

Cragside Church of England Primary School



EYFS Policy

Revised: September 2018

Date of next Review: September 2019

Related Policies and documents:

- Behaviour Policy
- Welfare and Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety NCC Policy
- Statutory Framework for the early years foundation stage
- Assessment and reporting arrangements, early years foundation stage
- Inspecting safeguarding in maintained schools and academies

(This document is available in an alternative format and in an alternative language on request)

Cragside C of E Primary School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Statement of Belief

At Cragside C of E Primary School we attach great importance to the Foundation Stage, believing that the Early Years are critical in children's development. We aim to build on the valuable work already done by the parents and carers to provide the quality and variety of learning experiences and care that help meet the diverse needs of all our pupils.

1. The Early Years Foundation Stage

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 chances.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 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 gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The EYFS seeks to provide

- **Quality and consistency** in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly;
- **Partnership** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. The learning and development requirements cover:

- The areas of learning and development which must shape activities and experiences (educational programmes) for children in all early years settings;
- The early learning goals that providers must help children work towards (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five); and
- Assessment arrangements for measuring progress (and requirements for reporting to parents and/or carers).
- Safeguarding and welfare requirements which cover the steps that providers must take to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

Cragside Primary School has two Reception classes, run as a Foundation Stage Unit. Each class has a maximum intake of thirty children. Each class is led by a class teacher and the Unit is managed by a Foundation Stage Leader. Each class has a minimum of one full time Teaching assistant.

Each day in the Foundation Unit begins at 8.40am and ends at 3.05pm. Free school meals are available. Parents eligible for school subsidies are encouraged to apply and contact the school office.

Cragside Primary School has a Committee lead Nursery on site. Some children currently enter the Nursery the term after their third birthday and then start the Reception class the September before they are five. Cragside also has a number of pupils, beginning Reception from Nurseries in the local area.

2. The School's aims, ethos and pedagogy

The following principles will underpin delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage at Cragside.

- To provide a happy, secure, well ordered and stimulating environment, where children can develop as individuals through interaction with other children and sensitive adults.
- To impart the caring Christian ethos of the school, where Christian values build on mutual trust, forgiveness, and respect for all.
- To offer a broad and balanced curriculum which extends previous learning, and covers the the seven areas of learning and development and the educational programmes from the EYFS.
- To ensure that the children develop positive attitudes to learning, self motivation, curiosity, confidence and responsibility.
- To provide children with first hand learning experiences rooted in purposeful play in which they can become actively engaged, expressing thoughts, ideas and feelings.
- To cater for a range of different learning styles to produce independent, active learners.
- To develop and maintain partnership with parents sharing good practice in a climate of mutual support.

3. The EYFS Curriculum

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; and
- 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.

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.

Practitioners will consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.

The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively. It is expected that the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime area. If, throughout the early years a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, practitioners must discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child.

Practitioners will consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support. They should link with, and help families to access, relevant services from other agencies as appropriate.

4. Teaching and Learning

Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people, and in the world around them. Development is not an automatic process, however. It depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments.

Practitioners in the Foundation Stage at Cragside strive to support children's learning by;

- Offering stimulating resources, indoors and outside which are relevant to all the children's cultures and communities.
- Providing rich learning opportunities through play and playful teaching.
- Supporting children to take risks and explore.
- Developing strong partnership between practitioners and parents and carers.
- Teaching children by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas of learning and development.
- Fostering the characteristics of effective early learning of playing and exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically.
- Understanding and observing each child's development and learning, assess progress, plan for next steps
- Supporting children to develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture.
- Identifying any need for additional support.
- Keeping children safe.
- Valuing and respecting all children and families equally.
- Establishing a positive whole school approach to behaviour, based upon Christian principles. Treating everyone as we would like to be treated and be willing to forgive.
- Remaining consistent in setting clear boundaries.
- Developing warm and loving relationships that foster a sense of belonging. Practitioners are sensitive and responsive to the child's needs, feelings and interests and support children's efforts and independence.

5. The Observation, Assessment and Planning Cycle (OAP)

On-going formative assessment is at the heart of effective early years practice.

Practitioners:

- Observe children as they act and interact in their play, everyday activities and planned activities, and learn from parents about what the child does at home. Observations are recorded by children's Key worker in the form of notes, videos, annotated examples of work, photographs and dated comments. Observations are then dated and logged in individual children's Interactive Learning Journeys using Tapestry. Long observations related to 'Focus Weeks'. Any observations by parents are recorded in children's Tapestry accounts or in their Home to School books. These opportunities provide chance for parent to record and inform staff of their child's personal developments and achievements at home. Individual children's Learning and next steps is shared at least weekly with parents to make them aware of their child's learning and stages of development.
- Consider the examples of development in the columns headed 'Unique Child: observing what children can do' to help identify where the child may be in their own developmental pathway. They consider ways to support the child to strengthen and deepen their current learning and development, reflecting on guidance in columns headed 'Positive Relationships' and 'Enabling Environments'. These columns contain some examples of what practitioners might do to support learning. Practitioners will develop many other approaches in response to the children with whom they work.
- Where appropriate, in planning, use the development statements to identify possible areas in which to challenge and extend the child's current learning and development.
- Make summative assessments of children on entry and at the end of each term, tracking children's developments in the age bands in relation to actually age and whether they are emerging, developing or secure in that band. Upon

completion of the academic year, assessments are made of the children's achievement of the Early Learning Goals and whether children are emerging, expected or exceeding these.

- Assess any children with additional needs and how these needs are supported. (See Inclusion section)

This way of teaching is particularly appropriate to support learning in early years

6. Inclusion

The EYFS is an inclusive curriculum and practitioners strive to provide an inclusive environment and meet the needs of all children. Supporting factors to achieve this include;

- Key workers secure knowledge and thorough understanding of the EYFS
- Use of the Early Years Inclusion Tool Kit to record documentation
- Thorough involvement of all Practitioners, Key workers, SENCO, Parents, Carers and external Advisors. Partnership with parents and carers when supporting inclusion is fundamental.
- Use of support staff when working with specific groups of children

7. Partnership with Parents

The EYFS recognises the crucial role parents play in supporting their child's learning and development at this early stage in their life. Practitioners will develop a wide range of ways to involve parents in the life of the school and more specifically in understanding the EYFS curriculum and developing their skills and confidence in supporting their own child.

We will endeavour to do this by;

- Encouraging parents to be involved in the setting on a regular basis. Parents are welcome to speak to staff briefly at the beginning or end of the school day or arrange convenient times for longer discussion.
- Parents are invited in for open mornings/afternoons, informative events such as New starters meetings/Reading meetings/Numeracy afternoons, Class assemblies etc.
- Interactive Learning Journeys highlight children's progress, developments and next steps and are shared at least weekly with parents over the year.
- Focus child weeks provide opportunity to check with parents about what their children tell them they like doing at school, what they enjoy at home. These weeks are also used to observe and assess children whilst in their play and report back to parents.
- Parents are invited to termly parents meetings over the year. Targets are issued for each child alongside each parents meeting.
- Newsletters informing parents of learning are issued half termly. School newsletters informing parents of events and learning in the EYFS are issued weekly.
- Reading logs are used to host discussion of reading progress. Letters and sounds home work, Mathematics and Reading challenges are used as an opportunity to promote learning and encourage parents to encourage their child at home. The schools text messaging service is used regularly to reward and encourage learning at home.
- If practitioners identify a child has an additional need parents will be supported in meeting their child's need through regular discussion with Key workers, Teaching Staff, the Senco or advisors from external agencies depending upon the child's needs. The appropriate documentation from the Early Years Inclusion Toolkit will be shared with parents.

- Children will be allocated Key workers depending on each child's individual need. The Key person's role includes building relationships with parents, engaging and supporting parents in guiding their child's development at home and helping families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.
- Parents are asked to complete a Home/School Agreement setting out roles and responsibilities in the partnership

8. Transitions

We aim to make transitions in school exciting and successful for all concerned.

We facilitate transition by

:

- Making formal information available to parents/carers including;
 - How the EYFS is being delivered in the setting, and how parents and/or carers can access more information (for example, via the DfE website or to view the school website for the EYFS policy);
 - The range and type of activities and experiences provided for children, the daily routines of the setting, and how parents and carers can share learning at home
 - How the setting supports children with special educational needs and disabilities
 - Food and drinks provided for children;
 - Details of the provider's policies and procedures
 - Staffing in the setting; the name of their child's key person and their role; and a telephone number for parents and/or carers to contact school in an emergency.
- Provide opportunities to visit, meet staff visit the EYFS classrooms.
- Source information from previous providers and parents to help staff prepare to meet children's needs. Contact is made with any previous settings and telephone calls and visits by teaching staff are made to previous Key workers. Where possible teaching staff from Cragside will visit pupils in Nursery settings. Data and information is received from Nursery settings and parents about a child's achievements, welfare, needs, special interests etc.
- Reception pupils begin the school year with a staggered induction, attending morning or afternoon sessions initially and building up to full days over three weeks.
- We support transition into Key stage one by hosting a transition meeting for parents, holding a moving up day for children so children can spend time in new classes with new teaching staff and ensuring Reception practitioners share information of needs, data and children's achievements with Year One teaching staff.

9. Welfare and Safeguarding

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements are outlined in the schools Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Policy, however specific information regarding EYFS Welfare and Safeguarding is outlined as follows.

- Current Early Years Foundation Stage Staff are as follows;

Kathryn Westgarth- EYFS Leader, Reception Class Teacher

Lindsey Pemberton- Reception Class Teacher

Sarah Middlemiss- Apprentice/LSA

Bethany Johnon-Green- LSA

Demi Roylance- LSA

Dawn Gilroy- LSA, NVQ3, Whole school qualified for First Aid and Paediatric First trained.

Joanne Parker- SENCO and designated Staff member for Child Protection in School

Paul Rusby- Deputy designated staff member for Child Protection

- The Key person

Each child is assigned a key person. Key worker list's are held with class teachers and kept in Welfare and Safeguarding file.

- Staff ratios

Legislation outlines that in a normal teaching session, a school must employ sufficient school teachers to enable it to teach its infant classes in groups of no more than thirty per school teacher.

- Health and Dietary Requirements

It is School policy to promote the good health of children attending the setting. It is school procedure to inform parents via letter of any accident or incident of ill health the child has had during a school day and record these incidents in a medical book. First Aid Boxes are located in each Early Years classroom. Kathryn Westgarth, Lindsey Pemberton, Sarah Middlemiss, Bethan Johnson-Green and Dawn Gilroy are all registered to administer Paediatric First Aid. School will notify Ofsted or child protection agencies of any serious accident, illness or injury to, or death of, any child while in their care, and of the action taken.

It is practitioner's judgement to respond to children who are ill or infectious, take necessary steps to inform parents and prevent the spread of infection.

For School policy on the administration of medicines please refer to whole school Safeguarding children policy.

Fresh water is available for children at all times. All practitioners are aware of any dietary, food or health requirements of pupils in class. Medical, dietary and health requirements of children in the Early Years are located with teaching staff and in the School additional needs register.

- Managing behaviour

Please see whole school Behaviour for learning policy.

- The suitability of premises, environment and equipment

Practitioners ensure that the premises, including outdoor spaces, are fit for purpose. Spaces, furniture, equipment and toys are kept safe for children to use and premises are kept secure. The staff keep premises and equipment clean, and are aware of, and comply with, EYFS risk assessments and requirements of health and safety legislation (including hygiene requirements). Please refer to Safeguarding children Policy.

All EYFS staff are aware of reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, staff and others on the premises in the case of fire or any other emergency, and have an emergency evacuation procedure. Classrooms are fitted with fire detection and control equipment which is in working order. Fire exits are clearly identifiable, and fire doors are kept free of obstruction and easily opened from the inside.

EYFS classroom provides free flow access to the outdoor area daily (unless in the circumstance of unsafe weather conditions). There are an adequate number of toilets and hand washing facilities and spare clothes are always available.

There are areas where staff may talk to parents and/or carers confidentially and the staff room provides a setting for staff to take breaks away from areas being used by children.

Practitioners only release children into the care of individuals who have been notified to the provider by the parent, and ensure that children do not leave the premises unsupervised. Practitioners take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises, and an agreed procedure for checking the identity of visitors via the school office is in place.

Risk assessments are currently in place for any risks or hazards in the EYFS indoor and outdoor space. These can be located in the EYFS Welfare File. It is of uppermost importance that children must be kept safe while on outings, written parental permission is always obtained for children to take part in outings. Practitioners must assess the risks

or hazards which may arise for the children and steps are taken to remove, minimise and manage those risks and hazards. The assessment must include consideration of adult to child ratios. Risk assessments are recorded using the counties EVOLVE system.

10. Continuous Quality Improvement

At Cragside we strive to ensure provision for children in the EYFS is evaluated and continual efforts are made to enhance and improve. This process of self-evaluation and improvement planning is linked to the school SEF and Development Plan.

- As EYFS leader Kathryn Westgarth leads on EYFS quality improvement.
- Self-evaluation regularly takes place in the form of lesson observations, data analysis and monitoring of the Early Years Action plan.
- How areas for development are prioritised and actions to improve are planned using an Early Years Action plan. This links to staff CPD and improvement of EYFS quality. The EYFS action plan is monitored half termly to review progress and next steps.
- Cragside is currently a member of Northumberland EYFS SLA which provides support from the Local Authority Early Years team and supports the process of continuous quality improvement.

Policy Date: September 2018

Review Date: September 2019