

## ***Early Years Policy***

Review date:	February 2018 Revised in line with Anti-bullying policy	Revised by:  Governor responsible:	Marie Cameron  Tracey George
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### **School Aims:**

At Grampound Road Primary School we aim to give all pupils:

- + Access to a rich curriculum, which enthuses and equips them for life as citizens in the 21st century.
- + Opportunities to explore their own developing Christian faith and to have respect for the faith of others.
- + High self esteem by feeling valued as a member of our school.
- + A sense of fair play, treating others with dignity and respect.
- + The chance to enjoy taking part in a vibrant, forward looking school, moving their learning forwards.

Grampound Road Primary School Motto is: Nurturing God's gifts with compassion and drive so that all our children succeed, learn & thrive.

### **General policy statement:**

All staff, governors, volunteer helpers, students and visitors need to give due regard to all of the policies and practices adopted by the school. Whilst it is acknowledged that people other than staff cannot be expected to read every policy before a visit to the school, it may be that further guidelines are necessary upon arrival. All staff carry responsibility for the welfare and success of the pupils in our school. Staff will advise anyone who is working alongside us of the necessary protocols, procedures and policies we follow.

### **The Foundation Stage**

This begins from birth and continues until the end of the reception year. It is a crucial stage in education, both in its own right and in preparing children for learning in Key Stage 1. We believe that all children should be given the best possible start to their education. We therefore place great value on the quality of our provision in the Foundation Stage.

### **Aims**

- To foster positive attitudes to learning including confidence, curiosity, responsibility and independence.
- To provide children with a well-planned programme which fosters enthusiasm for learning and is challenging and progressive.
- To develop children's knowledge skills and understanding in all areas of learning.
- To provide opportunities for children to make choices and become independent in their learning in a variety of safe and stimulating environments both indoors and outdoors.

- To establish and maintain a close partnership with parents/ carers, families and pre-school providers in our community, and with Key Stage 1 within the school.
- To use focussed assessment and record keeping based on direct observation of children and discussion with them. To use this to inform future planning, monitor progress and build on children's prior learning.
- To promote an inclusive ethos for all our children to ensure that none are excluded or disadvantaged.

## **Admission**

Our school follows the School Admission Arrangements as set out in the Admissions Policy.

## **Safeguarding**

Grampound Road Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. We expect all our team members to share this commitment.

All children have been offered a full-time place to start in September. Some children will already be part of our nursery class, but we have close links with other nurseries; Little Explorer Nursery and the village Pre-school. The reception teacher and the Head of School visit the pre-school and liaise with the pre-school staff during the second half of the summer term, before the children start school. The pre-school children are invited to come and watch Nativities and join in with Sports days.

## **Starting Nursery**

In our school, children can join our nursery in the term before they are four. Starting Nursery will be, for many children, the first time they have been away from their parents or familiar adults for a substantial length of time. It is therefore important we ensure transition from home to school is made as comfortable as possible.

During the term prior to starting Nursery, the Nursery holds an open day for the children and their parents/carers to meet the staff, familiarise themselves with the provision and experience some typical nursery activities. In addition to this, the nursery team will organise a home visit where they can meet the child in the familiar home environment. This important visit is a chance for both parents and child to get to know our staff, to discuss the child's needs and answer any questions. A welcome pack is given which includes information about the setting, daily routines, policies and procedures and there are also consent forms and an information sharing sheet to be completed prior to starting nursery.

When the children start Nursery, we ask that all children have a familiar adult with them on their first day and that an adult is available should the child need longer to settle. Settling in periods are flexible as children's needs vary. If a child has previously attended playgroup or a toddler group and was settled there, we like the parent/carer to leave their child fairly soon. Children are usually fully settled within a few weeks, so if the child has not settled by half-term, the staff will review the situation. After starting, time is made for individual feedback whenever the parents/carers require some, in person or by phone.

Children with SEN will be assessed and, if necessary, special provision will be made or extra adult help provided to offer them equal access to the Nursery Curriculum.

Parents/carers are made aware of the effect irregular attendance has on a child's ability to settle and also of the effects of coming back to school after a long absence.

There are two Parents' Evening Sessions, one in the Autumn and one in the Summer term and a written report covering all areas of the Early Years Framework is provided to all pupils in the Spring term.

## **Starting school**

They can join our reception class in school, full time, at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

Parents are invited to attend an induction evening in the summer term prior to their children starting school in September. This gives them the opportunity to find out about Grampound Road Primary School, and to meet their child's class teacher. Parents are then invited to come and meet the teacher, during which time an Entry Profile is completed and any questions may be answered. Children then visit their new class in July to familiarise themselves with the teacher, the other children and the school itself. The children are also invited to school, with their parents, for a "practice" school dinner in the July before they start school in September. Then in September a 'curriculum evening' is held to familiarise parents with the way the Foundation Stage Curriculum is delivered in the reception class. In October, face to face meetings are held between parents and class teacher.

## **Provision**

We review our provision annually to ensure that it meets statutory requirements. There is one reception classroom which provide a stimulating learning environment with a secure, enclosed area for outdoor play. The school is developing a stimulating EYFS garden which provides huge scope for additional learning opportunities. We have a wide range of resources to provide for the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. We also use the school hall, library, field and playground regularly. We review our resources annually to ensure that they are;

- adequate to match the needs of the children;
- in a safe and clean condition for use; and
- appropriate for all seven areas of learning.

Our resources include the following:

- A good range of quality books housed and displayed in an attractive, comfortable area;
- Sand and water with a variety of equipment;
- Mathematical and scientific equipment;
- Materials for imaginative play including some equipment for different role play areas;
- A variety of papers and tools/implements to make marks and write;
- A variety of creative media such as paint, dough and clay, wood and junk materials;
- Small and large construction equipment;
- Computers and access to the chrome books and ipads located in a trolley;
- A variety of outdoor play equipment, including a huge assortment of balls, hoops, beanbags etc and a fleet of scooters, balance bikes and 2 wheeled bicycles with a large variety of helmets; and
- Access to cooking equipment, artefacts and growing/living things as and when appropriate

## **Staffing and Organisation**

Our nursery and reception class is taught by a teacher with Early Years qualifications and experience. In addition the class has an experienced teaching assistant on a full time basis. We also welcome parental help in the classroom and on trips and visits which are planned regularly. We believe strongly in the importance of keeping our practice up to date. We therefore ensure that all our staff in the Foundation Stage attend courses and training on a regular basis as part of our school Professional Development. We also attend a number of different EYFS cluster and Trust groups in order to share expertise.

## **The Curriculum**

**The EYFS is grouped into four themes to compliment the every child matter outcomes and these are:**

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

**The Characteristics of Effective Learning are:**

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creative and Thinking Critically

The aim of the EYFS is to ensure the whole child develops through fostering and supporting children's learning and development, and welfare.

The Learning and Development theme of the EYFS is made up of seven areas.

All areas are inter connected and are of equal importance. The areas of Learning and Development are:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Communication and Language Prime Areas
3. Physical Development
4. Mathematics
5. Literacy
6. Understanding the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

Within these seven areas of learning, the early learning goals establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. Some children in our school will exceed these goals and others will still be working towards them as they enter Year 1. Although the seven areas of learning form the framework for our planning, we know that children's learning is not divided into distinct areas. Often, one experience helps a child to develop a range of new skills and concepts across several areas of learning and our planning reflects this. We encourage parents to become actively involved in their children's learning by sharing curriculum information with them and giving them plenty of opportunities to share information, experiences, thoughts, concerns and resources with us. The children have regular phonics homework, such as practising letter sounds, blending sounds to read words, homework writing sheets, reading books and weekly differentiated Numeracy work.

In addition, we use the Read, Write Inc document and the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus for RE and SEAL resources. This ensures high expectations and standards for our children. Our planning is clearly structured and firmly established within a framework for long, medium and short term and is based on half termly topics. The curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning: Personal, social and emotional development Communication and language, Literacy, Maths, Understanding of the World, Physical Development and Expressive Arts and Design.

## **Teaching and Learning**

We believe that our children learn best by being actively involved in activities, through first hand experiences and their senses. We therefore provide a range of activities which are interesting, enjoyable, challenging and fun! Through these, we encourage our children to explore, experiment, question, investigate, discover, create, practise and consolidate their developing understanding, knowledge and skills. We firmly believe that if a child is excited and motivated by learning, especially in

the early days at our school, then we are already helping that child to become a lifelong learner. We recognise that children learn in different ways and at different rates. For example, Read, Write Inc has a multi-sensory approach to learning and also allows children to progress at their own rate. We also provide time for children to make choices and explore ideas and interests in depth. This means that our timescales are flexible when necessary. The afternoon session has a strong emphasis on child initiated learning.

### **Purposeful Play**

We believe that 'well-planned purposeful play is a key way in which children learn with enjoyment and challenge during the foundation stage.' We therefore ensure that children have plenty of opportunities to play in a secure environment with effective support from caring adults. We use the classroom and our outdoor area to enable children to access both planned, structured play activities and self-initiated, spontaneous play activities.

### **Assessment**

Our assessment of pupils as they progress through the Foundation Stage is based on regular and close observations of children as well as discussion with individual children. We involve all adults who come into contact with the child and regard parents as important in this respect. We therefore want to ensure that parents are able to contribute to the assessment process through an ongoing dialogue between home and school. Our initial 'on entry assessment' provides an ideal opportunity for this. During the first six weeks of being admitted into school each child is assessed using the Foundation Stage Profile. Information is shared with parents and targets are set. The children are very carefully monitored in their progress within Literacy and Maths, to ensure that measurable progress is being made. In the Summer term, we make a judgement about how the children fare against the 17 ELGs and they can be deemed to be "emerging", "expected" or "exceeding ". We also report to the parents about the children's characteristics of effective learning. Observations are made and recorded throughout the year and we track each child's progress against specific learning objectives/intentions, recording outcomes and reporting to parents in the Spring term. Parents are regularly informed of their child's targets, in case they wish to support them at home. We encourage parents to be actively involved in achieving agreed targets with their children. We also encourage use of the home/school reading diaries and our open door policy where parents can come and speak to us at either end of the day/session.

We currently use an electronic method of collecting evidence of the attainment and progress of individual children, called Tapestry. This stores observations electronically to form a Learning Journey for each child which parents can input into and share their child's achievements.

### **Meeting individual needs**

We provide a safe and supportive learning environment at our school where the contribution of all children is valued. We also employ a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's experiences, interests, skills and learning needs. In particular we plan carefully to meet the needs of:

- boys and girls;
- children with special educational needs;
- children with disabilities;
- children from all social, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- children of different ethnic groups including Travellers and refugees;
- children from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

In addition we select our resources, equipment and materials thoughtfully, choosing those which positively reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.

## **Partnership with Parents**

We firmly believe that 'parents are children's first and most enduring educators.' To this end we work hard to promote a successful partnership with a two-way flow of knowledge, information and expertise in a range of ways including:

- Induction evening/Entry Profile interviews prior to admission;
- Parents are welcomed into school as voluntary helpers;
- Parents views and knowledge about their own child are listened to eg on admission, during formal/informal consultations;
- Parents are given clear information about the school e.g. prospectus, newsletters, displays, meetings, regular letters; and
- Parents and other family members are encouraged to support their child's learning e.g. Read, Write Inc, Numeracy, sharing books, collecting resources for topic work, visits and celebrations, postcards or books about holidays etc

Our school has close links with Pre-school and Nursery which include:

- Reception teachers visiting;
- Children visiting school prior to admission;
- Class teachers and pre-school leaders meeting to discuss transition; and
- Informal social occasions such as Harvest, Christmas and sports day

We do have links with other feeder pre-school settings and endeavour to visit all settings. We aim to meet staff from every setting in order to discuss the children that we will be receiving.

## **High Ability / Gifted and Talented**

Children who are considered to be High Ability / Gifted or Talented in EYFS will be identified in exactly the same way as they would be identified in KS1 or KS2. In general, it is possible that EYFS may be too early to place children on the HA or G& T register, however, the names of any EYFS children who are considered to be potential candidates for the register will be noted and passed raised in progress meetings for future reference.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

This policy is monitored on an annual basis by the Early Years Governor. It also forms part of our annual school self review process and is therefore incorporated into our School Development Plan.