



Gawber Primary School

FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

September 2025



Rationale

At Gawber Primary, our children thrive in a secure, inclusive and stimulating learning environment. Through quality teaching, provision and interaction, we ensure that children make progress through a mixture of child-initiated and adult-led activities. We have high expectations for all of our children, and encourage children to 'have a go' and develop a positive attitude to learning. We aim to build children's confidence and independence to ensure that they can meet the challenges of Year 1.

Teaching is delivered in accordance with the Government's statutory document "The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage" (2025). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements.

The curriculum has three prime areas of learning:

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

There are also four specific areas of learning:

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

These areas of Learning and Development address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. All areas of learning and development are closely interlinked. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum, which allows children to make links between what they are learning.

Learning through play is an important part of our ethos. We believe children learn best from stories, activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning and make sense of the world. In play, they have opportunities to think creatively and critically and develop independence. They also have the opportunity to practise skills, build upon and consolidate prior learning at their own level and pace. Through self-directed play, children learn to communicate effectively with others and develop socially and emotionally. These skills are vital for children to become successful learners as they progress through school. Adults support and enhance child-initiated play by observing, modelling, facilitating and extending children's ideas. They also develop children's use of language through listening, responding and

extending children's talk in play. We believe children learn best through a balanced approach of self-directed play and more focussed adult-led activities.

Aims

We aim to:

- Promote and develop personal, social and emotional well-being.
- Challenge children and set high expectations for learning.
- Develop each child's skills, understanding and enjoyment in all the seven areas of learning.
- Establish respectful relationships with parents and carers and involve them as partners in learning.
- Provide an environment that promotes independent learning.
- Allow children time to explore, practise and refine skills.
- Allow children to develop and follow their own interests.
- Ensure all children's opinions, achievements and wellbeing are valued.
- Foster and develop each child's characteristics of effective learning.
- Recognise and model the importance of kindness and respect, in our words and actions.
- Develop children's resilience, confidence and self-esteem in a safe and secure learning environment.

Quality of learning through play

Reflective practitioners will support learning by:

A Unique Child

- Seeking to know and understand individual children and their current levels of development
- Celebrating and rewarding children's interests, efforts and achievements
- Supporting children to develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture.

- Recognising what children understand, know and can do, and supporting them in reaching their full potential.

Positive Relationships

- Developing caring and respectful relationships.
- Encouraging and supporting children to relate to others.
- Supporting children to resolve small conflicts through problem-solving and communicating.
- Recognising that parents and practitioners have a lot to learn from each other, and each have a vital role to play in a child's progress and development.

Enabling Environments

- Ensuring children have sustained time to develop ideas in play.
- Arranging, resourcing, and making time for children to make free use of high quality indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- Interpreting children's actions and words to try to understand what children are thinking and learning.
- Being mindful of when to intervene with children's play, and when to allow children to develop skills independently.
- Joining in play and child-initiated activity following children's agendas.
- Scaffolding children's learning and vocabulary through talk, discussing strategies and ideas, suggesting possibilities and modelling approaches.

Learning and Development

- Using daily events within the routine to provide authentic, real-life experiences.
- Varying experiences, using an imaginative and playful approach.
- Providing first-hand experiences to explore and discover new objects and environments.
- Recognising that, in their play, children use the experiences they have and extend them to understand new ideas, concepts and skills.
- Planning and resourcing an engaging and challenging learning environment.
- Directly teaching, through modelling and explaining.

- Encouraging and supporting children to persevere through difficulties, to take risks, to ask questions and problem-solve.
- Identifying and supporting children in their next steps for learning.

Planning and Assessment

At Gawber Primary, formative assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff continually observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning.

Children are also assessed formally, on entry to school and every half-term. Children are assessed against the statutory Early Learning Goals, which Early Years Leads have broken down into smaller steps, or 'milestones.' Children who do not reach expected levels are identified quickly and receive targeted intervention.

Planning in FS2 is based around half-termly themes. These themes are used as a guide for weekly planning; however, the teacher may alter these in response to the needs, abilities and interests of the children. High-quality weekly texts are used in planning to engage children and provide a hook for learning, as well as developing a love of reading. FS2 leads also work closely with subject leaders to ensure that children are taught core knowledge and skills in curriculum subjects, which correspond to the Early Years Curriculum. This ensures a smooth progression to Year 1.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan challenging and engaging learning experiences. Early identification of needs is a crucial part of Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies when appropriate.

As the year progresses, children gradually participate in more adult-led activities to help them prepare for more formal teaching in Year 1.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development ('expected')
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The results of the profile are shared with parents or carers, who are given the opportunity to discuss the outcomes with class teachers.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Identification of Needs

At Gawber, we are committed to identifying children's needs accurately and providing timely support to ensure that every child has the best possible start in life. We recognise that identifying a need without taking appropriate action can have a lasting negative impact on a child's development and wellbeing.

We work closely with families and external professionals to identify children with complex developmental or sensory needs, many of whom may be recognised from birth through health assessments.

In addition to these formal assessments, Early Years practitioners play a vital role in continually monitoring and reviewing each child's progress and development. Through regular observations, assessments, and professional judgements, we identify where a child may have emerging or established special educational needs.

We understand that some children's needs may be less visible or more complex to identify. Therefore, we remain attentive to all aspects of a child's learning, communication, and behaviour. When we notice that a child is not making the expected progress over time, we act swiftly to identify any underlying barriers, address gaps, and provide targeted support to help each child reach their full potential.

Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop best when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and carers. Teachers are available at the beginning and end of the day for parents to share information about their child or ask questions.

Parents are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through parent meetings and the Class Dojo online portfolio. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating and drinking too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

To meet the needs of children we may introduce supervised tooth brushing. We follow statutory guidance for safety around supervised tooth brushing.

Suitable People

If practitioners are taking medication that may affect their ability to care for children they must seek medical advice to ensure that it is safe for them to look after children. Staff medication must be stored out of children's reach at all times.

All new staff must receive induction training to help them understand their roles and responsibilities within the setting and to be made aware of the welfare and safeguarding requirements. Practitioners must be alert to any issues of concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere.

Mrs Crossley and Mrs Ronson (FS2 teachers/Foundation Stage Leads) are responsible for the management and day to day running of FS2.

We ensure that at least one person with a current paediatric first aid certificate is present in the setting. Whenever first aid is administered, a record must be kept in the whole school first aid log and parents must be informed of the incident and treatment given. In the case of any head injury, whether first aid is required or not, a form must be completed and a copy given to parents. For any severe injury, practitioners should contact parents and carers immediately.

In September, FS2 staff spend time getting to know each child as an individual, ensuring that all children develop a positive relationship with adults and settle into new routines. Staff observe the children in play and develop an awareness of each child's abilities, needs and personalities. Teaching assistants share children's interests and development with class teachers and suggest enhancements to the provision to help children make progress.

Only people over the age of 17 can be included in staff ratios. Children must always be within sight or hearing and usually within sight and hearing.

In FS2 there will be one class teacher to every 30 children and at least one member of staff with a level 3 or equivalent qualification. On outings and excursions there must be one adult for every 4 children under the age of 5 and one adult per 8 children aged 5 or over. At least half of the adults must be employed by the school and a first aider must always be present.

There are four members of our FS2 Team:

Mrs Ronson – FS2 Lead and FS2 Teacher (job-share 3 days)

Mrs Crossley - FS2 Lead and FS2 Teacher (job-share 2 days)

Mrs Barton – Teaching Assistant

Miss Jones – Teaching Assistant

All staff have received paediatric first aid training.

Safeguarding

Practitioners must be alert to any issues of concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. Staff must monitor the following issues of concern:

- significant changes in children's behaviour
- deterioration in children's general well-being

- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
- children's comments which give cause for concern
- any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children, for example: inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; inappropriate sharing of images

Practitioners will follow the school's policy for safeguarding but must also observe the following procedures:

- Mobile phones and personal cameras must not be used to photograph children within the setting and mobile phones should not be used where children are present.
- The FS2 Leads (Mrs Ronson and Mrs Crossley) are responsible for liaison with the Headteacher and local statutory children's services agencies.
- All staff attend yearly safeguarding training, which enables them to understand current safeguarding policies and procedures.
- OFSTED must be informed of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any member of staff or person working on the premises.
- Written consent must be received from parents in order to place photographs of the children on the school's website and Twitter page. If consent is not provided, photographs of the child must not be placed online.

Food and Drink

Drinking water will always be available, either through children's own water bottles brought in from home or through cups provided from school. Children will be offered a daily healthy snack. Food for the children will be prepared in the kitchen and appropriate measures will be taken to ensure health and safety requirements are met. Surfaces in the kitchen area must be kept clean and hygienic. All knives must be stored out of children's reach and must not be left out on work surfaces.

Adults and visitors present in Foundation Stage must only have hot drinks in lidded cups or flasks and should take special care to ensure they are not left unattended within reach of the children.

Managing behaviour

- We support all children to understand their feelings and regulate their own behaviour.

- Behavioural issues are dealt with calmly and consistently, without shaming or belittling the child.
- We explain the reasons behind classroom rules to our children, to keep them safe and help them learn. We regularly refer to classroom rules to remind children of the expectations in the setting.
- We model respectful, considerate behaviour in our interactions with children and adults in the setting.
- We adhere to the whole school behaviour policy, and promote and reward positive behaviour with class and whole-school initiatives.