

**POLICY UPDATED: December 2019**

**NEXT POLICY REVIEW: December 2020**

**REVIEW SCHEDULE: Annually or subject to immediate review in line with statutory changes**

**STAFF RESPONSIBLE: DM**

### **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage which sets the standards for learning, development, education, supervision and care for all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities has fully informed this policy.

The whole school (including EYFS) Safeguarding Policy is fully adhered to within the KN and KR classes. It is noted that this specifically stipulates the use of mobile telephones ,smart watches, any photographic imagery and intimate care procedures.

Additional whole school policies specifically relating to the EYFS are listed in Appendix 1.

The Early Years Foundation Stage at Gad’s Hill consists of the Nursery known as KN and Reception known as KR.

| <b>Contents</b>   | <b>Page</b> |
|---|-------------|
| Aims for learning, development and care in the Early Years Foundation Stage   | 2           |
| Legislation   | 2           |
| Structure of the Department   | 2-3         |
| Induction   | 3           |
| The Areas of Learning and Development   | 3-4         |
| A Unique Child (Inclusion, SEN and EAL)   | 4-5         |
| Positive Relationships (Key Person)   | 5-6         |
| Enabling Environments (Observation, Assessment and Planning, Two-Year-Old Progress check, The Learning Environment) | 6-7         |
| Learning and Development (Play, Active Learning, Creativity and Critical Thinking )                                 | 7-8         |
| Welfare (Supervision of Staff, Uncollected Child Procedure)   | 9-10        |
| Transitions   | 10          |
| Appendix 1. List of Statutory Policies and Procedures including EYFS  | 11          |



### **Aims for learning development and care in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

At Gad's Hill School we believe that the Early Years phase of a child's physical, emotional and intellectual development is critical and should build a firm basis for future learning, development and independence.

We aim to:

- Provide a happy, secure, well-ordered and stimulating environment, which considers the individual needs, interests and stage of development for each child and where each child can develop as independent individuals through interaction with sensitive adults and other children.
- To offer a balanced curriculum which extends previous learning, implemented through planned purposeful play and through a mix of child-initiated and adult-led activities, which cover the seven areas of learning as set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (March 2017).
- To ensure that children develop positive attitudes to learning, self-motivation, curiosity, confidence and responsibility.
- To provide children with first-hand learning experiences rooted in purposeful play in which they become actively engaged and express thoughts, ideas and feelings.
- To develop the whole child: socially, spiritually, emotionally, physically, and intellectually.
- To assign each child a key person to offer a settled relationship for the child, and develop and maintain a partnership with parents and other professionals who are involved with the development of the child.
- To ensure that all children irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, learning difficulties, gender or ability, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.

The Early Years staff at Gad's Hill School believe in, and are guided by these aims and principles, which are closely linked to those of the whole school.

### **Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Statutory Requirements for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017 (EYFS).

### **Structure of the Department**

The Foundation Stage Department comprises of two Nursery classes (KN) one Reception class (KR). The KN classes are in a designated building with an orchard play area and KR is within the main school building with its own outside play area.

The Nursery has two teachers, one of which is also the Early Years Manager, who works closely with the Head of Kindergarten and two teaching assistants (one of which is part-time). The Reception class has a class teacher and a teaching assistant, who is also the Forest School Leader.

|  |           |   |
|--|-----------|---|
| Early Years Manager<br>Teacher of Kingfisher Class | Mrs Mills | Children join the Kingfisher class once they have turned 3. Occasionally children join when they are rising 3 following a taster session to |
|--|-----------|---|

|                        |              |   |
|------------------------|--------------|---|
|                        |              | ascertain their readiness for the Nursery environment.  |
| Teacher of Robin Class | Mrs Edmonds  | Children join the Robin class once they have turned 3. Occasionally children join when they are rising 3 following a taster session to ascertain their readiness for the Nursery environment. |
| KR                     | Mrs Heustice | Children move into KR in the autumn term following their fourth birthday.   |

The child's class teacher will oversee their learning, development records, Learning Journey and assessment using Tapestry and Kent Tracker. They will also be first point of contact for parents to discuss any issues relating to a child.

### **Induction**

Once a child has been registered at the school, a home visit or a visit to the child's existing nursery/school will be arranged by the class teacher. During this visit the teacher will be able to meet the child in an environment in which they feel secure. Information is exchanged during this visit to ensure a smooth transition into own environment and to ensure continuity of development and learning. Following this visit the child will be invited in for an introductory session to Nursery/Reception to develop familiarity with the setting and teachers. If the child is due to start at the beginning of the Autumn Term, the child will attend an Induction day with the rest of their cohort.

### **The Areas of Learning and Development**

There are seven areas of learning and development which shape educational programmes in Early Years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and are interconnected. At Gad's Hill, we have high expectations of each child, and we ensure that the curriculum we use creates and enhances the experiences and opportunities available to the children.

The three Prime Areas for Learning are the essential foundations for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn, and to form relationships and thrive. These three Prime Areas need mastering before moving onto to the Specific Areas of Learning.

The three Prime Areas are:

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

There is strong focus on the three prime areas for youngest children in KN and as the children move through the Early Years Foundation Stage the balance will shift towards a more equal focus to include the four specific areas to become ready for school.

There are four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These specific areas are:

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

The EYFS curriculum is based upon four principles:

- A Unique child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is implemented with reference to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

### **1. A Unique Child**

The Early Years Staff at Gad's Hill set high expectations for children's attainment and progress. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates and that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We use praise, encouragement and rewards to encourage children to develop a positive, independent attitude to their learning.

#### ***Inclusion***

We do not discriminate against children because of 'differences' and value the diversity of individuals regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued equally. We give every opportunity for all children to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of each child's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

The individual 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 is considered when setting realistic and challenging expectations.

We meet these needs through:

- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which contributions from all children are valued
- Planning activities that build on and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests and develop their confidence and self-esteem
- Providing a wide range of activities and teaching strategies to motivate and support children to help them learn effectively
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- Planning challenging opportunities for all children according to their specific needs
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

### ***Special Educational Needs***

It is important that there is no delay in identifying a child with Special Educational Needs within the Early years Foundation Stage and promptly making the necessary provision. When an additional need is identified the Key Person/class teacher will initially work in partnership with the parents to establish the level of support the child requires. A graduated approach is then taken involving the Early Years Manager, Key Person, SENCO and the parents; assess, plan, do, review. (As set out in the SEND code of practice 2015). SMART targets are regularly reviewed with the child's parents.

Additional support will take place as required at times of transition. If a child with SEN moves to another setting, parental permission is sought before sharing of any information.

### ***English as an Additional Language***

At Gad's Hill we aim to ensure that all EAL children are supported to develop spoken English within the environment and begin to use the English language with confidence and competence. Teaching staff have a key role in modelling the use of language, giving additional support where needed, whilst valuing the importance of the child's home language. We actively encourage parents to share their cultural background with staff and the other children within the setting through visits and the participation in activities.

## **2. Positive Relationships**

At Gad's Hill we greatly value the strong positive relationships we build with the children in our setting and their families. We believe that it is important to work in partnerships with parents as this benefits the children's learning and development. We aim to support the parents by involving them in their child's education and the full life of the school. We do this by:

- Having an open door approach so that the parents can be kept informed or share about their young child's learning. Parents' are also kept informed of what their children are learning via the school's SIS on which weekly updates are recorded of events and learning activities that are happening. Termly newsletters are also issued by class teachers as well as by the Headmaster giving news of upcoming events and general information. Learning at home is supported in a number of ways, including wow moments which are displayed in the classrooms showing children's accomplishments, home/school reading books in KR and shared reading books in KN
- Ongoing dialogue with parents to ensure our knowledge of the needs of their children and offer support to families where needed. This knowledge is shared in person at the beginning or end of the day, or via contact books
- Informing parents on a regular basis about their child's progress through parent consultation meetings, termly progress reports and shared observations on Tapestry Learning Journal
- A Parent information evening shortly after the start of the Autumn Term to give parents an overview of the Early Years Curriculum and to answer any questions they may have
- Invitations to attend class assemblies, concerts, celebrations, sporting events and to volunteer to help on school trips

### **Key Person**

Children's emotional wellbeing is an essential foundation for health, happiness and ability to learn. Every child who attends the Gad's Hill in the Early Years Department is assigned a key person/class teacher) to act as the bridge for the child between their home and the setting. The key person will get to know the child, become attuned to their likes and dislikes, attitudes and preferences, and will provide the child with particular support at key times. They will support the child and monitor their learning, emotional and physical development. The key person will:

- Help the children settle and become familiar with the setting
- Keep records of key children's developmental progress by ongoing observations
- Plan experiences for individual children based on observations of their interests and next steps
- Communicate with parents on a daily basis in person and through contact diaries
- Communicate with colleagues and other professionals as requires
- Develop a secure and trusting relationship with the key children and their parents/carers
- Aid transition by introducing children and their parent/carers to new key person/class teacher and help them to become familiar, with their new environment and ensure that up to date records are passed on during transition
- Be responsible for the welfare of the children in their care, monitoring patterns of absence, injury and development, referring them on where necessary

### **3. Enabling Environments**

The EYFS staff at Gad's Hill set high expectations for children's attainment and progress. Teaching uses a balance of approaches and groupings, appropriate to the age and development of the children and what is being taught. In KN the focus is on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the four specific areas. As the children progress and develop, sessions are organised so that a more equal focus on all areas of learning to allow for the children to be confident and ready for Key Stage 1 at the end of KR. If at any time a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, the child's key person/class teacher in the first instance will discuss this with the child's parents/carers to agree how best to support the child. The children's own interests and experiences are valued and their learning will take these into account.

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

Plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning, however the teacher may alter these in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This will be indicated on the weekly planning. Weekly continuous provision planners are also used and Knowledge organisers in KR.

Assessment is on-going and daily observational assessment informs future planning enabling activities to be planned to meet the needs of all the children. Observations are collected electronically using 'Tapestry' software and handwritten. These are used to record and build a profile showing the Learning and Development of each child and the next steps required. Parents are urged to share home experiences and add to their child's Learning Journal on Tapestry, or by completing a 'wow moment' slip.

During the first term of joining KN an initial assessment takes place to form a baseline. All children are assessed termly against the Early Years Outcomes and placed on a class tracker. This data is

shared and discussed at a half termly at an assessment meeting attended by EYFS teachers, EYFS Manager and Head of the Kindergarten. Parents receive an assessment report 3 times a year and have the opportunity to meet with the class Teacher/key person to discuss the progress made and next steps. At the end of KN the completed tracker showing children's levels are passed to KR as a baseline for KR. At the end of KR an internal moderation takes place with KR teaching staff, Early Years Manager and Head of Kindergarten. External moderation also takes place for quality assurance of EYFS Profile Data.

### ***Two-Year-Old Progress Check***

Two-year-old checks are completed on any child starting with us before their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. We review their progress and provide parents with a short written summary of their child's development. This check highlights the child's strengths and any areas of concern that may have been identified. The Early Years SENCO is available to give support if necessary.

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

The EYFS classrooms are set up to allow children to become independent learners. They are organised to allow children to explore and locate equipment and resources, and learn in a secure and safe environment. KN has its own outside Orchard area in which KR come and share once a week. KR has its own designated outside area attached to the classroom. The school also has its own Forest School and all Early Years classes attend a Forest School session weekly. The outside areas offer different opportunities for children explore and discover. Activities in the outside area are planned to further enhance their development in all Prime and Specific areas of learning. On-going observational assessment takes place as children learn through their child-initiated play and during teacher led activities.

## **4. Learning and Development**

At Gad's Hill we value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are all interconnected. We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different times.

Learning and development in KN and KR takes place through a wide range of adult-directed and child-initiated activities. Learning through play and first hand practical experiences provide the children with the opportunity to develop in all seven areas.

In the Nursery classes the majority of the day is timetabled as being Topic/theme/child initiated with free-flow between the two classrooms and the outside area. This enables the children to choose and move freely between adult directed and child initiated activities. The children gather together for: phonics sessions (Read,Write inc and Letters and Sounds, when children are developmentally ready) circle times, story times, Movement and Dance and in the summer term PE.

In KR (Reception) lessons are timetabled – Literacy and Maths (referred to as Phonics/Handwriting/Writing and Maths) occur mainly in the mornings. However, these lessons are adjusted on a daily basis to take into account the needs and interests of the class as a whole and of individuals. Lessons aim to be as practical and multisensory as possible with

a range of play based activities involved within them. Learning through play and other child-initiated experiences forms a valuable and necessary part of the children's day in Reception. During the afternoons the children have longer periods of free play/ child-initiated activity time and are able to freely access resources in the classroom or in the outside EYFS gardens. Despite a more structured approach in Reception – purposeful play/child-initiated activities are valued and regarded as being important and a valuable part of the children's learning and development. They provide a time in which the children can experiment freely, put their learning into practice, develop their ability to share, take turns, plan, negotiate and communicate their thoughts and ideas with others.

ICT is incorporated into all areas of learning and daily life. The children in KN and KR have access to, and take turns to use iPads and IWB's. In KR most lessons involve the IWB for whole class, small group or individual work and the children often choose to use the IWB during their Child- Initiated times.

The Read, Write Inc programme is started in KR and followed through into KS1. Read,Write inc phonics sessions are used in KN when appropriate.

All children in the Foundation Stage have access to a wide range of play based resources/activities designed to encourage them to develop mathematical awareness and understanding.

### ***Play***

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, these in turn help them to make sense of the world. They build up and expand ideas that they experience both outside and within the setting. They learn how to control themselves and understand the boundaries expected and the need for rules. They have the opportunity to communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems, as well as to think creatively alongside others and on their own.

### ***Active Learning***

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

### ***Creativity and Critical Thinking***

Opportunities are given for children to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through art activities. Support by adults can help them to make connections. This is done by the adults showing genuine interest in children's thinking, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move around the classroom to extend their learning.

### ***Welfare (see whole school Safeguarding Policy)***

All staff work together for the welfare of all the children. We aim to educate the children on boundaries, rules and limits to help keep them safe. Children are given opportunities to make choices to enable them to develop this important life skill. Children are allowed to take risks, but are taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-

being of all the children and the children regularly take part in well-being days. The specifically named member of staff for Safeguarding and Behaviour Management in the EYFS is Mrs Debbie Mills (see whole school safeguarding policy). Ms Christie Godding (Medical and Welfare Manager) has the responsibility for medical administration of any medicines and the care of the children when unwell.

We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as set out in the 'EYFS Framework 2017'. We are required to:

- Promote good health, adequately respond to children who are ill or infectious and take steps to prevent the spread of infection
- Provide snacks and drinks that are healthy, balanced and nutritious and keep accurate records for any child that has any special dietary requirements or food allergies
- Manage behaviour in an appropriate way for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so and the relevant staff to child ratios are adhered to
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for the age of the children and the activities provided
- Ensure that every child has their needs met by providing enjoyable, challenging experiences for their learning and development
- Maintain accurate records, policies and procedures for the safe efficient management of the setting to meet the needs of the children
- Provide a regular two-way flow of information with parents/carers and between providers if a child is attending more than one setting

### ***Supervision of Staff***

In accordance with the revised Statutory Requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage (March 2017) regular supervision of staff who have contact with EYFS children and families takes place. The EYFS Manager and Head of Kindergarten ensures that a supervisory schedule is adhered to in line with Kent County Council guidelines.

### ***Uncollected Child Procedure***

Should a child not be collected at their appointed time a member of the staff will endeavour to contact the parent/carer using the contact information file found inside the Head of Kindergarten office/ KN Manager Office. Under no circumstances will any child be released to an alternative adult without consent from the parent.

Should contact be made and information obtained that ensures the child will be collected shortly, then arrangements will be made by the person in charge for the child to attend the After School club. Such over hours are chargeable.

In the very unlikely event that no contact is made with a parent/carer then, 30 minutes after the time the child should have been collected, the Form Tutor/ After School Leader will first attempt to contact any other person whose name appears on the emergency list.

The Children Acts of various dates agree prime objective should be that 'welfare of the child is paramount'. To fulfil this prime objective Gad's Hill will provide care of the child for as long as is

reasonably practicable. Should the Head of Kindergarten/DSL believe that it is in the child's best interests for their care to be passed to the care of social services, and then under this procedure they reserve the right to do so. Should this ever occur, then all procedures in the Child Protection Policy in the main body of policies will be adhered to.

### **Transitions**

The KR teacher regularly visits KN and therefore the children are already familiar with their new teacher. During the Summer Term the children spend a morning each week in their new class to familiarise themselves with their new surroundings and learn a little of their new routine in the KR class. Initially members of KN staff accompany the children to ensure a smooth transition KR also take part in these transition sessions by going into their new K1 class.

A transition/induction day takes place towards the end of the Summer Term where children move into their new classrooms for the whole day. For children entering the setting for the first time, teachers visit the child in their own setting/home to discuss the child's needs, abilities and interests. The children then attend the transition/induction day with their cohort.

Prior to the end of term a transition meeting takes place between class teachers in which information with regard to the children's Learning and Development, medical and dietary needs and any other relevant information is exchanged. Assessment information and next steps are also passed on to the next class teacher. For any child that is moving to another setting parental permission is gained before passing on the relevant information.

During the final term in KR, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The profile provides parents/carers and staff with a well-rounded picture of their abilities, knowledge, understanding and shows their progress against expected levels and their readiness for Year 1.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals and indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels. A copy of the Profile is given to the Year 1 teacher with a short commentary on the child's skills and abilities taking into consideration the characteristics of effective learning. This informs planning of activities in Year 1.

**Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures including the EYFS**

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| <b>Admissions Procedures</b>                           |
| <b>Anti-Bullying</b>                                   |
| <b>Behaviour Management</b>                            |
| <b>Health and Safety</b>                               |
| <b>Medical Treatments and First Aid</b>                |
| <b>Parental Complaints Procedures</b>                  |
| <b>Safeguarding Policy</b>                             |
| <b>School out of Hours Policy</b>                      |
| <b>School Visits Policy and Procedures</b>             |
| <b>Whole School Mission, Visions, Values and Ethos</b> |