

# Gastrells Community Primary School

## Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy



Last reviewed on: October 2024

Next review due by: October 2025

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## 1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

At Gastrells we will achieve this through:

Use our P.R.I.D.E ethos:

- providing a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs
- providing a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond
- providing opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development
- using and valuing what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress
- enabling choice and decision-making, fostering independence and self confidence
- working in partnership with parents and valuing their contributions, providing opportunities to share in their child's learning through the use of Tapestry online learning journeys.
- ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development
- providing experiences for all children, whatever their needs, which are inclusive

## 2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) for 2023.

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3. Structure of the EYFS

The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. The final year of the EYFS is referred to as the reception year which at Gastrells starts in Owls. Every child begins at Gastrells with a variety of experiences, and they have already learnt a great deal; it is essential that the practitioners working in reception build upon that prior learning and experience. This is achieved by the sharing of information with pre-schools and parents/carers; staff in EYFS ensure to visit pre-school settings to ensure a smooth transition for the children starting their journey at Gastrells. It is also essential that parents/carers (parents), support staff and the early years practitioners work together effectively to support children's learning and development and ensure that each child's learning is a continuous journey.

## 4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest EYFS statutory framework.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. 3 areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

### 4.1 Planning

Our staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. Staff in the Early Years use 'objective-led planning' whereby teachers provide an overarching goal/aim for the week within a particular area. This then enables staff to direct the learning goal towards small groups of children whilst they are in provision. Although there are activities that are more

structured, the EYFS curriculum is play based which means that the learning goals can also be woven into children's play.

## 4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

In Owls we aspire to provide fun, hands-on activities for children to explore within a safe, challenging and stimulating learning environment. This promotes motivated, enthused and eager learners as well as developing a sense of independence, always striving to succeed.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

Throughout the day children and staff come together to join in with whole class time. This is where staff introduce new concepts and ideas, such as through phonics and maths, and everybody works together to explore this further. Children will get further opportunities to show their understanding of this during continuous provision where staff are then able to assess and support where needed. Continuous provision forms part of every child's learning journey as it enables them to explore new ideas through activities that have been carefully resourced and planned by staff. The learning environment being set up in this way is key in fostering children's ability to return to previous learning opportunities but also expand new ideas at the same time. This will also help to promote their independence as continuous provision encourages them to learn in the absence of an adult. As part of our continuous provision at Gastrells we aim to have our classroom set up to allow 'free-flow' between both the classrooms and the outdoor environment where possible. In addition to the continuous provision, teachers will work with small groups of children throughout the week with a specific focus. This is a further opportunity to expand on the new concepts and ideas that have been shared during whole class sessions. These small group sessions are more guided for the children in order for them to receive high quality teaching from the key adult and are supportive of individuals learning needs.

## 5. Assessment

At Gastrells, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

## 6. Working with parents and carers

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there's a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. Throughout the year, staff share observations and learning through Tapestry and parents can also share any home learning or experiences on this platform. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Throughout the year, we also ensure to promote this strong partnership between staff and parents by:

- talking to pre-schools and meeting the child before they start school
- inviting the children to spend two afternoons in the summer term prior to starting, with their teacher in the classroom
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- encouraging parents to attend consultation meetings in the first two terms to discuss their child's progress and share next steps
- providing parents with a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year
- encouraging parents to contribute observations via tapestry
- sharing our approach to phonics and reading through a phonics meeting
- hosting a bring your parent to school afternoon

## 7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We recognise that children learn best when they are healthy safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence. We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's safeguarding policy.

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the EYFS lead every 3 years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.