

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Our school promotes perseverance, resilience and mutual respect. Working in partnership with families, we ensure that all children are given the best opportunities throughout their educational journey. Children at Chase Lane embrace challenge and make the best possible progress to enhance their life choices in an ever changing, diverse modern Britain.

November 2023

<i>Title:</i>	Early Years Foundation Stage
<i>Function:</i>	Information and Reference
<i>Subject Category:</i>	Curriculum
<i>Audience:</i>	Staff, Parents, Children and Governors
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<i>Member of Staff Responsible:</i>	EYFS Phase Leader

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in our school extends from the age of three to the end of the Reception year. Entry into our primary school will be in the September of the academic year that the child will be five (although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday).

Admissions and Transition arrangements for the EYFS

Most children joining our school have been learning in one of the various pre-school settings in our community. The EYFS Reception class teachers will aim to visit every child in the Nursery or pre-school setting that they attend in the term before they start school at Chase Lane. In addition to this visit, we also offer two different taster sessions where they will have the opportunity to meet the children in their new class and become familiar with the new classroom and members of staff in the EYFS team. New starters are invited to attend one stay and play session with their parents and the second session, we encourage the children to stay on their own.

Please refer to the separate policy for specific admission arrangements for our Nursery and Reception classes.

The EYFS curriculum

Our curriculum for the EYFS reflects the Areas of Learning identified in the "Development Matters" document. This non-statutory guidance supports all EYFS practitioners to implement the statutory requirements of the EYFS. We plan for activities which cater for all aspects of the Characteristics of Effective Learning – as defined in "Development Matters" which enable the children to develop competency and skill across all areas of learning, both Prime and Specific.

"Development Matters" and the EYFS statutory Framework provide the basis for planning throughout the EYFS. Teachers use these documents to plan age appropriate activities and where appropriate, to plan support for individual children. Our medium-term planning is completed half-termly, and identifies the intended learning outcomes and planned activities which relate to each topic.

Where possible, we endeavour to provide real life experiences that relate to our topics and curriculum, to enhance their learning. We make links with the local community.

Aims and objectives of the EYFS

"Every child deserves the best possible to start in life, as well as support to reach 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." EYFS 2012

We believe that all children are born ready, able and eager to learn. Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. Children learn and develop well in enabling environments in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and where there is a strong relationship between practitioners and parents/carers. We aim to foster the characteristics of effective early learning by promoting playing and exploring, active learning and creating opportunities to think critically. The Early Years curriculum consists of seven areas of learning, three **Prime** areas and four *Specific* areas:

- **Personal, Social and Emotional development**
- **Physical development**
- **Communication and Language**
- *Literacy (Reading and Writing)*
- *Mathematics*
- *Understanding of the world*

- *Expressive Arts and Design*

The EYFS Curriculum also states that children learn in different ways; by playing and exploring, actively learning and creating and thinking critically.

Play and Exploring

“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.” EYFS 2012

Through play, our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own. They communicate and share experiences with others as they investigate and solve problems in a controlled and safe environment.

“Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult led and child initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part of children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more structured learning, ready for year one.” EYFS 2012

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.” EYFS 2012

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

Creating and Thinking Critically

“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.” EYFS 2012

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.

Teaching and learning in the EYFS

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS. Please refer to the separate policy for specific teaching and learning strategies that are consistent across the school.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the EYFS are:

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

- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication
- 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 space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors
- the identification, through year round observations of children's progress and future learning needs which are recorded, assessed, which inform planning and are regularly shared with parents
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working in the EYFS.

In Literacy, we use a phonics programme called 'Read Write Inc' to teach our children to read. We use 'Talk for Writing' to develop a love for stories, story-telling and to help teach children to write. We ensure we also read a variety of high quality story texts, as well as non-fiction, poems and nursery rhymes throughout each day. To develop gross motor skills, pencil control and the early foundations of handwriting, we teach children to make marks using the 'Squiggle While You Wiggle' programme, which is fun, exciting and accompanied by music. Kinetic Letters is then used to teach the correct letter formations, eventually leading to a fluent handwriting style.

In Maths, we follow 'White Rose Maths' which enables us to deliver a curriculum that embeds mathematical thinking and talk, through a hands-on, play based approach. We use concrete and pictorial resources to help support our learners, moving on to abstract approaches when children are ready. We also embed mathematical skills through daily maths meetings. As teachers, we ensure maths is everywhere within our learning environments to help children make links in their learning.

Inclusion in the EYFS

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.

At Chase Lane Primary School and Nursery, we believe that all of our children matter and take pride in giving them 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. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the school SENCo is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's inclusion policy for SEN.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively
- offering a safe, supportive and enabling learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued

- employing resources that reflect the diverse nature of our local, national and global community
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- monitoring children's progress, and providing support (e.g. speech & language support or behaviour support), as necessary.

Assessment in the EYFS

During the first six weeks of a child starting school, the EYFS practitioners carry out the compulsory 'Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)'.

In the first half term, we also spend time getting to know our children through play based activities and carry out our own additional assessments to gain a deeper understanding of our individual children. We use this information to set personalised next steps for our pupils that we update once these skills have been achieved. If needed, specific, targeted interventions can be set up.

We assess all children using the 'WellComm' screening toolkit, enabling us to identify children needing support with their speech and language development. We can then implement class based approaches if possible, or refer pupils to our speech and language teaching assistant. If further support is needed, we assess pupils using the 'Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI)' and run this programme in the Spring term.

Half termly, EYFS teachers track our pupils' attainment against the prime areas of learning, as well as reading, writing and mathematics, so that progress can be clearly monitored. We share this information with parents regularly through Tapestry updates and parent meetings.

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, an EYFS profile is completed for each child. The profile provides parents/carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels and their readiness for year 1. This information is passed on to year 1 teachers and shared with parents in their child's end of year school report.

The role of parents / carers in the EYFS

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We therefore 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
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk to the EYFS practitioner about their child's progress in our nursery and Reception classes
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns
- inviting parents to attend our half termly, 'Welcome Wednesday' sessions
- offering phonics workshops to all parents
- using the online portal, Tapestry, to complete observations on the children in the Reception setting which parents have free access to and are encouraged to contribute to
- offering a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents such as special assemblies and sports day
- providing a detailed end of year report
- updating our school website and class pages

Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. In line with current guidelines and best practice, we encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, to treat equipment and resources with care and

consideration for others and to enjoy and achieve during their time in EYFS as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the EYFS phase leader every year. At every review, the policy will be shared with the curriculum committee and governing body.

This policy will be reviewed in September 2024.