



## Goodway Nursery School

# Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy

Date policy adopted:

Signed:  
Chair of Governing Body

### Our school values

- Respect** - respecting children's rights, treating each other with dignity and valuing each person's individual identity
- Security** - creating an environment where children feel safe, both emotionally and physically, building their resilience through secure attachments
- Relationships** - encouraging kindness and developing relationships where children and families are listened to and feel valued
- Inclusion** - creating an enabling environment where children and families feel a sense of belonging and ensuring equality of opportunity for everyone
- Learning** - reflecting on our practice together, co-constructing learning with children and extending their learning by providing experiences that provoke curiosity and exploration
- Empowerment** - encouraging children to become confident and independent, equipping them to participate in decision making, resolve conflict and make positive choices

### We are a Unicef Rights Respecting School

This policy links to the UN Convention on the Rights of the child:

- Article 3 Best interests of the child** The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.
- Article 12 Respect for the views of the child** Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life.
- Article 13 Freedom of expression** Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.
- Article 14 Freedom of thought, belief and religion** Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose and also to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents to guide their child as they grow up.
- Article 19 Protection from violence, abuse and neglect** Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.
- Article 23 Children with a disability** A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to support disabled children and their families..
- Article 28 Right to education** Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.
- Article 29 Goals of education** Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.
- Article 30: Culture** Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, regardless of whether these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.
- Article 31 Leisure, play and culture** Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all children, and expect our staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

## **Introduction**

Children learn by actively pursuing their interests and ideas through exploratory play - exploring, investigating, discovering, creating, practicing, repeating, revising and consolidating their developing knowledge, skills and understanding through playful learning. They develop confidence, a sense of agency and a 'can do' approach by having time and opportunities to choose their play and learning. Adults extend their learning, through exploring ideas, posing questions and providing resources and provocations that facilitate the child's process of creating and developing theories about the world. We believe in lifelong learning and that both adults and children are learning every day.

*Teaching should not be taken to imply a 'top down' way of working. It is a broad term that covers the many different ways in which adults help young children learn. It includes their interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play and activities: communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges. It takes account of the equipment adults provide and the attention given to the physical environment, as well as the structures and routines of the day that establish expectations.*

Teaching & Play in the early years – A balancing act (Ofsted 2015)

We aim to

- provide a language rich environment, where adults take every opportunity to develop children's communication and language
- provide rich and experiential learning opportunities using children's interests as a vehicle for learning
- meet every child's learning and development needs, identified from observation and assessment
- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners
- foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people
- develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of other people
- show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, promote positive attitudes towards other people
- enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of the community

## **Curriculum**

A focus upon developing children's understanding of their rights and the rights of others, under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, threads throughout our curriculum. This understanding helps develop children's self-esteem and sense of agency, as well as an understanding and acceptance of difference and diversity.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is central to their learning and we support this through the development of positive and caring relationships. Each child has a Key Person and a Key Group of 13 children. We encourage the development of self-confidence and self-awareness and children become independent learners by choosing resources and accessing all areas of the nursery environment. We support children in managing feelings and behaviour through giving them the vocabulary to name a range of emotions and use a Conflict Resolution approach, where we help children learn how to find solutions to conflicts.

We provide a rich and varied learning environment planning learning in all areas of the curriculum and allowing children to learn in a variety of ways, with a balance of child and adult initiated learning.

We value learning outdoors, and believe that being outdoors has a positive impact on children's sense of well-being and on their development. We plan for learning outdoors across the curriculum and children have access to the outdoor learning environment throughout the day. Every child takes part in Forest School sessions every fortnight, developing self-regulation, risk management, and an understanding of the natural world.

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved, as far as possible, in reviewing the way they learn, what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn.

We have high expectations of all children, basing our teaching on our knowledge of the children's level of attainment. We use observation to plan for learning experiences for children and 'next steps' are identified for their learning. These learning objectives are used to plan for learning through skilled interventions by staff, ensuring high levels of engagement.

We are an inclusive school and children with SEND supported with visual aids, pre-tutoring with language used for planned activities, choice boards and pictorial timetables, one to one work, Early Years Support Plans, Education & Health Care Plans,

All staff aim to establish good working relationships with all children, treating them with kindness and respect and follow our Behaviour Policy, using positive behaviour strategies through a Conflict Resolution approach.

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe. When we plan to take children out of school we comply with the Government Regulations for Educational Visits. We deploy Teaching Assistants and other adult helpers effectively.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

We believe in child centred learning and plan for learning using the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance which sets out what a child is expected to learn from birth to five.

#### **Prime areas**

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

#### **Specific areas**

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

#### **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

We aim to develop the characteristics of effective learning through our teaching:

Playing and Exploring - engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Using what they know in their play
- Being willing to have a go

Active Learning - motivation

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

Creativity and Thinking Critically - thinking

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

#### **The key objectives of the Revised EYFS (2021)**

- Improve outcomes for all children (particularly in language and literacy)
- Reduce teacher/practitioner workload (more time interacting with children)

There is a focus on strengthening language and vocabulary development to ensure all children experience a rich language environment.

*'By 3 years of age, there is a 30 million word gap between children from the wealthiest and poorest families.'* (Fernald, Marchman, & Weisleder 2013).

*'By the age of three, more disadvantaged children are on average, already almost a full year and a half behind their more affluent peers in their early language development.'* (Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential DfE 2017)

### **Observation**

We observe children's learning informally to identify children's interests and 'next steps' and assess learning. We use the identified interests and 'next steps' as a basis for planning adult led and adult initiated learning, and to inform interactions which effectively support learning during child initiated learning.

Tapestry Online Learning Journey is used to record observations and assessment information, where parents can access observations and assessments of their child and add their own observations and comments. 'Next steps' for children and strategies to support these are discussed during Professional Conversations, and these are included in the 'Spotlight' observations.

### **Spotlight observations**

We carry out one 'Spotlight' observation per term. This covers all areas of learning and is a summary of the child's learning and development at that time, including learning the key persons have observed during their interactions with the child. It also includes the child's 'next steps' and strategies that can support these. This is recorded on Tapestry Online Learning Journey.

### **Professional conversation**

Spotlight observations and the key person's assessment of the child's learning and development are discussed and moderated during Professional Conversations. During these conversations, colleagues decide upon 'Next Steps' for the child and the strategies that will support the learning and development. Key persons can add further information to their spotlight observation after discussion with colleagues.

During the Professional Conversation, colleagues discuss whether the child has met expected levels of development or has not yet met expected levels according to their age in months, using the Development Matters document to support this judgement.

### **Parent consultation meetings**

Parent consultation meetings are arranged each term where key persons use the Spotlight observation to discuss each child's learning, development and next steps and add further information to the Spotlight observation and assessment.

### **Sharing moments**

We post two or three photos on Tapestry three times per term. These have a caption, showing something special the child has done and are not assessed. There is also one Forest School 'Sharing moment'.

### **Events & celebrations**

Photographs of events and celebrations are posted on Facebook, not Tapestry.

### **Assessment**

*'Assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork.'*

*'When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement and should not be required to prove this through collection of physical evidence.'* EYFS Statutory Framework 2017

Key persons use their professional judgement, using Development Matters to support this judgement, to decide whether a child has met expected levels or has not yet met expected levels according to their age in months, using a 'best fit' approach.

This is discussed during the Professional Conversations about each child.

Assessments levels of all children are recorded at Baseline, at the end of Spring Term and at the end of Summer term.

### **Teaching**

The learning environment is carefully planned to promote relationships, communication, and collaboration as well as creativity, thinking and problem solving skills, questions, experimentation and exploration through play. *We aim for our learning environment to be welcoming, aesthetically pleasing, culturally representative, embracing nature and filled with purposeful materials that encourage children's interest and engagement.*

We recognise that

*'It is not enough ... to create a stimulating environment and let children play. Staff need to actively teach the children, which means modelling appropriate language and behaviour, sharing intelligent conversations, asking questions and using play to motivate and encourage them.'*

*Iram Siraj-Blatchford & Kathy Sylva*

### **Planning**

We plan activities to meet children's needs identified from observation and assessment, as well as their interests, and extend children's learning through a balance of child initiated and adult led or initiated learning. Our learning environments are created with stimulating resources and displays to interest and engage children. We encourage children to access resources independently and to help to tidy at the end of the session. Children reflect on their learning in Key Group to develop meta-cognition and contribute to planning their learning in planning time sessions

We focus on a range of core books over the year, so that the children develop a bank of deeply known and loved stories. Children choose a book to take home each week to share with their parents and carers. A Rights Respecting soft toy goes home with children each week to help them learn about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

### **Child initiated learning - Planning in the moment**

Children are deeply involved when they initiate their own learning through play. Staff plan 'in the moment' in response to children's immediate thoughts, ideas and interests, asking questions or gathering resources to take children's learning forward. In the moment planning is recorded at the end of each day so that staff can build on children's interests and learning from day to day.

### **Adult led learning**

Daily group times focus upon identified next steps in Literacy; Maths, and PSED/RRSA. Daily stories, action songs and rhymes build up vocabulary and understanding of rhyme and rhythm

Intervention groups support children needing targeted support eg Phonics extension group; Early Years Pupil Premium teacher led project; Well-being intervention group; Language intervention group; EAL intervention group.

Daily Forest School sessions develop self-regulation, risk management and an understanding of the natural world.

Weekly Yoga Bugs yoga through stories sessions develop literacy, self-regulation, listening and attention and physical development.

### **The Role of Parents**

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- o Home visit to share information

- Parent 'Starting points' baseline assessment
- Tapestry Online Learning Journey, where parents can access observations and assessments of their child and are encouraged to add their own observations and comments
- Parents Charter outlining expectations and responsibilities
- Termly Parent Consultation meetings
- Open door policy
- End of year report to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child
- Parent workshops where parents can work with their child and find out about ways they can support particular areas of the curriculum at home
- Library book scheme where children are encouraged to borrow a book each week to share with their parents at home
- Theatre trip with parents and children
- Summer trip with parents and children
- Local trip with parents and children
- Parents invited to Black History celebrations; Diwali celebrations; Christmas performance; Chinese new year celebrations; Mothers' Day celebration; Vaisakhi celebrations; Fathers' Day celebration; Eid celebration; Sports day; Summer fair

### **The Role of Governors**

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning.

In particular they:

- Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- Ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning; Monitor teaching strategies in light of health and safety regulations;
- Monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment;
- Ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching;
- Monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the head teacher's reports to governors and the school self-evaluation processes.

**PREAMBLE**

Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.

**PART ONE: TEACHING****A teacher must:****1. Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils**

- establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect
- set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions
- demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils.

**2. Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils**

- be accountable for pupils' attainment, progress and outcomes
- be aware of pupils' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these
- guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impacts on teaching
- encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.

**3. Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge**

- have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings
- demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship
- demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject
- if teaching early reading, demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics
- if teaching early mathematics, demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate teaching strategies.

**4. Plan and teach well structured lessons**

- impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time
- promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity
- set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired
- reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching
- contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s).

**5. Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils**

- know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively
- have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these
- demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development

- have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.

#### **6. Make accurate and productive use of assessment**

- know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements
- make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress
- use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons
- give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.

#### **7. Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment**

- have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly
- manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them
- maintain good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.

#### **8. Fulfil wider professional responsibilities**

- make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school
- develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support
- deploy support staff effectively
- take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues
- communicate effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.

### **PART TWO: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
  - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
  - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
  - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
  - not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
  - ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.