



Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) Your Child’s Learning Journey 2016-17

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Programme Aim

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the UK's programme for learners up to the age of four. It sets the standards that all early years' providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and develops a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for future progress through school and life.

Green Shoots aims to deliver the UK National Curriculum by providing its students with the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding required to become lifelong learners. Our programme fosters creativity, cooperation, and responsibility.

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life successes. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its' own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

Programme Overview

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape early years learning at Green Shoots. The three prime areas (focusing on language, physical, and personal/social development) are developed through the teaching of four specific areas (literacy, maths, expressive arts, and understanding the world), through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Green Shoots learners follow a supportive Core Values and Personal Learning Goals programme, which encourages them to be the best person they can be while developing their social and emotional skills. We practise age-appropriate mindfulness activities and learn about quiet reflection time. At Green Shoots, we promote respect and understanding of the natural environment around us, and our Early Years students learn practical and relevant ways to be sustainable and foster a sense of responsibility for our world.

Teaching and Learning

Our Approach to the EYFS

Relationships are at the heart of the EYFS at Green Shoots. Children in our programme develop quality relationships with their teachers, their peers, and other members of our school community including older students and our other staff members. Teachers understand that through knowing a child well, where they are and where they've come from, the child develops a strong sense of belonging, critical to their well being and future successes.

Green Shoots teachers understand and value how children learn. The key ways children learn are:

- Playing: Indoors and out, alone and with others, quietly or boisterously, playing allows children to learn about things, try out ideas and skills, take

risks, explore their feelings, learn from mistakes, be in control and think imaginatively. Playing is an important centre of learning for young children.

- Being with people: As well as developing emotional security and social skills, being with other people (children and adults) stimulates ideas that move learning forward.
- Being active: Young children learn and remember things by taking experiences in through the senses as they move. Sitting still for too long can disrupt learning.
- Exploring new things and experiences: Children's deep curiosity leads them to use all their senses to explore during hands-on activities, then put the information together in their own minds to form ideas and make sense of the world.
- Talking to themselves: In 'self-speech' children use thinking out loud to clarify their thoughts, regulate their activities, take on imaginative roles and rehearse their skills.
- Communicating about what they are doing with someone who responds to their ideas: Even before they can talk in words, children are keen to share their ideas through sounds, gesture and body language. Talk helps children to understand what they experience. It is important that they have a chance to express their own ideas, as well as have conversations to hear other people's ideas, extend their thinking, and use language about learning.
- Representing ideas and experiences: Children deepen their understanding as they recreate experiences or communicate thoughts in many different ways: through role play or small-world play, pictures, movements, models, and speech.
- Meeting physical and mental challenges: Working out what to do, trying hard, persevering with problems, and thinking for themselves are all opportunities for developing real understanding. These challenges may occur in play, in real life, or in planned activities.
- Being shown how to do things: Children learn skills by watching others or being shown how to do something. Adults or peers may directly instruct, model, guide or demonstrate.
- Practising, repeating, and applying skills: Rehearsing skills in similar tasks or new contexts helps children to build mastery, enjoy their own expertise, and consolidate what they have learned.
- Having fun: There is no place for dull, repetitive activities. Laughter, fun, and enjoyment, sometimes being whimsical and nonsensical, are the best contexts for learning at this age. Activities can be playful even when they are not actually play.

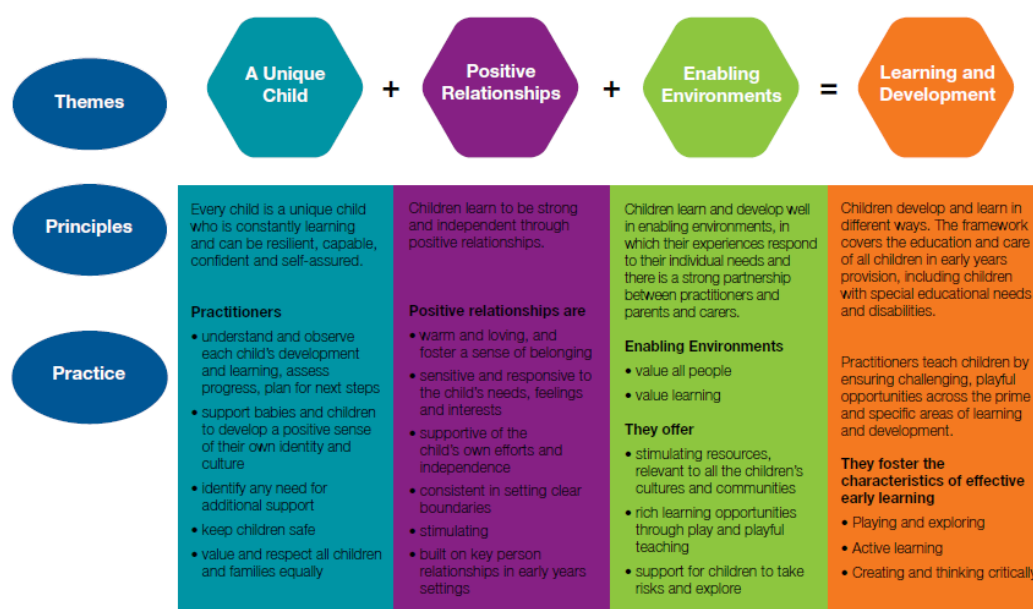
Keeping in mind the ways in which children learn, Green Shoots' youngest learners are offered a range of opportunities for playing and exploring, creating and thinking critically, and being involved in active learning within the EYFS framework. All of this takes place in an environment that encourages collaboration, problem solving, communication, and creativity, and fosters a lifelong love of learning. This approach

ensures a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities, balancing open-ended play and exploration with direct teaching.

We strive to ensure our learners develop independence and initiative, have the confidence to take risks, and understand that there is not always a right or wrong way. The Green Shoots Core Values of respect, cooperation, thoughtfulness, integrity, tenacity, adaptability, independence and sustainability are woven into everyday life and fostered with even our youngest learners. At Green Shoots, we promote respect and understanding of the natural environment around us and our EYFS students begin to develop an awareness of our role in looking after the world around us and how our actions can have an impact.

Overarching Principles of the EYFS Framework

Four guiding principles shape practice in early years settings. These are shown in the graphic below:



Learning and Development in the EYFS

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape EYFS learning at Green Shoots as defined by the UK's Department for Education. All areas of learning and development are important and inter connected.

The three prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. We also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Prime Areas

Communication and Language

Development in this area involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment, to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves, and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical Development

This involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

In this area of learning, we help children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others, form positive relationships and develop respect for others, develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings, understand appropriate behaviour in groups, and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Specific Areas

Literacy

We encourage children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials including books, poems, and other written materials to ignite their interest.

Mathematics

We provide children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems, and describing shapes, spaces, and measures.

Understanding the World

We guide children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive Arts and Design

We enable children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, and provide opportunities and encouragement for sharing thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role play, and design and technology.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The characteristics of effective learning describe factors that play a central role in a pupil's learning and in becoming an effective learner. They describe how children learn, rather than what they learn. They are:

Playing and Exploring

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go.'

Active Learning

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

Creating and Thinking Critically

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

Reporting and Assessment

Assessment at Green Shoots

Assessment in the early years plays an important part in helping parents, carers and teachers to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and plan activities and support. It is a journey, gathering evidence over time. The goal is not to compare children against each other but to monitor individual development.

Formative assessment (ongoing assessment that informs teaching and learning) is an integral part of the learning and development process. At Green Shoots we utilise an online reporting system, Orbit,¹ to keep parents informed. Photographic updates of each child's learning show links to the EYFS and inform parents of their child's progress and learning. Over time, this documentation shows a clear picture of each child's growth. Teachers use this formative assessment to inform their planning for each child, observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and then shape learning experiences for each child to reflect those observations.

Summative assessment (evaluating student performance at a particular time and against certain benchmarks) happens toward the end of a learner's Reception year when the progress is assessed against the Early Learning Goals, listed below. A written report is provided to parents showing their child's achievement level in relation to each of the goals and against the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Both formative and summative assessments are described as *emerging*, *developing* or *secure*. When a child begins to show some development in relation to a learning goal or within a band of the learning areas, it is described as *emerging*. They achieve *developing* status when they are working within the level most of the time. *Secure* is used as the descriptor when a child is consistently working within that level.

Early Learning Goals of the EYFS

Communication and Language

Listening and attention: children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and responding to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.

Understanding: children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.

Speaking: children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or will happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

¹ <https://orbit.so/earlyyears>

Physical Development

Moving and handling: children show good control and coordination in large and small movements. They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.

Health and self-care: children know the importance for good health of physical exercise and a healthy diet, and talk about ways to keep healthy and safe. They manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Self-confidence and self-awareness: children are confident to try new activities and say why they like some activities more than others. They are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities. They say when they do or don't need help.

Managing feelings and behaviour: children talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others' behaviour and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. They work as part of a group or class, and understand and follow the rules. They adjust their behaviour to different situations and take changes of routine in their stride.

Making relationships: children play cooperatively, taking turns with others. They take account of one another's ideas about how to organise their activity. They show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings, and form positive relationships with adults and other children.

Literacy

Reading: children read and understand simple sentences. They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.

Writing: children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways that match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

Mathematics

Numbers: children count reliably with numbers from 1 to 20, place them in order and say which number is one more or one less than a given number. Using quantities and objects, they add and subtract two single-digit numbers and count on or back to find the answer. They solve problems, including doubling, halving and sharing.

Shape, space and measures: children use everyday language to talk about size, weight, capacity, position, distance, time and money to compare quantities and objects and to solve problems. They recognise, create and describe patterns. They explore characteristics of everyday objects and shapes and use mathematical language to describe them.

Understanding the World

People and communities: children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They know that other children don't always enjoy the same things, and are sensitive to this. They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.

The world: children know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another. They make observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur, and talk about changes.

Technology: children recognise that a range of technology is used in places such as homes and schools. They select and use technology for particular purposes.

Expressive Arts and Design

Exploring and using media and materials: children sing songs, make music and dance, and experiment with ways of changing them. They safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.

Being imaginative: children use what they have learnt about media and materials in original ways, thinking about uses and purposes. They represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through design and technology, art, music, dance, role-play and stories.