursery rhymes, stories and providing time for quality interactions between adults and peers.
- All members of the Early Years team ensure that interactions are positive and progressive, allowing children to flourish and gather words at pace in order to become confident communicators. Children are encouraged to become early readers through enjoyment of books and the systematic teaching of phonics. The children learn nursery rhymes and develop their mathematical thinking through direct teaching and exploration. We want our children to become confident mathematicians who can apply what they have learnt to real life experiences. We have built our learning environment to enable our children to strengthen their core muscles through physical play, children spend time outdoors in their natural environment in all weathers.

- Our learning environment is adaptable in order to reflect children's interests and needs. The children are supported to learn to work together, manage their feelings and ask questions through skilled adult facilitated play. The curriculum is taught through topics which are enriched with classroom enhancements, trips and visitors. Topics are supported by quality key texts. These are chosen carefully to encourage children's speech, language and communication development. All planning however, is flexible and responsive to children's needs so plans can be changed and adapted dependent on children's needs and interests. We understand the importance of parental engagement and believe that our parents have a crucial role to play in their children's education. We work hard to create strong partnerships between home and school. As part of the learning and teaching process, children are assessed in relation to their progress towards the Early Learning Goals. These judgements are made on the basis of accumulative observations and in depth practitioner knowledge of the children acquired through ongoing assessment. These ongoing assessments are used to inform planning and next steps in teaching and learning for all children throughout the year.
- At GGA we meet the welfare requirements laid down in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and actively safeguard and promote the welfare of all of our children.

Teaching in the EYFS:

- Has a carefully planned curriculum which aims for all children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS
- Involves creating adult and child-initiated opportunities that will encourage children to explore, create, investigate, rehearse, practise, repeat and discover
- Involves developing Characteristics of Effective Learning
- Uses a multi-sensory, fun play-based approach
- Shows awareness of the different ways and rates by which children develop and learn; that there are many factors affecting achievement including ability, emotional state, age and maturity, and how this informs teaching strategies
- Has a high expectation of children's behaviour and attainment
- Recognises the importance of emotional well-being

Play in the EYFS

- We highly value play and the learning it brings in itself. Anyone who has observed play for any length of time will recognise that, for young children, play is a tool for learning.
- Through play children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules thereby developing emotional resilience and self-regulation.
- Children have the opportunity to think creatively and problem solve alongside others. They express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations as well as re-enact positive experiences building self-awareness and self-esteem.

Inclusion in the EYFS

In consultation and working collaboratively with parents/guardians the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) will lead on provision for children who may experience barriers to their learning, which may relate to sensory or physical impairment, learning difficulties or emotional or social development in line with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice (2014) and the school's SEND/Inclusion Policy. We aim to meet the needs of all our children by: -

- Setting realistic and challenging expectations. We aim for all children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS. We achieve this by planning for different learning styles, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities or medical needs, children from all social and cultural backgrounds as well as children with diverse linguistic backgrounds
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contributions of all children are valued
- Using resources, which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping which all children have equal access to
- Monitoring children's progress and providing support where necessary, within the resources available to the school
- Providing specific targets detailed in Individual Pupil Plans (IPP) and following external therapy or support programmes of work such as Speech and Language
- Working collaboratively with families or carers, the SENDCo and other professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists, and Educational Psychologists
- Ensuring where possible a balance across classes, within each cohort, of gender, ability, children with additional learning or medical needs and summer born children.
- Acknowledging the wishes of parents and carers of twins and multiple birth siblings regarding class allocation in the EYFS. Following discussions with parents and carers the school's usual practice is for twins and multiple birth siblings to be allocated to separate classes

The EYFS Curriculum

- The EYFS is statutory and is important in its own right as a basis for developing essential skills such as listening, speaking, persistence and collaborating with each other. The three prime areas cover the knowledge and skills which are the foundations for future progress, and which are applied and reinforced by the specific areas. All areas of learning are equally important and are interlinked.
- Our Curriculum Progression Maps (based upon The Development Matters) and the Early Learning Goals guide our planning together with termly topics. In preschool activities are planned around the children's current needs, schemas and interests to ensure all areas of the EYFS curriculum are embraced.
- Weekly Planning focuses on day-to-day organisation of activities. It takes into account that children's learning is not necessarily sequential and that they may need time to consolidate, repeat and extend their learning in their own way. All planning is evaluated on an on-going basis and adapted in response to the children's needs and interests.

Assessment in the EYFS

- The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) became statutory in schools in September 2021. It is an activity based assessment of pupils' starting points in: language, communication and literacy and mathematics. The RBA is a short, task-based assessment. It is not used to label or track individual pupils. We are required to carry out the assessment within the first 6 weeks of pupils starting reception. No numerical score is shared and the data will only be used at the end of year 6 to form the school-level progress measure. However, teachers will receive a series of short, narrative statements that tell them how their pupils performed in the assessment. These can be used to inform teaching within the first term. The assessment will enable us to create school-level progress measures for primary schools which show the progress pupils make from reception until the end of key stage 2 (KS2). During these first few weeks it is also a time for the teacher to discover the unique personality and interests of each child.
- We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure future planning reflects individual or group needs. Once a term, summative assessments are entered and progress is measured using PIXL language (as used by the rest of the school).
- Formative assessment in the Foundation Stage is continuous and takes the form of observations, examples of child-initiated work and samples of dated work from books and photographs. The teachers and learning support assistants keep observational records and use these to record examples of each child's work. These are kept on Tapestry for each child and are available to parents and carers at all times.
- We have regular termly parents' meetings take place to ensure parents/carers are informed of their child's progress and next steps in learning.

Working with Parents/ carers and other significant adults

We recognise the importance of working alongside parents and other significant adults during a child's education. We do this through: -

- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- Giving the children the opportunity to take part in a 'staggered start' when starting school in Reception to support transition
- Inviting new parents into the classroom in their child's first term to take part in activities
- Providing formal meetings for parents during the school year to discuss children's progress
- Welcoming parents to discuss any concerns with the teacher and/or learning support assistants through an 'open-door' policy
- Working to build good relationships with families to promote a regular two-way flow of information
- Send out surveys to families
- The use of Tapestry to share what children have been learning

The Environment and Resources in the EYFS

- A rich and varied 'enabling' environment is actively planned for and continuously developed with varied multi-cultural and inclusive resources to encourage exploratory play-based learning and challenge. The learning environment encompasses both indoor and outdoor provision, which are of equal importance. Children are encouraged to experience all areas of the learning environment in all weathers. We encourage children to plan their own selection of activities balanced with adult initiated activities.

Impact

- Our curriculum and its delivery, aim for children to make good or better progress from their starting points. During their time with us children make rapid progress towards the national expectation for a good level of development at the end of the year. Pupils also can make good progress toward their age-related expectations both academically and socially, developing a sense of themselves before transitioning into Year One.
- Children develop their characteristics of learning and are able to apply their knowledge to a range of situations making links and explaining their ideas and understanding. We want children to be confident, to take risks and discuss their successes and failures with peers and adults drawing on their experiences to improve or adjust what they are doing. We believe our high standards are due to our carefully planned environment, enriched play-based curriculum, quality first teaching and the rigour of assessment.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding practices and procedures are the same as the main school and information regarding this can be found in the school's safeguarding policy

September 2025 updates:

- Safer Recruitment: Providers obtain references for new staff before hiring, and the safeguarding policy details recruitment procedures for suitability.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Caroline Skingsley (Head Teacher), there are 2 DDSLs based in Preschool – Alex Krol (EYFS Lead/ AHT) and Gayle Meakins (Preschool Administrator)
- Child Absence Follow-Up: The school office promptly follow up unexplained absences; seek extra emergency contacts (more than two recommended) and contact alternative contacts if needed, and escalate concerns to social care if necessary.
- Safeguarding Training: Training is carried out in line with recommended guidelines
- Whistleblowing: See main school whistle blowing policy
- Safer Eating: All children that require a care plan to manage allergies have this in place before starting at the setting. This is shared with all relevant staff and displayed in appropriate spaces. Staff sit facing children at mealtimes to manage the risk of choking. A PFA is in the room during mealtimes.

- Privacy in Personal Care: Where possible staff will support children to manage their privacy for example when changing nappies or accidents. This will involve appropriately moving on other children that are in the spaces and ensuring everyone has an understanding of privates are private.
- Staffing Ratios: Volunteers (17+) and students (16+) must have valid Paediatric First Aid (PFA) to count in ratios.

Reviewed by: Alex Krol (Jan 26)