



EARLY YEARS POLICY

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the academic year in which a child has their fifth birthday.

The EYFS is statutory and is detailed under the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* and the *Practical Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage*.

INTENT

We follow the statutory framework and guidance detailed in the EYFS using our extensive experience we observe, plan and teach children in early years.

We provide a broad and balanced Early Years curriculum: -

- based on first hand experiences and purposeful interactions
 - through 'in the moment planning' opportunities and carefully planned adult or child-initiated activities
 - whilst having a regard for the skills and attitudes the Key Stage One curriculum will demand
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- We recognise all children as individuals.
 - We aim to make the child's first experience of school happy, positive and fun.
 - We aim to foster a love of learning and develop enquiring minds through promoting
 - We aim to instil the Characteristics of Effective Learning such as independence, resilience and confidence
 - We aim to promote emotional well-being
 - We aim to build positive relationships and work in partnership with families (recognising that parents are their child's first and foremost educator), carers and professionals to support every child to develop and learn.

IMPLEMENT

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning throughout our school. These features equally apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS. Within the EYFS the development of a holistic learner is recognised based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to humanitarian values such as compassion.

Teaching in the EYFS:

- Has a carefully planned curriculum which aims for all children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS.
- Involves creating adult and child-initiated opportunities that will encourage children to explore, create, investigate, rehearse, practise, repeat and discover
- Involves developing Characteristics of Effective Learning
- Involves a well-planned, purposeful learning environment.
- Uses a multi-sensory, play-based approach
- Shows awareness of the different ways and rates by which children develop and learn; that there are many factors affecting achievement including ability, emotional state, age and maturity, and how this informs teaching strategies.
- Has a high expectation of children's behaviour and attainment.
- Recognises the importance of emotional well-being.
- Is outside as much as possible ensuring children take ownership of their learning
- Provides support to SEN pupils

Learning in the EYFS

- Through a comprehensive induction programme from home to school and/or from a child's previous setting to ours, we ensure prior learning and development is valued and the transition into school is supported.
- We encourage cross-curricular links to ensure a seamless transition into Key Stage One by building on previous experiences and planning those for the future.

In the EYFS children are learning when they: -

- Collaborate and learn from one another through shared experiences
- Are supported to set their own challenges in their physical environment and in their learning
- Access resources independently
- Use their senses to explore and investigate
- Develop persistence and positive attitudes to learning as detailed in the Characteristics of Effective Learning

Play in the EYFS

We highly value play and the learning it brings in itself. Anyone who has observed play for any length of time will recognise that, for young children, play is a tool for learning.

Through play children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules thereby developing emotional resilience and self-regulation.

Children have the opportunity to think creatively and problem solve alongside others. They express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations as well as re-enact positive experiences building self-awareness and self-esteem.

Inclusion in the EYFS

In consultation and working collaboratively with parents/guardians the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) will lead on provision for children who may experience barriers to their learning, which may relate to sensory or physical impairment, learning difficulties or emotional or social development in line with the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice (2014) and the school's SEN/Inclusion Policy.

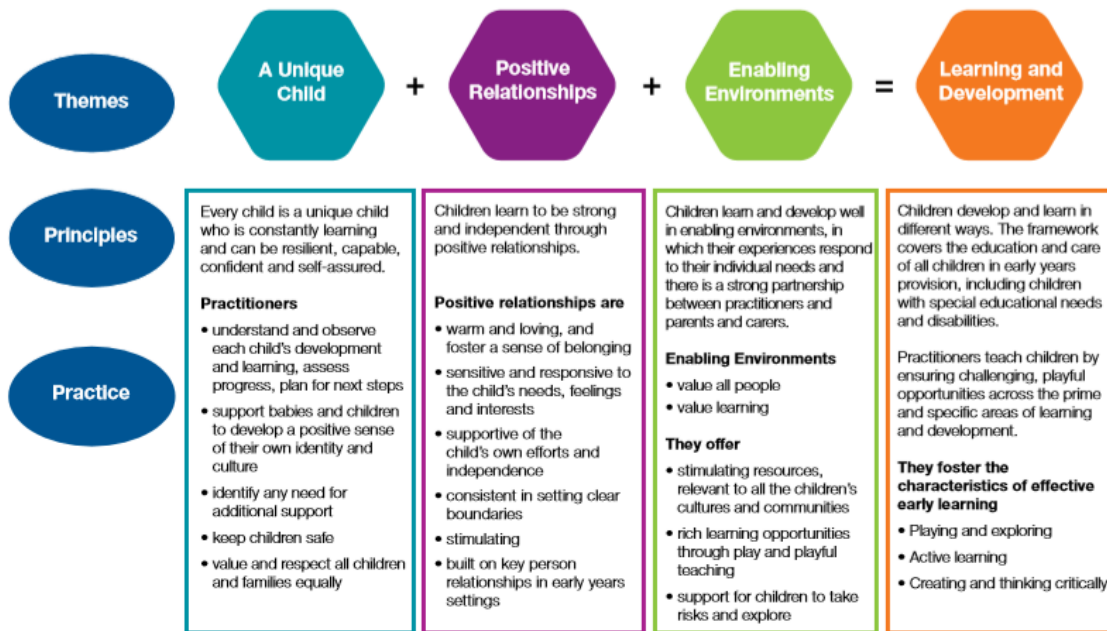
We aim to meet the needs of all our children by: -

- Setting realistic and challenging expectations. We aim for all children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS. We achieve this by planning for different learning styles, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities or medical needs, children from all social and cultural backgrounds as well as children with diverse linguistic backgrounds. All information is contained within individual Plan, Do, review documents which are shared with parents/career on a termly basis.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contributions of all children are valued.
- Using resources, which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping which all children have equal access to.
- Monitoring children's progress and providing support where necessary, within the resources available to the school. This may include a phased transition programme dependant on a child's specific SEN needs.
- Providing specific targets detailed in Individual Support Plans (ISP) and following external therapy or support programmes of work such as Speech and Language
- Working collaboratively with families or carers, the SENCo and other professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists and Parent Support Advisor.

EHCP reviews are conducted in line with approved guidance (6 months under 5 and yearly for over 5s).

The EYFS Curriculum

The EYFS is statutory and is important in its own right as a basis for developing essential skills such as listening, speaking, persistence and collaborating with each other. The three prime areas cover the knowledge and skills which are the foundations for future progress, and which are applied and reinforced by the specific areas. All areas of learning are equally important and are interlinked.



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Our curriculum enables the child to learn and develop skills, attitudes and understanding in the following areas of learning:

Prime areas:

- Personal, Emotional and Social Development. (PSED)
- Communication and Language. (CL)
- Physical development (PD)

Specific areas:

- Mathematics
- Literacy
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Art and Design

The Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals guide our long term planning together with the termly topics. In F1 activities are planned around the children's current needs, schemas and interests to ensure all areas of the EYFS curriculum are embraced.

Medium term planning is completed half termly and identifies the intended learning outcomes (based on assessment) and takes into account children working at or towards the exceeding level.

Weekly Planning focuses on day-to-day organisation of activities. It takes into account that children's learning is not necessarily sequential and that they may need time to consolidate, repeat and extend their learning in their own way. All planning is evaluated on an on-going basis and adapted in response to the children's needs and interests.

The EYFS also highlight the Characteristic of Learning as important skills for learning. The focus of the CoEL is on how children learn rather than what they learn i.e. process over outcome. Underpinning the CoEL is the understanding that during their earliest years, children form attitudes about learning that will last a lifetime. Children who receive the right sort of support and encouragement during these years will be creative, and adventurous learners throughout their lives.

Playing and Exploring

(Engagement)

Finding out and exploring:

- Showing curiosity about objects, events and people
- Using senses to explore the world around them
- Engaging in open-ended activity
- Showing particular interests

Playing with what they know:

- Pretending objects are things from their experience
- Representing their experiences in play
- Taking on a role in their play
- Acting out experiences with other people

Being willing to 'have a go':

- Initiating activities
- Seeking challenge
- Showing a 'can do' attitude

Taking a risk, engaging in new experiences, and learning by trial and error

Active Learning

(Motivation)

Being involved and concentrating:

- Maintaining focus on their activity for a period of time
- Showing high levels of energy, fascination
- Not easily distracted
- Paying attention to details

Keeping on trying:

- Persisting with activity when challenges occur
- Showing a belief more effort or a different approach will pay off
- Bouncing back after difficulties

Enjoying achieving what they set out to do:

- Showing satisfaction in meeting their own goals
- Being proud of how they accomplished something – not just the end result

Enjoying meeting challenges for their own sake rather than external rewards or praise

Creating and Thinking Critically (thinking)

Having their own ideas:

- Thinking of ideas
- Finding ways to solve problems
- Finding new ways to do things

Making links:

- Making links and noticing patterns in their experience
- Making predictions
- Testing their ideas
- Developing ideas of grouping, sequences, cause and effect

Choosing ways to do things:

- Planning, making decisions and how to approach a task, solve a problem and reach a goal
- Checking how well their activities are going
- Changing strategy as needed
- Reviewing how well the approach worked

Assessment in the EYFS

During the children's first half term in the F1 and F2 classes, the teacher assesses each child's development and learning attainment against the criteria set out in Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals. It is also a time for the teacher to discover the unique personality and interests of each child.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure future planning reflects individual or group needs. Once a term, summative assessments are entered on to Tapestry.

Formative assessment in the Foundation Stage is continuous and takes the form of observations, examples of child-initiated work and samples of dated work from books and photographs. The teachers and teaching assistants enter all of this information on Tapestry to build a growing picture of each child's abilities. These records are passed onto Year One teachers to ensure a smooth transition.

We have regular termly parents' meetings take place to ensure parents/carers are informed of their child's progress and next steps in learning. In F2, in addition to parents' meetings in the Autumn and Spring terms, parents receive an annual report that offers detailed comments on each child's progress in each area of learning and their Characteristics of Effective Learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs. The children are also given opportunity to comment on areas they would like to improve.

Reflection in the EYFS

We continually reflect upon our practise. SPCMAT EYFS Network groups, EYFS training, school monitoring by subject leaders and Senior Leadership Team, School Improvement Partner visits, SPCMAT Executive Lead visits and working with other setting within the Trust enable us to keep improving our practise and keep asking questions. Aspects of practise which need to develop further become part of the School Development Plan and are evaluated through-out the year with Governors. This enables us to continually evaluate our aims, the quality of our education, the behaviour and attitudes of children, personal development of children and our own leadership and management.

Working with Parents/ carers and other significant adults i.e. childminders

We recognise the importance of working alongside parents and other significant adults during a child's education. We do this through: -

- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Giving the children the opportunity to spend several mornings or afternoons with their teacher before starting school.
- Sharing children's learning on Tapestry and encouraging parents to share learning from home.
- Operating an open door policy that encourages parental communication.
- Providing formal meetings for parents during the school year to discuss children's progress.
- Welcoming parents to discuss any concerns with the teacher and/or teaching assistants.
- Working to build good relationships with families to promote a regular two-way flow of information.
- Providing parental training sessions from staff within the school to explore early learning (e.g. phonics/reading support).
- Sharing home learning resources and providing up to date information on EYFS and our practise on the website.
- Leading Plan, Do, Review Meetings where necessary

The Environment and Resources in the EYFS

A rich and varied 'enabling' environment is actively planned for and continuously developed with varied multi-cultural and inclusive resources to encourage exploratory play-based learning and challenge. The learning environment encompasses both indoor and outdoor provision, which are of equal importance. Children are encouraged to experience all areas of the learning environment in all weathers. Both F1 and F2 have direct access to the outdoors to ensure free-flow. Additional opportunities to explore the wider school grounds, such as the playground and forest school area are provided on a regular basis. We encourage children to plan their own selection of activities balanced with adult initiated activities.

Intimate Care in the EYFS

Where pupils require the support of a member of the class staff team to complete personal care and intimate care routines, staff will follow procedure as set out in the Personal and Intimate Care Policy and Staff Code of Conduct in line with the whole school.

Where pupils require additional intimate care in F2 to help with their needs a specific action plan will be written with the parents/carers, following the information set out in the Personal and Intimate Care Policy. Staff will receive additional support or training if needed to ensure they are able to meet the needs of the child.

IMPACT

- The majority of children in Reception reach the ELG by the end of Summer
- Children develop the characteristics of effective learning which helps them through the rest of school
- Children develop the ability to manage risks
- Children enjoy being independent in managing themselves and their learning
- 100% of parents are happy with their child's progress
- Parents feel part of the school community
- Practise is improved year on year
- Everyone is included
- Children have high levels of wellbeing and involvement

Date of review:

Reviewed by: