



# Glen Hills Primary School

## Early Years Policy

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This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Foundation Stage Unit at Glen Hills Primary School.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to 5 years old. The EYFS Framework supports an integrated approach to learning and care. The statutory framework is used so that children learn and develop well.

### Induction Process to the Foundation Stage

#### Summer Term Prior to starting at Glen Hills

- The Foundation Stage Leader attends transition meetings with pre-school's / nurseries / parents to discuss the needs of children who will attend Glen Hills Primary School.
- The Foundation Stage Leader visits pre-school and nursery settings to meet the children and introduce themselves. The Foundation Stage Leader takes along a soft toy bear dressed in Glen Hills' uniform to visit the children and it is used as a pre-school / school link. The children's current 'Learning Journey' is shared with the Foundation Stage Leader and the child as this contains information and photographs that the child is keen to talk about with the visiting teacher.
- The Foundation Stage Leader invites all pre-schools / nurseries to visit the Foundation Stage Unit as often as they feel necessary to help the children in their transition process. This is during normal school hours so that they are able to meet other additional members of the Foundation Stage Staff and so that they can play alongside our current cohort of pupils.
- For children who do not currently attend a pre-school / nursery / childminder setting during the Summer Term, the Foundation Stage Leader invites the child's parents to visit and to stay and play for a morning or afternoon session/s during normal school hours. Where possible the Foundation Stage Leader tries to timetable this so that they visit together with other new pupils.
- We organise a 'teddy bears picnic' for the new intake pupils to attend with their pre-school / nursery.
- The Foundation Stage Leader offers a 'home visit' if a child has not attended a private, voluntary or independent setting (PVI setting) before starting school.
- Parents of the new intake are invited to an information evening at Glen Hills Primary School. This meeting is an opportunity to meet their child's new teacher and key adults within school and to receive information regarding the school as a whole. It also provides parents with a chance to again informally meet the teachers and ask any questions. Parents receive an information pack during this evening. **(Appendix 1 – New Intake Foundation Stage Booklet)**
- The parents and children are then invited to an informal 'Play Evening' held in the Foundation Stage Unit and outdoor enclosed area.

### **During the Autumn Term at Glen Hills**

- The new intake is staggered over the first two weeks of the Autumn Term. The older children in the cohort start first (autumn born) then the spring born children and finally the summer born children. This gives the children the chance to start school in smaller groups and allows the children to orientate themselves within the classroom and Foundation Stage Unit as well as giving them a chance to bond with staff.
- In our school, children join full time, at the beginning of the school year in which they are five years old. They do however have the option to attend part time if required.
- After a few weeks in school parents are invited to a Parents Evening with the class teacher to discuss how they feel their child has settled in to school routines and discuss any issues. During this meeting the parent can pass any information to the teacher regarding changes in family circumstances etc and the teacher can introduce the parents to the school and explain the EYFS and how their child will be educated.
- Each morning parents / carers are invited to help settle their child and talk to the Class Teacher / Nursery Nurse about any issues.

### **Organisation of the Foundation Stage**

The 4+ Unit is split into 3 classes following LEA directives of no more than 30 children in a class. Each class has a Class Teacher and a Nursery Nurses. Additional classroom support is also provided by 2 other adults throughout the week. The additional classroom support allows for the outdoor area to be accessed by the children regularly throughout the day, additional classroom support and preparation of activities and resources.

### **Timetabling**

The topics are taught through a thematic approach over a three week period of time. There is a structure to the timetable that allows for whole class, half class and small group teaching on a regular basis. Phonics and Maths direct teaching is taught on a daily basis through half class teaching, with many activities then allowing for the pupils to apply the skills they learn through these sessions during independent and structured play. Individual needs / targets of the cohort and individual pupils are met through this structure of the timetable too. Throughout the year the timetable is subject to change in order that we meet the needs of the current cohort. We enable to keep a balanced timetable to ensure that all the 7 areas of learning are addressed with equal importance.

### **Resources**

The Foundation Stage Unit has their own set of resources to allow for a very active, play based, explorative curriculum to be delivered. Each class has their own sets of resources for Maths and Phonics. Children move between areas within the unit and all topic resources are shared by all the classes. The outdoor area is enclosed and well resourced; for an engaging environment for the pupils to learn. There is a mixture of fixed playground equipment for the pupils to access on a daily basis.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS)**

*“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe*

*and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.”*

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **A Unique Child**
- **Positive Relationships**
- **Enabling Environments**
- **Learning and Development**

### **A Unique Child**

At Glen Hills Primary School 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 praise and encouragement, as well as celebration /sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning. Each week a child’s attitude to learning is celebrated through receiving ‘Star of the Week’.

### **Equal Opportunities and Inclusion**

All children at Glen Hills Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children’s progress and taking action to provide support as necessary;
- promoting ‘British Values’ in accordance with our school policy.

It is important to us that all children in the 4+ are ‘safe’ and feel that they are kept safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why

they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop ~~these his-~~ important life skills. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

### **Health & Safety and Welfare**

“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.”

At Glen Hills Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children;
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill;
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs, which is consistent between the Unit’s Dining Supervisors and Staff;
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so;
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose;
- staff within the unit complete a daily check list of the outdoor area to ensure that all gates remain closed, that the playground and equipment are safe to use;
- any unsafe equipment / areas are reported immediately to the relevant person necessary;
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs;
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

### **Positive Relationships**

At Glen Hills Primary School we recognise that children learn to be independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

#### **Parents as Partners**

- We recognise that parents are children’s first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role in educating their children. We do this through:
  - talking to parents during the induction process;
  - ensuring parents complete an ‘All About Me’ booklet for their new intake child;
  - offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child’s progress in our 4+ Unit at the beginning and end of the school day;
  - encouraging parents to talk to the child’s teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents in the Autumn and Spring Terms at which the teacher and the parents discuss the child’s progress in private. During the Spring Term Parents Evening, parents receive a summary report of their progress so far in relation to the ‘Development Matters Bands for learning’ and the ‘Early Learning

Goals'. At the end of the academic year parents receive a written report on their child's attainment and progress against the 'Early Learning Goals';

- encouraging parents to contribute to their child's 'Home and School Learning Card' during the Autumn term to indicate how their child is settling in to school life;
- encouraging parents to contribute to their child's progress with phonics and reading through comments in their 'Home-School Reading Record Book';
- encouraging parents and pupils to record 'parents voice' and 'child's voice' comments linked to the 7 areas of learning in the EYFS Curriculum;
- encouraging parents to support Maths and Literacy homework that is set by the school,
- encouraging parents to support weekly spelling tests – as appropriate to the individual needs of the children.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. All members of the 4+ Staff act as valued 'Key People' to all children in EYFS. The Foundation Stage Leader meets with staff to discuss new intake children.

### **Enabling Environments**

At Glen Hills Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

### **Planning, Observation and Assessment**

The Planning within the EYFS follows the schools' Long Term Plan and Medium Term Plans. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for short term planning, which is taught using a thematic approach over a period of three weeks. This also allows for more personalised learning for the children's individual targets that are set. However the teacher may alter the medium and weekly plans in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on medium term and weekly planning. Short term plans are produced to show the level of independent, group and supported work and also the finer details of the lesson such as objectives and organisation. Planning is discussed, evaluated and modified by all 4+ Staff. All staff have input in to the planning meetings. Close liaison amongst all the Foundation Stage staff allows for activities / tasks to be modified on a short term time scale if required.

#### **Assessment**

- On entry we complete Baseline Assessments on all children for all areas of learning of the EYFS Curriculum. We use our own assessments / devised activities to support baseline assessment observations and judgements. These have been devised in conjunction with another linked school.
- We moderate our Baseline judgements with all teachers and our link school.
- As well as reporting to the LEA we use our own internal point system to monitor progress from Baseline to the end of the reception year.
- We make regular assessments of children's learning through observations and play based activities. This information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, photographic or written/drawn work, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate.
- We use an APP –Earwig Academic Timelines to record online 'Learning Journeys'. Starting from February 2017 the parents will be emailed their child's timeline and will be able to respond to this for teachers to view the comments made by parents.

- During the Spring Term Parents Evening, parents receive a summary report of their progress so far in relation to the 'Development Matters Bands for learning' and the 'Early Learning Goals'.
- At the end of the academic year parents receive a written report on their child's attainment and progress against the 17 'Early Learning Goals'. They are reported as either 'emerging ELG, expected ELG or Exceeding ELG;
- The Foundation Stage Profile results from the end of year assessments are sent to the LEA for scrutiny and analysis and form part of our target setting for Year One and Year Two results.
- Assessments and judgements are moderated internally and externally. Practitioners refer to the exemplification materials provided, which illustrate the standard expected for ELG at the end of the EYFS. For exceeding descriptors, practitioners refer to the EYFS Handbook and discuss with Year 1 colleagues about whether a child is exceeding in any ELG's.

### ***The Learning Environment***

The 4+ Unit is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The unit is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The 4+ Unit has its own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It enables the children to explore, use their senses and be physically active. We plan activities and resources for the children to access the outdoor area that helps the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning. It is used every day for many activities.

### **Learning and Development**

At Glen Hills Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected.

### ***Teaching and Learning Style***

Effective teaching and learning in the 4+ that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout the EYFS Curriculum;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

### **Play and Exploration**

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.”

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

### **Active Learning**

“Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.”

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

### **Creating and Critical Thinking**

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move around the 4+ Unit, both indoors and outdoors to extend their learning.

### **Areas of Learning**

The EYFS is made up of 3 prime areas of learning.

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language

Children will mostly develop the 3 prime areas first. The prime areas will help to develop skills in the 4 specific areas. These are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL)**

The Characteristics of Effective Learning focus on ‘how’ a child learns. This is recorded throughout the year and written in their end of year written reports to parents. The CoEL’s are;

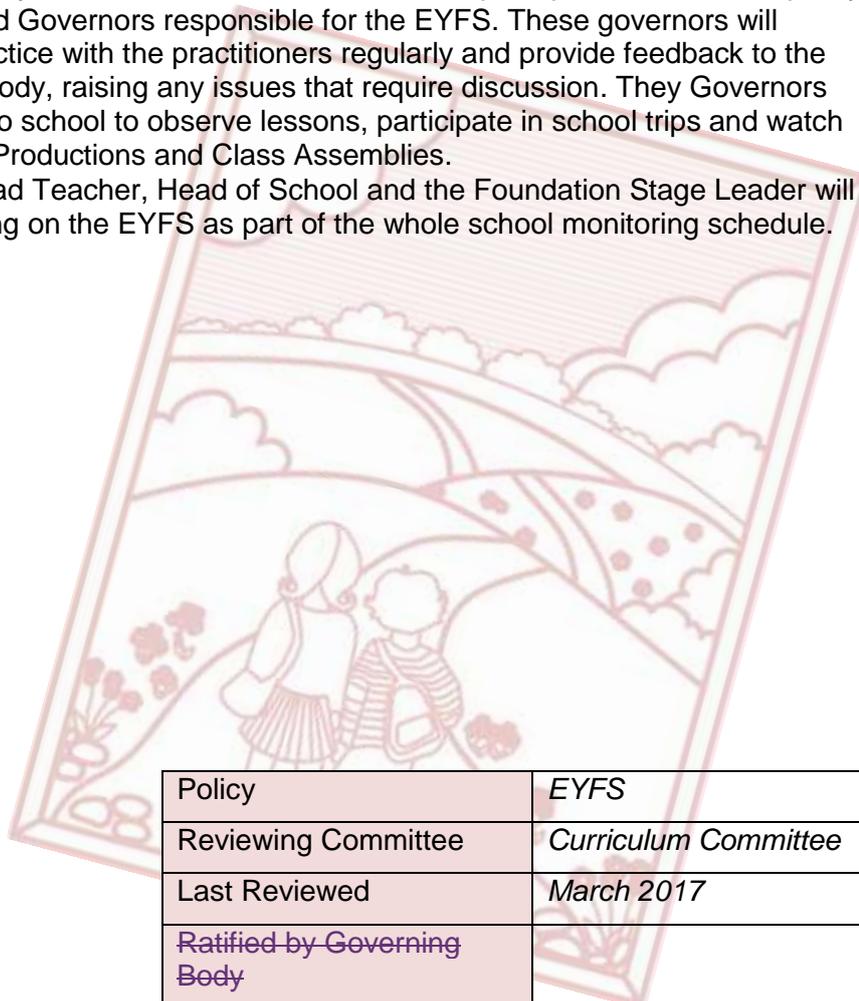
- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

### **Transition to Year 1**

- Recorded on the end of year report are targets for the children that are passed on to the Year 1 teachers.
- Foundation Stage and Year 1 colleagues have a day to meet to update records for the 'Symphony Assessment System' (SAS) grids to enable up to date records and targets to be set for Literacy and Mathematics. Other useful information about the children is also passed on during this meeting.
- During the Summer Term Foundation Stage Pupils and Year 1 pupils share some timetabled time together.
- The Foundation Stage children spend a morning as a new class in Year 1 and get to meet their class teacher.
- During an open evening at Glen Hills, pupils attend with their parents and meet their new teacher.
- Some timetabling / approaches to the daily routine are introduced to the Foundation Stage pupils during the Summer Term to prepare them for the changes of moving to a new year group.

### **Monitoring and review**

- It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy.
- There are 2 named Governors responsible for the EYFS. These governors will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. They Governors are also invited into school to observe lessons, participate in school trips and watch the 4+ Christmas Productions and Class Assemblies.
- The Executive Head Teacher, Head of School and the Foundation Stage Leader will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.



Policy	<i>EYFS</i>
Reviewing Committee	<i>Curriculum Committee</i>
Last Reviewed	<i>March 2017</i>
<del>Ratified by Governing Body</del>	