



Glendower Preparatory School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

2024 - 2025

Reviewed: May 2024
Next Review: May 2025

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Glendower Prep School has qualified for exemption from the learning and development requirements of the 2012 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children aged 3 and over.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they turn five.

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2023

Early Years Philosophy

At Glendower we understand the importance of the early years of a girl’s life and the impact it has on their development. We appreciate the need for skilled early years practitioners whose understanding of this key developmental stage ensures that the right environment is create to maximise the learning of all the girls. We place significant emphasis on differentiating learning to ensure that each girl’s learning journey is individually tailored to them. This approach, when combined with class sizes of no more than 18, ensures that all girls achieve their potential as they move through the EYFS stage. The approach is underpinned by the idea that:

“If children don’t learn the way you teach, perhaps you should teach the way they learn”
Ignacio Estrada 1981

We are aware that children learn in different ways and so we support that with a multi faceted approach including visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles. It is also important that the girls at Glendower are given opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning, to assess their achievements and look for ways to develop their learning. This starts in our Reception Classes and continues throughout the school.

The Principles of Early Childhood Education:

The EYFS is based upon four principles which shape our practice in early years settings. These are:

- A Unique Child
A child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Positive Relationships
Children should learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- Enabling Environments
Children learn best in environments where there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and/or carers.
- Learning and Development
Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. The environment includes all children including those with Special Educational needs and disabilities.

A Unique Child

At Glendower Prep 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.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Glendower Prep School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. 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 all our pupils, girls with special educational needs, girls who are more able, girls with disabilities, girls from all social and cultural backgrounds, girls of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our girls 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

It is important to us that all children in the school 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 children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)

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 Glendower Prep 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 2023. 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
- 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

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

At Glendower Prep School we recognise that children learn to be independent and form 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:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the summer term before their child starts school as well as a further meeting early in the autumn term
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Reception classes encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. 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 report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the autumn and summer terms

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. At our school the EYFS teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all the girls within her class, supported by the Teaching Assistant.

Enabling Environments

At Glendower Prep 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.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The Planning within the EYFS follows the school's Long Term Plan and Medium Term Plans (MTPs), which are based around half termly topics. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning, however the teacher may alter these MTPs in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate.

At the end of the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents covering all areas of the curriculum.

Individual Learning Records

Each pupil has an individual Learning Record which is designed to capture their personal learning journey, display their development and provide evidence of their progress. Parents are invited to contribute to these either on an ad hoc basis or when they attend Open Afternoons which are held at the end of each academic term. These records are currently generated and updated using the SeeSaw learning Platform.

In addition to this physical documentation of individual progress is kept through the completion of worksheets and creative artwork.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom 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 classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS does not have its own outside area, nor does it have direct access to one. However, there is a secure balcony area and both classes make full use of the local communal gardens. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

Food and Allergies

Girls bring in snacks to have each morning before break. These snacks may only consist of fruit or vegetables (fresh). They are offered the choice of water or milk to drink. Birthday cakes are distributed on birthdays but all girls with allergies or intolerances may instead choose from a treat that has been previously sent in by their parents.

All girls receive a hot meal each lunchtime (choice of meat/vegetarian or jacket potato) and all allergies/intolerances are catered for. In addition we are aware of any dietary requirements based on religious observances.

The school is strictly nut free and any food brought into school must not contain nuts or traces of nuts.

Learning and Development

At Glendower Prep 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

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 2. Features 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 EYFS
- 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 (if possible)
- 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

Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.

Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2023

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 concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements”

Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2023

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 satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

“Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.”

Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2023

Children should be given the 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 them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS at Glendower is made up of 7 areas of learning:

Prime areas of Learning:

- **Communication and Language**

(Underpins all seven areas of learning and development)

- **Physical Development**

(Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives)

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

(Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development.)

Specific areas of learning:

- **Literacy**

(It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading.)

- **Mathematics**

(Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically.)

- **Understanding the World**

(Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community.)

- **Expressive arts and design**

(The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity.)

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 Learning Objectives that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. Evidence is collected for each subject area and referenced accordingly.

The delivery of the curriculum is underpinned by our 6Rs – a set of learning behaviours which help the girls to develop the kind of attitude and approach to learning which ensures they are able to make the best possible progress both in EYFS and beyond.

Responsibility Pooh Bear

Resourcefulness Piglet

Resilience Tigger

Reflectiveness Owl

Readiness Rabbit

Relationships Roo

Assessment process

Girls wishing to join Reception are assessed in the January of the year in which they intend to start in the autumn term. Girls take part in the 4+ assessments in groups of 5-6 for a 40-minute session with a number of EYFS and Pre-prep School staff. Following the assessment, offers are sent out and all spaces are filled by the deadline which is two weeks later. An assessment is not required to gain entry to the Nursery classes.

Behaviour Management

At Glendower Prep School we believe that children's behaviour must be managed effectively and in a manner appropriate for the child's stage of development and particular individual needs. Most behaviour is easily managed within the class by the EYFS team. However, the Head of EYFS is also available should the need arise and is the named person for behaviour management. All staff in school have the same views and attitudes towards behaviour. We follow the Glendower Guide to Good Behaviour and our five Golden Rules, that were developed in consultation with the children, to remind each other of our rights and responsibilities.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies which provide specific information on other areas of the school and EYFS:

- All school policies relating to Safeguarding
- The Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid and Administration of Medicines Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Late Pupil Collection Policy
- Missing Child Policy
- Educational Visits Policy EYFS
- Playground Supervision Policy

MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy.

The Headmistress and Head of EYFS will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The policy will be reviewed again in November 2024

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(Head of EYFS and Nursery)

