



Glenwood School

Together we will;  
respect, achieve and make good choices

# Glenwood Residential Special School

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

**December 2021**

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

### Introduction

This policy reflects the values, ethos, philosophy and culture of Glenwood School in relation to teaching learners at the Foundation Stage. It provides guidance on content, planning, teaching and assessment.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Policy is a working document and as such it reflects both the practices that are carried out and those to which the school is striving.

The policy is agreed upon by the whole teaching staff and presented to the Governing Body. The document is available for interested parties.

### Rationale

At Glenwood School we do not have a designated Nursery for Foundation Stage. On starting at school learners join a class, one of which caters for learners with significant physical or sensory needs and those who may be vulnerable for a variety of reasons. Learners are grouped by chronological age.

The term curriculum is used to describe everything children do, see, hear or feel in their setting, both planned and unplanned.

Learners joining our school have already had a range of experiences from their parents/carers and other settings that exist within the community. The early years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- it builds upon what the learner already know and can do
- it ensures that all learners have equal opportunities
- it offers structure for learning that has a range of starting points
- it has content that matches the needs of the young learners and activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and out
- it provides a safe and stimulating environment in which the contribution made by each learner is valued
- ensures that learners develop their self esteem and confidence
- it ensures that learners have fun and are challenged as they learn

### Aims

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years settings.

These are:

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

(Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage March 2017)

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the *prime* areas, are:

- communication and language;
- physical development;
- personal, social and emotional development.

Providers must also support children in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy;
- mathematics;
- understanding the world; and
- expressive arts and design.

. (Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage March 2017)

## Implementation

Glenwood School implement a curriculum which is broad, balanced and relevant to the learners who attend the school. The curriculum must be responsive to national initiatives, whilst maintaining the flexibility to meet individual needs.

The curriculum is appropriately differentiated to allow learners at Early Years Foundation Stage to access them. Personal, social and emotional development, physical development, problem solving, reasoning and number, and communication, language and literacy are taught discretely.

Other areas of learning are taught in a thematic approach where subjects can be linked by a common theme.

The reason that Glenwood School exists is to make a transformational difference to the quality of life and future prospects of each individual young person. Every member of the Glenwood School community has a unique contribution to make to achieving that end.

In such a school, it is sensible to adopt the widest understanding of what the Glenwood Curriculum is. For this reason, when we talk about "the Glenwood Curriculum", we are describing "the totality of experiences a young person has as a result of the provision made by Glenwood School".

It follows that we need to take a holistic view of what we plan and do for each young person across the school and how we assess and evaluate the outcomes of this for them. It also follows that we need to think widely about how we resource the curriculum and teaching/learning so that we maximise the impact on the quality of life and future prospects of the young person.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are;

**playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';  
**active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and

**creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things. (Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage March 2014)

It is important that all staff recognise the need to work in a structured and consistent way to enable all learners to make progress. Staff are encouraged to have high but realistic expectations for all learners and are given appropriate training and advice about structures and approaches used.

### Equal Opportunities

The race, ethnicity and cultural background as well as the interests, strengths and needs of individuals must be considered in deciding on appropriate teaching content and strategies.

The entitlement of all learners to a full curriculum is acknowledged. Teachers will provide any other, adaptations, specific teaching techniques and specialist resources required to overcome individual learners' barriers to learning.

### Teaching and Organisation

Individual class teachers are responsible for their own class organisation and teaching style in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage, while at the same time ensuring that these compliment and reflect the overall aims and philosophy of the school.

Learners are given the opportunity to work as a class, as part of a group or as individuals. The learning task or activity, the nature of the topic being studied and the resources being used will determine the choice of class organisation.

The more general features of good practice in the school that relate to the Early Years Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents/carers recognising that parents/carers continue to have a teaching role with their children
- the understanding that teachers have knowledge of how children develop and learn, and how this impacts on their teaching
- the range of approaches used to ensure that learners have first hand experiences across the curriculum
- that adults give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and communication skills
- a carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage
- the identification through observation and planning of the next step in children's learning
- opportunities to share with parents/carers
- careful planning of indoor and outdoor environments to provide a positive context for teaching and learning

## **Play in the Foundation Stage**

Learners do not make a distinction between 'play' and 'work' and neither should adults working with them. Learners need time to become engrossed, work in depth and complete activities.

However, we value the importance of well planned play as a key way in which young children learn. It offers them opportunities to explore and investigate, develop skills, solve problems and make sense of the world.

## **Assessment**

Teachers continually assess learners' current understanding and knowledge in order to ensure that appropriate learning targets are set.

'In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile must reflect: ongoing observation; 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 must be assessed against the early learning goals (see Section 1). Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').

(Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage March 2017)

A formal meeting will be held within six weeks of a learner joining Glenwood School This is a multi agency meeting which includes parents/carers when aims and aspirations for the learner will be planned for.

## **Review of the policy**

The policy will be reviewed in line with whole school procedures.

Reviewed October 2021