



**Probus Primary School and Little Acorns Pre-School**

**Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

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

*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 keep 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 is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

### **A Unique Child**

At Probus Primary School and Little Acorns Pre-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/ sharing assemblies 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 at Probus Primary School and Little Acorns Pre-School 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, interests and stage of development, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs guiding their development through warm, positive interaction;
- 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.

It is important to us that all children in our setting 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 - Keeping Children safe in Education Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy)

### *Safeguarding and 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."

At Probus Primary School and Little Acorns Pre-School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017. We understand that we are required to:

- safeguard children
- ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children
- promote good health
- manage behaviour effectively in an appropriate way
- ensure the safety and suitability of premises, environment and equipment are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children being cared for
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe and efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

### **Positive Relationships**

At Probus Primary School and Little Acorns Pre-School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through positive 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:*

- *talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school*
- *completing an 'All About Me' book when they start in Reception Class and a parent sharing form for Pre-School;*
- *the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during 'Transition' sessions;*
- *inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts Pre-School/School;*
- *offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our pre-school and Reception Class and allowing free access to the children's 'Learning Journeys' as a hardcopy or online;*
- *encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents 2 x a year in Reception Class at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. In Pre-school parents are invited throughout the year to talk to their child's key worker. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;*
- *encouraging parents to share their child's 'WOW' moments from home;*
- *arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Share days, Class assemblies, Sports Day and many other opportunities.*

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop excellent relationships with all children, interacting positively with them, taking time to listen to them and play with them to ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs. At our school the EYFS teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the class Teaching Assistant. In Pre-School each child is assigned a 'Key Person'.

The EYFS leaders meet with staff from other settings to discuss and observe new intake children.

## **Enabling Environments**

At Probus Primary School and Little Acorns Pre-School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. In order for any Early Years environment to be enabling it is essential that all staff understand how children learn and the value of play and children's independence. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

## *Observation, Assessment and Planning*

Planning within the EYFS follows the schools' Long Term Plan and Medium Term Plans (MTP's), which are based around half termly Cornerstones Curriculum topic plans. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning, however the teachers may alter these MTP's in response to the interests, needs and achievements of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

*We make regular ongoing 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 observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in children's individual 'Learning Journeys' on Tapestry (online Learning Journey). They also contain information provided by parents.*

At Probus Primary School, we use a robust tracking system to record judgements against the EYFS Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the 7 areas of learning and 17 assessment scales derived from the ELG's. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's and assessment scales. We give an opportunity for parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher. At Pre-School we provide parents with their children's learning journeys showing their progress throughout the year. Parents have an opportunity to discuss these with their child's Key Person.

### *The Learning Environment*

The EYFS learning areas are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, or be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS phase has its own enclosed outdoor area as well as an open sensory garden and outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunities to explore using their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

### Learning and Development

At Probus Primary School and Little Acorns Pre-School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development and understand that they are important and inter connected.

### *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 EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 2. Features that relate to the EYFS 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;
- 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;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- 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 observations, which are shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

*"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'."

Play provides the natural, imaginative and motivating contexts for children to learn about themselves, one another and the world around them. They practice and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

#### *Active Learning*

"Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements."

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning as they learn together and from each other. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions, try different approaches, persist and have new ideas. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

#### *Creativity and Critical Thinking*

"Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things."

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

#### *Areas of Learning*

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- 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.

### **Monitoring and review**

*It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy.  
The Head of School, EYFS coordinator and Pre-School Team Leader will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.*

*This policy will be reviewed in **February 2019**.*

*All quotes taken from: Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage; Published 3 March 2017;  
DfE*