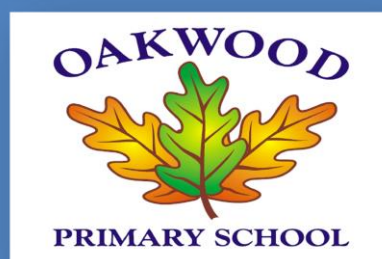




Gardners Lane &
Oakwood Federation

FEDERATION EYFS
POLICY

Approved April 2026
Review April 2027



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Gardners Lane and Oakwood, children join the Reception class in the school 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. The Governing Body monitors EYFS provision, safeguarding and statutory compliance through regular reports and challenge. All EYFS staff receive safeguarding training in line with statutory requirements and whole-school arrangements.

We endeavour to ensure that children are provided with a broad range of teaching and experiences that will keep them safe and healthy and provide them with the right foundations for good progress through school.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident individuals.
- Positive relationships – working with parents and carers to support the children in becoming confident and independent.
- Enabling environments – where opportunities and experiences promote independence, communication and language.
- Learning and developing – Implementing a robust, adaptive, flexible curriculum with clear intent.

A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise we must adapt the learning experiences and curriculum to meet the needs of each child. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use clear expectations, praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Adaptive teaching

All children and their families are valued at Gardners Lane and Oakwood. Children are treated as individuals and have equal 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 consider contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with emerging 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 and the SENCO is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion Policy for SEND.

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 acting to provide support as necessary

Welfare

We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We take a Restorative Practice approach to ensure that the children are given the tools to problem solve and build positive relationships with staff and peers. 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 emotional well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Policy)

“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 Gardners Lane and Oakwood we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2024 . 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 using a restorative approach
- 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
- Ensure that children are given the time they need to self-regulate and develop their executive functions
- Ensure that early language development is a key focus to EYFS practice to give the children the tools they need to self-regulate and access all areas of the curriculum

Positive Relationships

At Gardners Lane and Oakwood we recognise that children learn to be confident and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Restorative Practice

At Gardners Lane and Oakwood we take a restorative approach in order to build relationships between pupils and staff and between pupils and their peers. We encourage time for discussion and give regular time to talk about our feelings. This allows children to take ownership of their feelings and actions and aims to build their self-esteem. We use the 'Zones of Regulation' to support the children in identifying and discussing their feelings. We teach strategies to aid the children in regulating their emotions and behaviour.

For restorative practice to be most effective, we actively encourage the whole school community to share in this approach. This includes all school staff and parents. Advice is offered to parents when we feel a restorative approach would achieve the best outcomes for all involved.

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
- conducting home visits
- giving the children opportunities to spend time with their teacher before starting school through transition sessions
- supporting children through the transition from Pre-School to Reception by providing a part time induction during the first few weeks, if required.
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and again during the first half term of the child's Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child, particularly in relation to reading and phonics
- 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 school year
- encouraging parents to register with Class Dojo, our online communication tool
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child school and parents such as celebration assemblies and school visits
- encouraging parents to celebrate their child's learning and development by posting comments on Dojo
- providing a quiet and confidential area or a telephone appointment where parents are able to discuss any concerns
- Providing opportunities for parents to get together and share advice and establish friendships

- Communicating, via Dojo, a monthly EYFS newsletter or utilising Tapestry (Methods differ at each school)
- Contributing to the weekly whole school newsletter

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 enhancements added to continuous provision, matched to the children's interests and learning needs.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and stimulating children's interests. Effective planning is informed by observations and assessment. We record this assessment information on Insight/Tapestry and the Little Wandle phonics tracker (Methods differ at each school).

Play- based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play, through considered interactions, as needed to further individual learning.

Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas."

The prime areas are

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

The specific areas are

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

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. 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. This may also include a discussion with the Special Needs Co-ordinator in order to access Special Educational Needs support. All children also complete a statutory Reception Baseline Assessment in September, which assesses key English and Maths skills.

At Gardners Lane and Oakwood, each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part of children's development, building their confidence as they

learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going consideration to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

At Gardners Lane and Oakwood we support children to develop the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These are;

- **Playing and Exploring** - children investigate and experience things
- **Active Learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things (Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2024)

Religious Education is also taught in the Reception classes in accordance with Gloucestershire guidelines.

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, sexual orientation, age, 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 Gardners Lane and Oakwood, there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see Whole School Risk Assessment Policy) 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 EYFS statutory framework, at Gardners Lane and Oakwood we ensure;

- Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required
- Each classroom has a snack and sink area that can provide healthy snacks and drinks
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept (see First Aid & Medicine Policy)
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy is in place
- A safeguarding policy stating 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 staff's own personal use.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time is given to ensure continuity of learning. Children attend introductory sessions to Reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. They receive information about their new setting e.g. a small booklet containing photos and information about starting school. A 'New to School' Parents meeting is also held in the July prior to children starting school.

Formal meetings offered to parents include:

- An Autumn term meeting with parents/carers to discuss how their child is settling in
- An Early Reading and Maths Workshop takes place during the Autumn term to inform parents about how phonics and reading is taught and how they can support their child at home
- During the Spring Term, a meeting is held with parents to discuss their child's progress and any targets that have been set
- During the Summer Term parent/carers receive a report highlighting their child's progress and achievements

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents/carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge and understanding against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observations, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected or not yet meeting expected levels. Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1. At least 1 transition session is arranged for Reception children to meet their new teachers. During the Summer Term, class teachers will be preparing the children for Year 1. This may involve more structured activities for those children who display readiness for Key Stage One. They will be encouraged to become independent learners in line with the National Curriculum. Equally, in Year 1 practitioners will begin with some free flow and child-initiated learning in order to reflect the Reception classroom and ease the transition into Year 1.