

Great Waldingfield

Church of England
Primary School

Policy on Teaching and Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Date – Summer 2025

Review date – Summer 2026

Policy on teaching and Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Version	Date	Amendment/Addition
Two	08.02.21	All photographs have been updated.
Two	08.02.21	Quotations that are no longer relevant omitted
Two	08.02.21	p4 – ‘The Role of the Adult’
Two	08.02.21	p4 – paragraph explaining change in planning practice included
Three	12.06.23	p6 Linked policies added
Three	12.06.23	p5 2015 OFSTED quote removed as out-dated
Four	23.05.24	P3 – removal of new when referring to ELGs.
Four	23.05.24	P6 – removal of paragraph of come and play sessions.
Four	23.05.24	P6 removal of the part time attendance in the first weeks
Five	02.06.25	No changes

Policy for Teaching and Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

GREAT WALDINGFIELD CEVC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage follows the guidance set out in 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)', the non-statutory guidance material which supports practitioners in implementing the statutory requirements of the EYFS curriculum.

The Foundation Stage is important in its own right and should not be seen as preparing children for later schooling. However, we teach EYFS curriculum in a logical progression so that it gives children the necessary foundations for the rest of their schooling.

It is the Early Learning Goals that set out what is expected of most children by the end of the EYFS. These are the ELGs based upon the 'Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'.

Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been learning in one of the various educational settings that exist in our community including the local First Friends Pre-School Group. The early years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- it builds on what our children already know and can do
- it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged
- it offers the opportunity for children to learn and develop a range of skills to explore and discover more about the world
- it provides a rich, stimulating, fun and creative learning environment which focuses on play and individual interests
- it encourages children to develop independence through making choices about what to learn as they play



Through play, our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children and on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. Children are helped to understand their feelings and encouraged to express them.

In the Early Years at Great Waldingfield CEVC Primary School we pride ourselves on listening to children and those who care for them and using this information to personalise child's learning.

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Learning should be fun and we strongly believe in first hand learning, valuing the importance of the indoor and outdoor environment to develop children's curiosity, creativity, thinking and problem solving skills. Our aim is to develop life-long learners.

We believe that the best outcomes for children occur when most of the activity within a child's day is a mixture of:

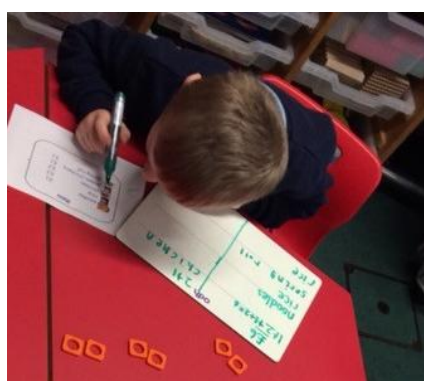
- Child-initiated play, actively supported by adults
- Focused learning, with adults guiding the learning through playful, rich experiential activities

We plan and organise activities in the daily routine to reflect the different types of learning to best support children's well-being and continual progression. By combining child-initiated learning and adult-led opportunities our staff select the approach that best fits the developmental stage of the children, and for individuals and groups.

Alongside the children's interest as a stimulus, we also use a topic based approach which ensures that the planning for Reception covers the learning goals of the curriculum.

Despite a firm belief and commitment to the principles of child led learning and 'planning in the moment' we recognise that to reach their full potential all children must have the opportunity to engage in planned, focussed activities. For some this means interventions planned to meet a child's specific needs.

We are committed to the whole school 'Talk4Writing' approach and use a suitable story or text each half term. These are often used as a hook for learning across all areas of the EYFS curriculum and are used to broaden children's interests and generate ideas that may not come naturally to children. Provocations and enhancements to the continuous provision are used to stimulate the children's enquiring minds and different learning paths. Celebrations, such as Chinese New Year and Diwali, are used as learning opportunities to introduce children to different cultures and ways of life. Stories, visits away from school and visitors to school (such as from a local vet and police officer) develop children's interests and experiences. Forest school throughout the summer term is popular and a fantastic opportunity to develop skills and knowledge as well as learning how to take risks safely and promoting wellbeing.



Children are taught through discrete phonics (based on Letters and Sounds) and maths (based on the White Rose scheme) inputs, daily, to teach specific skills which the children are then encouraged to practise and consolidate during their child initiated play. A 'challenge' using the learning from the adult input may be set for the children to complete during continuous provision. The children will sometimes have the choice about when they will do this to encourage them to take responsibility for their learning and develop self-regulation skills.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

The characteristics of effective learning (CoEL) are key principles in the EYFS.

Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'

Learning Actively – 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.

The Role of the Adult

The adults are there to teach. This may be through adult directed activities or during child led provision time. Staff do this through observing and interacting. All the adults know the children very well and have a sound understanding of child development. This ensures that the adults enhance and extend the learning at the appropriate level for each unique child.

Quality interactions between children and adults are the key to successful teaching. During play and learn time (continuous provision) the children become involved in activities of their choice. The adults observe the children carefully, join them, when appropriate, and engage in quality interactions (teaching) to move the learning on.



A yearly overview for EYFS ensures a carefully planned curriculum which enables children to play and engage in enquiry, discover and reflect. A more detailed medium term plan is written for each term and weekly short term plans ensure no learning is left to chance and children are challenged. Children are encouraged to direct their own learning which means that adults also plan in the moment to develop children's learning as they play.



When children show high levels of involvement, that is when there is progress and development occurring – when the brain is at its most active. High level involvement occurs most often when children are able to pursue their own interests in an enabling environment, supported by skilful staff.

We have a workshop style environment indoors and outside. All resources are available to the children. The children select what they want to do in each area. The principle is that resources

are accessible to the children and they are varied, open-ended and high quality. This gives children the opportunity to select resources to support their chosen activity.

Partnership with parents

We value learning at home and the contribution that parents make to their child's development. We value and endeavour to foster, close partnerships with families to facilitate close links in children's learning and wellbeing between home and school.

Parents are actively encouraged to add to their child's online journal, Tapestry, to share their achievements at home. These are used to help inform the Early Years Profile completed in the summer term.

Induction and Transition

Transition will be successful if:-

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1. Practitioners know each child, including their interests and needs
2. The school is able to meet these interests and needs
3. Practitioners have formed a relationship with each family
4. Children know, and like, the practitioners
5. Children are familiar and happy with their new school environment, its routines and expectations
6. Children have met and made friends with some of the other children who will be in their class

The induction period is always critical – even more so when the children have so much autonomy and choice.

All parents will be invited to an initial information session to provide them with an overview of life in our EYFS classroom.

Where possible, staff will visit children in their home or pre-school settings to see children in an environment where they are settled and comfortable. This will also include an opportunity to talk to key persons about each individual child.



We have a good relationship with First Friends preschool and have transition sessions for children from the preschool during the summer term.

Home visits are offered to all families prior to children starting school. Home visits are the starting point for building relationships with both the parents and children and acknowledge that parents are their children's first educators. Information gained at these visits enable staff to gain an understanding of each child's individual needs, interests and family situations which supports a smooth transition into Great Waldingfield Primary School.

Starting school in smaller groups with high ratios of adults where possible is ideal and some part time attendance for the first few days can ensure that the routines and expectations are established efficiently. Ground rules are essential when freedom is given – all the children need to feel safe and secure. Clear and consistent expectations are key. Focus is given to the prime areas during settling in periods, focusing on children's Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- **Policy on Child Protection and Safeguarding**
- Policy on Teaching and Learning
- Policy on Behaviour for Learning
- Policy on Curriculum