

Grasslot

School

Early Years Policy

At Grasslot Infant School our Early Years covers children 2 – 5 years old. We believe that having a high quality Foundation Stage education is vital in establishing children's journey as life-long learners.

'All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children develop at a faster rate from birth to five years 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 learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.'

*Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
September 2025*

Aims

As part of our practice we will:

- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out.
- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning.
- Promote equality of opportunity, anti-discriminatory practice and provide early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- Work closely with parents to develop a partnership and whole child approach.
- Plan challenging learning experiences based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in a range of activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult.

Admissions

Children can enter our Early Years Unit at the start of the term following their 2nd birthday or straight after they turn two if a paid place. We offer both funded and non-funded places in our 2-year old provision. In order to apply for a place within this provision or into the Nursery class, parents must complete an application form (appendix A) which should be returned to school in order to be allocated a place or complete the form online on the Cumberland website. Where the child is eligible for a funded place the school administrator will forward the forms on to Cumbria County Council. These will also be submitted for those children in Nursery who are entitled to Early Years Pupil Premium Funding.

For children wishing to enter our Reception class, an application must be submitted to Cumbria County Council, either through their website or by contacting them by telephone on **01228 221582**.

Once an application form has been received by the school we will contact the parents to confirm a place, arrange a school visit and agree a suitable start date. Where necessary we will also arrange an induction phase to allow children to settle into the Foundation Stage at a rate which is appropriate and personalised to the child's needs.

For those children who are entitled to 30 hours free two year old and nursery provision, parents must submit their eligibility code to school to secure their place. Codes are obtained by completing the form on the www.childcarechoices.gov.uk website. Where nursery aged children are not entitled to free 30 hour provision but parents wish for them to stay in school until 3.00pm we do offer 'Wrap Around' care at the cost of £12. 00 per session.

All children are given the opportunity to stay for a school dinner. Two Year Old and Nursery will be charged £2.50 a dinner.

Early Years Curriculum

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (September 2021) sets the standards for all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well. It is from this framework that we base our continuous provision, our planning and our assessment.

The Framework covers seven areas of learning

- **Communication and Language**
- **Physical Development**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

We provide the children with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences, in which they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

Teaching and Learning

We plan for the children to experience both adult-directed and child initiated learning, as well as small group and whole class input which increase as the children become older in preparation for the transition to Key Stage 1. During the children's self-initiated activities, staff 'play' alongside the children to challenge and extend their learning.

In order to provide the children with a rich learning environment we ensure the children have access to:

- Malleable play
- Mark making
- Role play
- Maths area
- Sand and water play
- Craft and painting
- Small world
- Big blocks
- Construction
- Technology including tablets and computers
- Outdoor learning

Within each of these area we aim to develop all aspects of the Early Years Curriculum especially language and social skills as well as early writing and maths. These areas are available to all children in the Early Years and form our continuous provision, however, they are also enhanced to meet the children's interests and to promote further learning through our topics.

We ensure Oracy is a priority in our Early Years. To help children develop early communication we complete a baseline assessment at the start of each year which Our 'Currently Not On Track' children in the Early Years within Communication, Language and Literacy take part in the 'Early Talk Boost' and 'Time to Talk' programmes.

Phonics is delivered to all children across the school. This takes different forms in each stage of the Early Years, ranging from speaking and listening activities, songs, Phase ne phonics and Read, Write inc..

Reading is also high on our agenda, children in the Sunbeams provision take home a song bag, Nursery children are provided with a Reading Together story sack and Reception children have access to a Reading for Pleasure library. Each class reads stories to the children on a daily basis and we have a selection of age appropriate books for each year group which we link to our weekly planning. We have developed a Reading Spine for each year group which is a selection of age appropriate books. We read these books on a weekly basis as well as taking part in the 'Talk Through Stories' in Reception.

Assessment

Assessment is vital to the way we structure our environment and how we plan. Through observation of child initiated play and adult-led activities we build a picture of each child's learning development, allowing us to establish their individual next steps.

Observational evidence and adult led assessment in the Early Years is gathered and tracked through the use of 'Tapestry Learning Journal'. All staff have access to an I Pad and are able to update children's learning journeys on a daily basis.

The evidence collated through Tapestry and from teacher's judgements on children's development, we will provide Objective Led Planning using a current and up to date 'next steps' for the children. We will assess our children at three points throughout the school year – Baseline, Spring 1 and Summer 1. This will consist of either an 'On Track' and 'Currently Not on Track' judgement of the children. Those children who are 'Not on Track' will be provided with next steps and additional support in school.

'2 Year Old Development Check' reports will be created 6 weeks after entering our provision. These reports will be given to parents to take with them to their child's health check. Where staff are concerned that a child is not meeting their development milestones contact will be made with both parent / carer and the health visitor in order to carry out a joint review. Maryport health visitors can be contacted via Victoria Cottage Hospital, Ewanrigg Road, Maryport, CA15 8EJ, **01900 811 844**

At the end of the Early Years, Reception children will be assessed against the Early Learning Goals in order complete the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. The teacher will collate all the evidence and assessments gathered on Tapestry and submit final judgements to Cumbria County Council. This information will be shared with parents and the Year 1 teacher to ensure a smooth transition into Key Stage 1.

Parental Involvement

We strive to develop strong communication links with our parents. We recognise that by working together we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. As part of the school's welcome pack, parents are asked to complete a Tapestry consent form. This allows parents to access their child's learning journey through a personal account. Through this account parents can see, and make comments on, staff observations as well as add their own observations. We encourage parents to upload their own photos and videos to Tapestry to develop a picture of the 'whole' child and value the importance of parental input in their child's learning.

Health & safety and safeguarding

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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (September 2021). Members of staff do not use their mobile phones in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads to take photographs to support Tapestry, for use in class displays and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website as part of their consent form, which is updated annually.

It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that school have up to date contact details in case we need to contact them.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

All children irrespective of gender, ability, ethnic and social circumstances have access to the curriculum.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is the responsibility of the Early Years Leader and Head Teacher to evaluate the working of this policy.

Other school policies which are to be read in conjunction with this:

- Admissions Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Changing Policy