



GUILDFORD HIGH SCHOOL

5-18 EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

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This document is a statement of the aims, principles, strategies, and intentions in the teaching and learning of our Early Years Foundation Stage children at Guildford High Junior School and is a working document. It is reviewed on a regular basis.

This policy has clear links to the GHS Mission Statement, Values and Vision.

THE SCHOOL AIMS

Our mission at Guildford High School is to provide a first-class education for academically able girls in a community where every member will be treated with dignity and respect and their contribution valued.

Our vision is to provide an atmosphere and surroundings in which individuals can:

- be happy
- be positive about their own gifts and abilities
- maximise their potential
- think and learn creatively and collaboratively
- develop intellectual curiosity and a love of learning
- develop the confidence to take appropriate risks
- develop the resilience to cope with adversity
- become responsible citizens

THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE AT GUILDFORD HIGH SCHOOL

Every pupil in Reception at Guildford High School is entitled to provision which:

- Supports and extends their knowledge and understanding.
- Encourages the formation of new skills.
- Provides opportunities to build confidence in all areas of their development.

“All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.” *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*, Department for Education (2024:p7)

The Early Years Foundation Stage is an educational programme that is for children from birth to the age of five. The final year of the EYFS is referred to as Reception. All children begin school with a variety of experiences and having encountered different learning opportunities. At GHS, it is the work of the Reception team to build upon these experiences so that they can encourage, support, and extend future learning and development. This is achieved by drawing on the expertise and experience of the teaching, teaching assistants and support staff within the Early Years Team in addition to working closely with parents and liaising with previous nurseries and schools attended prior to starting at GHS.

AIMS

Our philosophy is that a successful EYFS setting is one which provides a caring, supportive, welcoming and stimulating environment in which girls feel safe, secure and happy. We aim to provide an education that we believe will enable girls to grow and mature across all areas of their development. As a result, we believe that our pupils will become independent and confident individuals who will foster a love for learning.

We encourage the girls to build friendships and relationships with their peer group, older pupils, and adults, developing good manners and courtesy towards others. They learn to become aware and sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and discover that they have a part to play in the school community.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

We recognise that parents/guardians are the child’s first and most enduring educators. When parents/guardians and practitioners work together, the results have a positive impact on the child’s development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise. As such, we value a strong relationship and liaison between parents and school.

Parents are invited to the Reception Information Evening in September. This is an opportunity for the Reception team to provide an academic and pastoral overview of the EYFS setting and add context to the transition from their child’s pre-school education/learning and how ongoing assessment leads to completion of the EYFS Profile at the end of their first academic year at GHS.

Parents are sent a weekly newsletter, Junior News, to keep them informed of school events and news. All information relevant to the year group is sent out weekly by email via our SchoolPost system, in addition there is more specific information sent home weekly via the Reading Record. The Reading Record also allows parents to communicate regularly with their Form Teacher. Parents are also informed regularly on pastoral and social matters through verbal contact on a daily/weekly basis when required.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Our stimulating learning environment provides pupils with a wealth of experiences both indoors and outdoors. We make the setting a place where children feel secure and confident, providing opportunities for the girls to investigate, explore and develop their creativity and independence.

The Reception classrooms have an adjoining door, and we aim to provide varied activities across both rooms as much as possible. Each classroom is divided into a variety of different areas: Reading, Writing, Maths, Craft, Construction and Role Play. These are carefully arranged to distinguish between quiet and more active areas within the learning environment. Additional resources are organised and labelled clearly and available for pupils to access independently. The girls are encouraged to care for their environment and the resources within it.

The girls have opportunities to choose their activities each day and Creative Play on Friday afternoons allows pupils to explore their own interests for an extended period of time. The girls have access to the following resources:

- Dressing up clothes including multi-cultural costumes, household objects, kitchen utensils, investigative tools, story characters
- Construction items such as Lego, Stickle Bricks, magnet tiles and wooden blocks
- Jigsaw puzzles and games, such as threading, peg boards and Tap Tap
- Sensory opportunities including sand and playdough, torches, fabrics
- Arts and crafts
- Outside play equipment

The resources have been selected carefully to encourage imaginative play and creativity, the development of fine and gross motor skills, problem solving and exploration, alongside interpersonal skills such as cooperation and sharing.

The outdoor learning environment is safe and secure with a small garden that pupils maintain themselves, a bug hotel, a climbing wall, Trapeze handles, rope walk, mud kitchen, sand pit, doodle boards, Teepee, wooden construction blocks and tyres, as well as sheds with a reading area, maths area, writing area and sand and water equipment.

Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to pursue their own lines of enquiry and investigation, through carefully planned out objectives created by the teachers.

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

At Guildford High School we understand the importance of play-based learning and provide a wide variety of opportunities inside and outside the classroom. The girls learn through first-hand experience to experiment, explore, investigate, solve problems, role-play, interact with others and cooperate in different group situations.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Our Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum follows closely the educational principles set out in the “*Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*”, *Department for Education 2024* document in addition to the school curriculum. By combining the two programmes we can ensure that we cater for all children’s needs, experiences, and stages of development and general abilities.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is organised into seven main areas of learning which are inter-connected. There are three *prime* areas that are crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These *prime* areas are:

COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

Development involves providing children with a rich language environment to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves, ask questions, to speak and listen in a range of situations and support their understanding.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities are provided for the children to be active and interactive, developing their co-ordination, control and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to understand the importance of making healthy choices.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Involves supporting children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; forming positive relationships and respect for others; developing social skills and learning how to manage their feelings; understanding appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Children are then supported in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The *specific* areas are:

LITERACY

Development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children should have access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

MATHEMATICS

Skills are developed and improved in counting, understanding and using numbers and applying simple mathematical concepts to everyday problem solving. In shape, space and measure, children are taught how to describe and compare shapes, length, weight, position, distance and capacity, as well as develop an understanding of time, money and sequencing.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

Supports children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore and find out about themselves, people, places, technology and the environment. Children are encouraged to ask questions, be curious and learn from each other. In particular, children will be encouraged to understand similarities and differences between their own experiences and other’s.

EXPRESSIVE ARTS AND DESIGN

Children are given the opportunity to explore a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in Art, Music, Dance and Creative Play.

During Reception, pupils will also develop the Characteristics of Effective Learning. These characteristics underpin learning and development across all areas and support children's engagement with other people and their environment. These are broken down into the following:

- Playing and exploring – Engagement
- Active learning – Motivation
- Creating and Thinking Critically – Thinking

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum Practice Guidance suggests indicators that identify developing knowledge, skills, understanding, attitudes and processes that the children are moving through as they develop and learn. Each child's ability and competency are assessed formatively as they progress through these different stages. The statutory **Early Learning Goals** establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Reception year.

The principles which underpin the work of the Reception Team are grouped into four overarching principles as stated in the "*Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*" page 7

A Unique Child - this recognises that every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive Relationships - this describes how children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.

Enabling Environments - this explains that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. A strong relationship between practitioners and parents is key.

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 interconnected.

Our Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum supports the five outcomes for **Every Child Matters**.

TEACHING

In Reception, lessons are appropriately balanced between teacher-led and child-initiated activities, recognising the importance of learning through play. Pupils have opportunities to work as a whole class, whole year, in groups, pairs and independently.

The Curriculum areas are aligned to the 7 areas of learning within the EYFS and taught through the following subjects:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (Form time, Beehive (PSHE)).
- Communication and Language (Literacy & Phonics).
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World (Computing, Humanities, Science).

- Physical Development (Physical Education)
- Expressive Arts and Design (Art and Design, Creative Play, Expressive Arts and Music).

The aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage are followed and extended in daily teaching and planning to ensure that the girls will become happy and independent individuals who are able to face challenges with enthusiasm and confidence. We also provide a balanced and creative curriculum that encourages the girls to reach their full potential in terms of their personal, social, emotional, physical, moral, spiritual and intellectual development in preparation for Pre-Prep.

Planning takes place at three levels with long-term, medium-term and short-term planning. The planning focuses on specific storybooks introduced at the start of every half term. Topics and themes are incorporated to complement the storybooks. The medium-term planning gives detailed schemes of work for each half term providing an overview of each week's activities across all subject areas, whilst allowing for flexibility to pursue and develop the pupils' own interests, lines of enquiry and needs. The short-term planning consists of daily activities and lessons. It also details which specific EYFS areas will be developed, targeting individual children for observation and assessment and any key vocabulary and terminology to be introduced. Topics include:

Michaelmas 1	Michaelmas 2	Lent 1	Lent 2	Trinity 1	Trinity 2
<i>Starting School</i> <i>The Gruffalo</i> <i>A Squash and a Squeeze</i> <i>Alice in Wonderland</i> <i>We're Going on a Bear Hunt</i>	<i>Books about different Celebrations</i> <i>The Scarecrow's Wedding</i> <i>The Christmas Story</i> <i>* The Button Lady</i>	<i>Non-Fiction books about people who help us</i> <i>* Little City</i>	<i>Here We Are</i> <i>The Enormous Crocodile</i> <i>Rumble in the Jungle</i> <i>Commotion in the Ocean</i> <i>Snail & the Whale</i>	<i>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</i> <i>Frog on a Log</i> <i>The Frog Prince</i> <i>The Ugly Duckling</i> <i>* Bocketts Farm</i>	<i>Various Traditional Tales</i> <i>* The Button Lady</i>
<u>Understanding the World</u> All About Me	<u>Understanding the World</u> Celebrations	<u>Understanding the World</u> People Who Help Us	<u>Understanding the World</u> Around the World	<u>Understanding the World</u> Life Cycles	<u>Understanding the World</u> Past, Present & Future
<u>Science</u> Ourselves, Materials, the Outside, Healthy Eating	<u>Science</u> Weather, Day and Night, Melting, Winter	<u>Science</u> Movement, Floating and Sinking	<u>Science</u> Comparing Habitats	<u>Science</u> Life cycles, growing butterflies, Growing plants	<u>Science</u> Animals, where does food come from, Weather, Summer
<u>Computer Science</u> How to use technology around the classroom	<u>Computer Science</u> How to use technology around the classroom	<u>Computer Science</u> How to stay safe on the Internet	<u>Computer Science</u> How to stay safe on the Internet	<u>Computer Science</u> ICT in the environment, iPads within lessons	<u>Computer Science</u> ICT in the environment, iPads within lessons
<u>Physical Dev.</u>	<u>Physical Dev.</u>	<u>Physical Dev.</u>	<u>Physical Dev.</u>	<u>Physical Dev.</u>	<u>Physical Dev.</u>

Dance, Games, Gymnastics, fine motor skills	Dance, Games, Gymnastics, fine motor skills	Dance, Games, Gymnastics	Dance, Games, Gymnastics	Athletics, Mini Tennis	Athletics, Mini Tennis
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* Indicates enrichment opportunities (i.e. trips/visits/workshops)

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

At GHS we undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning and then make informed decisions about their progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

Formative assessment informs everyday planning and is based on daily observations of each child's achievements, interests, and learning styles. It may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations recorded on group assessment sheets, baseline assessment, annotated examples of work, photographs, and information from parents. We plan for observational assessment when undertaking short-term planning which also enables us to evaluate, review and improve our own practice.

We monitor and assess the girls' progress and achievements, setting targets for next steps that are appropriate for their individual learning journeys these are discussed with the girls individually. By target setting with the girls on an individual basis we enable them to have ownership over their learning, gaining a sense of achievement as they see the progress that they have made.

Parents' Evenings are held in the Michaelmas and Lent Terms where teachers share information about pupil's progress, achievements and targets. Record cards are issued at the end of the Michaelmas and Lent Terms and a summative report is sent at the end of the Trinity Term. Achievement against the Early Learning Goals, as well as skills and abilities in relation to the three Characteristics of Effective Learning are reported to parents in the Trinity Term.

Parents can request to discuss their daughter's Learning Journey at any time. Parents are invited to contribute and engage with their daughter's Learning Journey by sharing achievements at home using 'Tapestry'. We hold a Tapestry Information workshop in the Michaelmas Term for parents to understand the platform and how it is utilised by the school to record progress against the Early Learning Goals.

If a girls' progress in any of the prime areas of learning gives cause for concern, their class teacher will discuss this with their parents/or carers and agree how to best support their daughter. The class teacher must consider with the school SENDCo if a pupil may have a special educational need or disability which requires school level intervention or external specialist support (if appropriate).

Girls' achievements are rewarded with effort stickers and House points which follow the House point system throughout the Junior School. A WOW work certificate will be awarded by a member of staff where they have identified positive learning behaviours within a lesson/piece of work (achievement, effort or participation). This is celebrated within the weekly whole school Celebration Assembly.

STAFFING AND ORGANISATION

Reception has two parallel forms each with a Form Teacher and a Teaching Assistant. The Form Teacher is responsible for most areas of the curriculum with the girls receiving specialist teaching in class Music, Art, PE and French.

The Reception Team meet daily to share ideas and good practice and to ensure all requirements of the EYFS are covered effectively. The teachers have a weekly planning meeting ready for the following week to ensure continuity and progression. This also provides an opportunity to discuss individual pupils, observations and assessments. In planning, preparation, recording and assessment, Teachers and Teaching Assistants work as a team. The Reception Team attend local Early Years cluster group meetings to keep abreast of all new initiatives and to participate in training and share best practice.

CLASS TEACHER

The Class Teacher is responsible for developing a special relationship with their pupils, responding sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour and planning for their individual needs. The Class Teacher will ensure that every child feels safe and cared for at all times and will also build a strong relationship with the child's parents. Every Class Teacher has a Teaching Assistant so that if they are away there is a trusted person who knows the child well in addition to the qualified supply teacher.

TRANSITION AND INDUCTION

Guildford High School is proud of its 'Explorers' outreach programme which offers local families with pre-school aged children the opportunity to visit the school four times a year.

We understand that times of transition can be difficult and sometimes stressful for young children and their parents, therefore, planning for this is a priority. We aim to ensure that all girls feel safe, secure and happy in their educational setting and we work very hard to guide and ease the transition from nursery/home to a Reception classroom environment. We have good links with a wide number of local nurseries and feeder schools and are extremely proud of our strong liaison and relationships that we have established.

We facilitate the settling in process by offering several opportunities for the girls and parents to meet the staff and become familiar with their new environment prior to starting in September. Our Head of Pre Prep will visit each of the girls' nurseries, where possible, to meet them and their nursery teacher to learn more about the girls. Where this is not possible, a phone call will be made to the nursery teacher. Towards the end of the Trinity Term the girls are invited into school for the New Girls' Afternoon to meet their teacher, new classmates, and their Year 6 shadow. The girls are also given a 'Welcome to...' booklet with pictures of their teachers, different areas of the school and classroom to share at home and in nursery to help familiarise themselves with Guildford High School. Parents are invited to an Information Evening in September.

LIAISON BETWEEN RECEPTION AND PRE-PREP

The Reception Team, Pre-Prep team, and the Head of Pre-Prep work closely together to discuss planning, progression, assessment and induction issues, and attend training together. Liaison between the Reception and Pre-Prep is extremely important to ensure all records and personal knowledge of an individual child is passed on.

In preparation for the move to Year 1 the Reception teachers plan for the following in the Trinity Term:

- joining with Pre-Prep for playtimes in the second half of the Michaelmas Term
- joining Years 1 and 2 for the Sports Day
- joining Years 1 and 2 for Activities Morning in “Houses”
- joining Pre-Prep and KS2 for a ‘House’ meeting
- transition meetings with the Year 1 teachers to discuss each individual child
- joining with Years 1 and 2 for the Christmas production and fund-raising activities like the Fun Run, World Book Day etc.

At the end of the Trinity Term when the new class lists have been announced, pupils meet their new teachers and visit their Year 1 classroom on New Girls’ Afternoon. There is also an opportunity for parents to meet informally with the Year 1 teachers.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

At Guildford High School, pupil welfare and safety is of prime importance and children are supervised at all times within the EYFS setting. Duty lists and teaching timetables ensure that there are at least two members of staff with each class or group.

The general indoors and outdoors security in place complies, with all doors and gates being locked appropriately, with padlocks used where necessary. Security is enhanced by CCTV, security alarms, and intercom systems. Staff are made aware when there will be visitors in the building and on the premises. Visitors on site, sign in and wear name badges.

There are a number of policies in place to ensure the health and safety of the children to which the Reception staff team adhere. These include Child Protection, Safe Collection and Failure to collect by Parent/carer, Missing Pupils and Safety on Educational Visits when taking children off site.

The condition of materials and equipment is checked regularly with Risk Assessments in place. Special care is taken by staff when setting up, moving and managing resources and the children are taught the importance of using equipment correctly and safely and the need to be aware of others around them to ensure their safety too.

All electrical resources are checked annually.

The staff in the Reception Classes have attended Paediatric First Aid Training.

Further information regarding the EYFS is available at www.gov.uk.

Approved by member of local governing body: **Zip Jila (EYFS Governor)** Date: **24 June 2025**

Next Review Date: **June 2026**