



Grandpont
Nursery School & Childcare

Teaching and Learning Policy

Date agreed and ratified by Governing Body: 8th Oct 2021

At Grandpont we believe that high quality teaching enables young children to become life-long learners who can reach their full potential. Our vision is to provide outstanding early years care and education that supports children to develop independence, confidence, curiosity, resilience and well-developed social skills.

This policy details the strategies and principles used at Grandpont to promote effective teaching and learning.

Teaching and Learning

Grandpont has a long and distinguished history teaching young children in the Oxfordshire area. Throughout this time, we have developed a strong understanding of how children learn and understand the vital role of learning through play.

We know children learn by being active; by constructing, exploring, experimenting, and feeling. Children require opportunities, space, and time to repeat, practise and consolidate what has been learnt. Children build their learning on what they can already do and explore further what is familiar to them. They work on things that interest them, learning from first-hand experience in real-life situations.

At Grandpont we know each child's rate of development and learning is varied and individual. This means there is a need for breadth of experiences rather than a narrow restrictive programme.

The Early Years Foundation Stage framework

The Early Years Foundation Stage framework (EYFS) is the compulsory framework the all registered early years settings must follow. It applies to the care and education of children from 0-5 years of age.

The EYFS describes the Characteristics of effective learning. At Grandpont we embrace these characteristics and consider each of these when planning opportunities for children. The characteristics of effective learning are.

Characteristic	What it looks like
Playing and exploring	Finding out and exploring: showing curiosity, using their senses to explore the world, engaging in open ended activity, showing interests. Playing with what they know: Pretending objects are things from their experience, representing experiences in play, taking on a role in play, acting out experiences with other people. Being willing to 'have a go': initiating activities, seeking challenge, showing a 'can do' attitude, taking risk, engaging in new activities, learning by trial and error.
Active learning	Being involved and concentrating: Maintaining focus on their activity for a period of time, showing high levels of energy, fascination, not easily distracted, paying attention to details. Keeping trying: persisting with an activity when challenges occur, trying different approaches, bouncing back after difficulties.

	Enjoying achieving what they set out to do: being satisfied at meeting their goals, being proud when they accomplish something, being internally motivated to meet challenges.
Creating and thinking critically	Having their own ideas: thinking of ideas, finding solutions to problems, finding new ways to do things. Making links: Making links and noticing patterns, making predictions, testing their ideas, developing ideas about grouping, sequences and cause and effect. Choosing ways to do things: planning, making decisions, checking how well things are going, changing strategy when needed, reviewing how well the work went.

The framework specifies the areas of learning that must be taught. They are as follows;

The prime areas:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social, and emotional development

The specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Please see the appendix for specific information about teaching and learning within each of these areas.

How we teach

The physical 'enabling' environment is central to strong early years teaching and learning. A range of learning experiences encourage children to explore and control the direction of their learning. Different areas are carefully structured and planned to meet different aspects of learning. At Grandpont some of these are the construction area, graphics area, book area, tactile area, and the woodwork area. Within these there are opportunities for exploring, investigating, contemplating, practising, being quiet and relaxed, being noisy, messy, private, or sociable. The staff ensure that these areas are always fresh and well stocked so children can be independent in their choices and don't get frustrated if things are not available.

The way in which equipment and activities are deployed in the classroom and garden area can facilitate learning. Furniture and equipment are arranged to allow children to move around easily and safely between workshop areas and from the building into the garden.

The staff recognise that young children need the security of a daily routine within which they can make informed choices about the optimal use of available time (but subject always to staff guidance where appropriate)

The daily routine allows for extended periods of freely chosen (child-initiated) play, which is carefully planned for and observed, in order to maximise its potential for learning. Staff take a flexible approach in order that there is;

- time for children to pursue interests at length, in the depth they wish.
- time to explore, rediscover and consolidate without interruption.

Children will also have a daily group time which is used flexibly by the Key Person and may focus on any aspect of the curriculum, indoors and outside.

The children always have access to a wide range of equipment. This is calculated to facilitate their choice of appropriate resources for their chosen activity (and to enable them to tidy up later, themselves).

The outdoor area is a central feature of the physical learning environment. It is given equal importance to the indoor area and is carefully planned and maintained. In order for children to access the outdoors in all weathers we provide waterproofs and children are encouraged to access the outdoors freely whenever they choose.

At Grandpont we believe that maintenance and decoration of the school building and garden are essential elements in creating a purposeful and effective teaching environment.

Role of the adult

The role of skilled adults with expert understanding of child development is essential for children to learn and make good progress. All adults at Grandpont understand the importance of modelling positive relationships to children and other adults to create a warm and trusting ethos.

The central role of staff is to act as enablers and facilitators of learning. They stimulate, sustain, and extend learning in addition to acting as providers of activities and experiences.

Grandpont staff recognise that different children learn at different rates; and that their individual rates of learning are not linear (there are periods in child development when young children regress in certain aspects). They also recognise the need to consider the whole child. The social, emotional, moral, spiritual, cultural, physical, and intellectual development of each child is equally important. Staff appreciate that these factors are inter-related. Children need the presence of an adult interested in their experiences and achievements, supportive and knowledgeable, to provide opportunities, open ideas, encourage feelings of fun, help to form socially acceptable attitudes and behaviour patterns and generally to act as role models.

Adults observe children in order to respond to their needs and interests.

These observations are used to assess children's progress and their learning is tracked. Observations and assessments are used to support the planning for individuals and groups. Staff plan activities that reflect children's interests and stages of development. They have clear objectives for learning which include;

- giving clear explanations to enable children to make sense of and apply their existing knowledge.
- impart new knowledge and information necessary in particular situations.
- introduce new equipment to extend children's exploration and experimentation.
- recognise children's efforts and achievements.
- praise children and give them constructive criticism which enables them to grow in confidence.
- pose questions and problems to extend children's thinking.
- interpret and extend children's thought processes.
- adults ensure the environment is of a high quality by constantly replenishing resources and keeping it attractive, safe and clean.
- to ensure children have long periods of uninterrupted play for children to lead their own learning.
- to plan and lead key group times and create an atmosphere of support and friendship within this group time in order to develop strong relationships.

At Grandpont we believe all children should feel equally valued as members of a group. We ensure that each child is given an equal opportunity to take advantage of the experiences available. A child who feels valued, respected and cared about is likely to show similar feelings for others. Children have a home visit by their key person before they start, to support the settling in process. Parents stay with children when they first start until they are comfortable enough to be left alone. We are able to offer our EAL children support with small groups and extra adult intervention. Equal opportunity is discussed in a separate policy document.

Key Documents

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/development-matters--2>

Working with the revised EYFS: Principles into Practice (Julian Grenier)

<https://development-matters.org.uk/>

Birth to 5 Matters: non-statutory guidance for the Early Years foundation stage

<https://www.birthto5matters.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Birthto5Matters-download.pdf>

Appendix – The areas of learning

Area of learning	Specific features
Communication and language	<p>Communication and language includes listening and attention, understanding and speaking.</p> <p><u>Listening:</u> Children have opportunities to develop their listening skills in planned and spontaneous interactions. They learn to listen in a variety of contexts such as one to one in conversation as well as in small and large groups.</p> <p><u>Speaking:</u> Children are encouraged to speak in a variety of contexts.</p> <p><u>Understanding:</u> Children develop understanding and thinking skills through adults using appropriate questions and offering children time to solve problems and try new ideas. Children are given instructions to follow in all areas of the nursery.</p>
Physical Development	<p>The EYFS describe physical development in two sections, Health and self-care and Moving and handling.</p> <p>Physical development helps children to coordinate different parts of their body to provide opportunities to develop spatial awareness and to develop muscle tone and strength. It helps children develop an awareness of physical hygiene and healthy lifestyles including hand washing, blowing noses and the importance of eating healthy food.</p> <p>Physical development focuses on the development of both gross and fine motor skills. Fine motor skills include: cutting, drawing, writing, sewing, threading, pouring, using cutlery. Gross motor skills include: jumping, running, balancing, crawling, throwing, climbing, digging, pulling, carrying, sitting still, moving safely, changing direction.</p>
Personal, social and emotional development	<p>PSED is about children learning to develop their relationships with adults and children. They develop positive attitudes towards others and themselves. It encompasses values such as honesty, fairness, respect and empathy. It includes learning how to deal with emotions and developing positive behaviour. The EYFS encompasses managing feelings and behaviour, self-confidence and self-awareness and making relationships.</p>
Literacy	<p>Literacy covers reading and writing. Children have many opportunities to be immersed in stories and books including being read to, looking at books themselves and with their friends. Writing opportunities should exist throughout the setting and children have opportunities to write and draw indoors and out.</p>
Mathematics	<p>The EYFS divides the teaching of mathematics into Numbers, Shape and Space and Measures. Children learn to seek patterns, make connections and recognise mathematical relationships through hands-on exposure to mathematical concepts. Children will learn concepts through a variety of planned and freely chosen activities such as learning number rhymes and songs, seeing numbers and shapes in the environment, solving problems, playing with mathematical toys such as puzzles.</p>
Understanding the world	<p>This area covers the topics people and communities, the world and technology. This area encourages children to learn about themselves, their home and family and the wider world around them.</p> <p>Children explore the local environment through visits and learn about the wider world through looking at books, photographs, artifacts and natural objects. Children develop IT skills through a variety of tools such as computers, digital cameras, remote control toys, CD players and other programmable and technological toys.</p>
Expressive arts and design	<p>This area of learning focuses on the development of children's imaginations, their ability to respond to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel, and to express and represent their ideas and feelings in creative and original ways. The topic is divided into two sections of "exploring and using media and materials" and "being imaginative". These cover the areas of Visual Art, Music, Dance/Movement and Imaginative and role play. Children are offered daily opportunities to focus on these areas.</p>