



Enabling Excellence for Exceptional Futures

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Policy owner:	Gemma Jackson- Head Teacher
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Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Green Park Village Primary Academy, children are able to join the Nursery classes (when this opens) from September in the academic year they turn three and the Reception class from September in the academic year that they turn five.

In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

We endeavour to ensure that children learn and develop well and keep healthy and safe. We aim to support children in their learning through teaching and experiences that gives children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life.

The Four Themes

The principles which guide the work of all Early Years' practitioners are grouped into four themes:

- **A Unique Child** - every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** – children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.
- **Enabling Environments** – the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.
- **Learning and Development** – children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

These four guiding themes work together to underpin effective practice in the delivery of the EYFS and lie at the heart of all Early Years Foundation Stage provision.

A Unique Child

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 and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

All children and their families are valued at Green Park Village Primary Academy. Children are treated as individuals and have appropriate access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage.

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.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in our academy are '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 this important life skill. 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 our children. 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 Green Park Village Primary Academy we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years 2017. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding 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
- 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
- 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.

Supervision

In line with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage we operate minimum adult:pupil ratios within our EYFS setting. These are as follows:

Within the nursery

For children aged 2:

- at least one member of staff to every four children
- at least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification
- at least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification

For children aged 3:

- a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children
- there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children
- at least one other member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification

During times when the member of staff without a suitable level 6 is not present:

- there must be at least one member of staff for every eight children
- at least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification
- at least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification

For children in our Reception classes

i.e. where the majority of the children will reach the age of five or older within the school year:

- there must be at least one member of staff for every 30 children and that member of staff must hold Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another suitable level 6 qualification
- in addition to this, it is our usual practice to also have an additional member of staff who holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification

Positive Relationships

At Green Park Village Primary Academy we recognise that children learn to be strong and 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 the children.

We do this through:

- An information/induction session for parents where they receive the Information packs and school information which highlights school start and finish times, uniform and informs the parents of the schools vision and aims.
- An opportunity to talk to the Early Years team and representatives from other areas of school life, e.g. PTA, Governors and the After School Club.
- Asking parents to complete an admissions form, a medical form.
- Asking parents to sign permission slips for visits out of school, photographs of their child for assessment purposes and using the internet at school.
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher if there are concerns.
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings providing information about other areas of the curriculum, e.g. Early Reading, Maths and Phonics.
- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school, usually through Home Visits.
- Ensuring children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transfer sessions.
- There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Organising a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents / carers: Open afternoons, Class assemblies, Sports Day etc.;
- Inviting parents / carers to make comments relating to the children's achievements.

- Written contact through reading diaries as well as the acknowledgement that parents can telephone school to contact staff or the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team
- The children have the opportunity to spend time in their new setting before starting school during ‘preschool visit sessions’ held throughout the year and transfer morning/afternoon;
- Offering parents / carers regular opportunities to talk about their child’s progress in our Early Years classes and allowing free access to the children’s ‘Learning journals’ online and classroom displays;
- Parents / carers are along with any other relevant messages/information, curriculum guidance booklets relating to the half-termly topic, invitations to help or to join the afternoon sessions as an observer.

All staff aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school, every child has a Key Worker, in keeping with the requirements of the statutory framework for EYFS 2017. We are developing good links with local Preschools and settings. Where possible, visits are undertaken by the Early Years teachers and practitioners. Staff from Preschools and settings are welcome at Green Park Village Primary Academy to observe practice to support transition.

Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children’s interest. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children’s individual Learning Journals. Play-based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

All areas of learning are accessible each day, all day within the Early Years classrooms.

Learning and Development

Teachers and Early Years Practitioners provide the curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes. There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are “prime areas,” and four “specific areas.”

The three **Prime** areas are:

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

The four **Specific** areas are:

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

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children’s development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child’s progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child’s parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. Planning and guided children’s activities will reflect the different ways that children learn

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

We support children by using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The characteristics of effective learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes.

Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

Religious Education and PSHE is also taught in the Reception classes following national and school-based guidelines.

Importance of play

Through play our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and 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.

We recognise the importance of children's play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

The EYFS setting at Green Park Village Primary Academy provides both structured and unstructured play opportunities inside and outside. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experiences which will support children to discover, explore, investigate, develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity, and help to make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. Play opportunities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding.

In providing these active learning opportunities through play we understand the central position of play within the EYFS framework.

Objective-led planning/adult directed

The Green Park Village Primary Academy uses objective-led planning in order to provide specific learning opportunities and assessment opportunities for individual pupils. For example, there may be a focus on counting one more or one less as part of the mathematical development during a given week. The teacher or Early Years Practitioner will seek out a child or group of children as part of their Child Initiated Learning (CIL) and work alongside them doing whatever it is they are doing, in order to bring counting one more or less into their learning. This ensures that children relate their learning in a context, and is led by their own interests. It is the skill of the Early Years team to provide and enhance the environment to enable each child to make good or better progress.

As children in Reception prepare for their transition to Year One in the summer term, there will be more focussed adult-directed learning opportunities where children are withdrawn within small groups to replicate the type of learning that the children will need to be familiar with in September.

Observation

Children within the Early Years are regularly assessed and observed to ensure that practitioners capture each child's progress and learning. Typically, observations are carried out during CIL activities, so that children are in an independent environment which best demonstrates what they have learned.

Each child will be part of objective-led planning (at least twice a week in Reception), and children will also be observed and assessed; this will be in addition to any focussed observations taking place.

Reading

In Reception classes, each child will be heard individually each week by an adult (on a rota where one week is the Class Teacher, and the other week is the LSA). As children become more fluent and able readers and when they are developmentally ready, guided reading groups will be formed whereby a teacher will take a group of readers together and work with them specifically. This will be on a rota with individual reading opportunities, led by a LSA.

Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Health and Safety

At Green Park Village Primary Academy there are clear procedures for assessing risk which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment.

In line with the Early Years statutory framework 2017, at Green Park Village Primary Academy we undertake:

- A whole school supporting children with medical needs policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines will not be administered unless there are exceptional circumstances, and then only if prescribed. (See Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy) Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer. A written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and the child's parents and/or carers are informed on the same day.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required.
- Milk and fruit are available during the session.
- Paediatric first aiders are accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept.
- We practice our fire and emergency evacuation procedures
- Our Online Safety policy states how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for personal use by staff or visitors.

The Learning Environment

The Early Years classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active or take things more quietly. The classroom covers all learning areas, where children can find and located equipment and resources independently. The Early Years has its own large 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 offers the children the ability to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

Transition from Pre-school settings

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception class, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition into Green Park Village Primary Academy:

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures any raise any concerns they may want to express.
- Children are invited to visit their Reception class (where possible).
- Members of staff make visits to feeder settings. The number of meetings/visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.

Home Visits are carried out where parents and children can feel at ease in their own home and are able chat to practitioners in a less formal way.