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Signed by Chair of Governors	 Rishi Makwana 21/11/18	Signed by Headteacher	

ETWALL PRIMARY SCHOOL: EARLY YEARS POLICY

“Etwall Primary School focuses on excellence and ensures all children achieve Personal and academic success. We provide a happy, secure and stimulating environment; instil the highest standards of attitude, behaviour, achievement improvement and development”

INTRODUCTION

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A Child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.”

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school, the children start full time in the September of the academic year in which they are five.

The EYFS is based upon overarching principles:

A Unique Child – who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;

Positive Relationships – children learn to be strong and independent through having positive relationships.

Enabling Environments – 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.

Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve through:

- **quality and consistency** in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
- **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 working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;

- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

At Etwall Primary School we aim to achieve these outcomes by:

- ❖ Providing an environment where the children can experience and explore.
- ❖ Setting the standards for the learning, development and care of young children.
- ❖ Providing equal opportunity and anti- discriminatory practice.
- ❖ Creating the framework for partnership by working with parents, the community, professionals and all settings the child attends.
- ❖ Ensuring that learning and development is planned around the individual needs and interests of the child and informed by the use of on-going observational assessment.

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage should underpin all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

Communication and language – Children will be given lots of opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical development – Children will be provided lots of opportunities to be active and interactive; to develop their co-ordination, control and movement Children will be taught the importance of physical activity and make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, social and emotional development – We will help children develop a positive sense of themselves and others. They will learn to form positive relationships and develop respect for others. Develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings and understand appropriate behaviour. Children to become confident in their own abilities.

Literacy – Children will be taught to link sounds and letters and begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest.

Mathematics – Children will have lots of opportunities to develop and improve their skills of counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating addition and subtraction problems. They will be taught to describe shapes, spaces and measures.

Understanding the world – Children will be guided 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 – Children will explore and play with a wide range of media and materials as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.

The Nature of Learning

The three 'prime' areas:

- Communication and language

- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The four 'specific' areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

A Unique Child

At Etwall Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- ❖ planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- ❖ using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- ❖ providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- ❖ providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- ❖ using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- ❖ planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- ❖ Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.
- ❖ Seeking advice from specialist agencies where appropriate.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)

Welfare

"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 understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012.

We understand that we are required to:

- ❖ Promote the welfare of children.
- ❖ Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- ❖ Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ❖ Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ❖ Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.
- ❖ Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- ❖ Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through a comprehensive induction process and continued dialogue through out the year:

- ❖ talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- ❖ the children have the opportunity to spend time in Woodpeckers Class during the half term before starting school;
- ❖ inviting all parents to induction meetings during the term before their child starts school and then workshops in the September;

- ❖ To have discussions prior to the transition to our school with other settings and where appropriate including a visit.
- ❖ Provide opportunities for a home visit.
- ❖ Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- ❖ Provide an open drop in session regularly for informal discussions.

There is a formal meeting for parents in the Autumn and Spring terms at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress with the teacher.

Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the Foundation Stage;

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children and their families, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. All EYFS staff are allocated as a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, with ultimate responsibility with the class teachers. All members of the EYFS team are a 'key person' to groups of children.

Enabling Environments

Our environment is carefully planned both indoors and outdoors to help children achieve across all aspects of the EYFS, providing children with learning choices. Opportunities are provided for children to take part in a wide range of experiences and to extend their interests.

We meet the needs of all of our children by:

- ❖ encouraging children to communicate and talk about their experiences.
- ❖ developing children's independence and decision making by providing an environment where children can freely access resources and select from the experiences on offer.
- ❖ using the outdoor environment on a regular / daily basis to enhance learning and development.
- ❖ analysing children's responses to different situations and identifying their future learning needs.
- ❖ using materials and equipment that reflects both the community that the children come from and the wider world.
- ❖ encouraging a positive attitude to learning by ensuring our planning begins by observing the children in order to consider their current interests, developmental stage and learning style.

We plan to build on what the children know, understand and can do.

Planning, Observation and Assessment

All staff is committed to planning as a team around the needs and interests of the children.

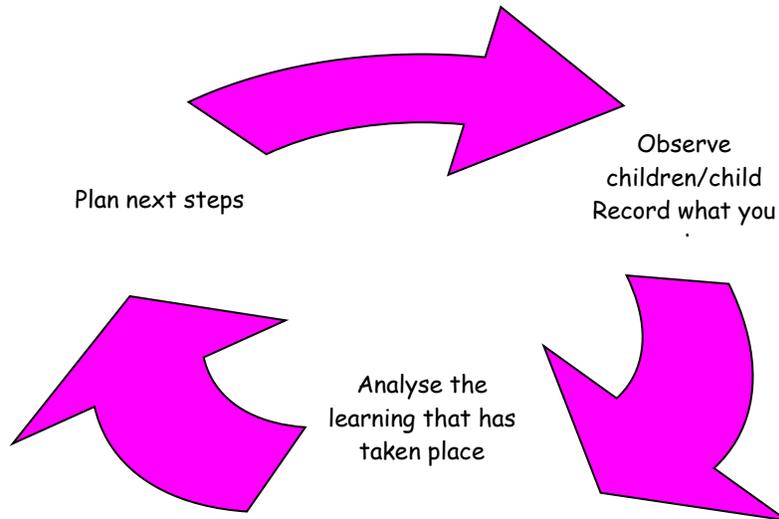
LONG TERM PLANS

Long term planning provides a strong framework for working with 3-5 year olds.

We base our plans on the Foundation Stage curriculum. This is the over-arching framework that informs all others stages of planning. It shows the range of experiences/learning opportunities that are available whilst the children are in the foundation stage.

MEDIUM and SHORT TERM PLANS

The Planning within the EYFS is based around half termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning; however the teacher may alter these in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning. Planning meetings are held weekly between staff. At these meetings activities/learning objectives are selected from our medium plans as deemed appropriate to meet the needs and interests of the children.



Through observation we assess the children’s interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children’s learning. We make regular assessments of children’s learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observations and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways and used to inform the EYFSP.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG’s and assessment scales. The parents are given the opportunity to discuss these judgments with the teacher and both parents and children are encouraged to complete a feedback sheet.

The Learning Environment

The Reception Class is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are zones where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The unit is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and located equipment and resources independently. The Reception Class has its own secure, enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children’s development. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning. See the outdoor policy.

OBSERVATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

Assessment of particular areas of the curriculum is part of the on-going planning.

Methods of Observation

- Planned focused observations and analysis.

- Daily observational jottings noting children’s significant achievements.
- Photographic evidence – dated.
- Time is planned for sharing and evaluating observations and incorporating plans for individual children into weekly planning.
- Regular summative assessment of individual children leading to the setting of learning priorities for the next few months.

Records

- An entry assessment Baseline is undertaken on entry to our Reception Classes.
- Each child in the Early Years has a ‘Learning Journal’ which contains a collection of different documents collected by Early Years practitioners that provide a picture of a child’s development under the areas of learning identified in the EYFS. They consist of photos, artwork, mark-making, writing with observations made including notes of relevant conversations or comments made by the child.
- Star moments from parents and carers.

The aim is to build a unique picture of what each child knows, feels and can do as well as their particular interests and learning style. This picture can then be used to pinpoint learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating learning experiences. This information informs itrack data tracking.

Each child will be discussed and observations shown to the Year 1 teacher and if a child has not achieved the Early Years assessment scales then the Year 1 teacher will work on these until they are achieved.

Learning and Development

Our three aims are:

- there must be *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).

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often linked.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on Teaching and Learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. It includes whole class teaching, working with small groups or individuals and on-going observations. Features of good practice in our school that relate to the Early Years Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;

- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching; we start from the child and his/her needs and plan the learning linked to our assessments and observations.
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication; we believe that children learn through active, hands-on experiences both in and outside of the classroom.
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through 'Assessment for Learning' of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- the clear aims and success criteria for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate our planning and improve what we do;
- The regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Early Years Foundation Stage using the Performance Management system to inform this.

Play

"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development."

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They have the opportunity to practise skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually. The children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Characteristics of Learning

Active Learning

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods."

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS Leader and all EYFS Staff to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor has the opportunity to discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head teacher and subject coordinators carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Associated Policies and Documentation

Health and Safety
SEN
Equal Opportunity
Outdoor Policy