

Cockton Hill Infants' School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

The purpose of this policy statement is to reflect our own school philosophy on the implementation of the foundation stage.

This policy refers to children between the ages of two and five years within our Nursery and two Reception Classes, 1 and 2.

Rationale

This states the aims of the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. While being a preparation for work or the next stage of education we must remember that early childhood is a part of life, with its own intrinsic value. We believe that in the early years children learn best through first hand experience

We aim to:

- foster personal social and emotional well-being,
- support the transition to and between settings,
- promote an inclusive ethos,
- provide opportunities for each child to become a valued member of their group and community,
- develop a strong self-image and self-esteem,
- promote positive attitudes and dispositions to learning,
- develop an enthusiasm for knowledge and learning, and
- engender confidence in children's ability to be successful learners,
- enhance social skills,
- provide opportunities that enable children to learn how to co-operate and work harmoniously alongside, and with, each other and to listen to each other, and
- promote attention skills and persistence, particularly children's capacity to concentrate on their own play or group tasks.

Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 statutory framework of the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. The framework also include the Characteristics of Effective Learning which demonstrate how the children learn rather than what they learn. The 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy

- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Young Children's Learning

Young children learn most effectively within a challenging and carefully resourced environment, and through planned and purposeful play activities. Spontaneous play is valued, extended and supported and an appropriate balance is maintained between child-initiated and adult-directed activities. Play is used as a context through which language and communication is developed and extended

Through play children can:

- explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world;
- practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills;
- learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules;
- be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk or rehearse their feelings;
- take risks and make mistakes;
- think creatively and imaginatively;
- communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems;
- express fears or rehearse anxious experiences in a safe and secure environment.

We recognise that how children are encouraged to learn is as important as what they learn.

Promoting Young Children's Learning

Children have opportunities to learn through explanation, exposition, direct whole-class teaching, discussion, asking questions, trying, copying, practising, repeating, succeeding and making mistakes in a safe and secure environment. Many of these opportunities are brought together through play and talk.

The organisation of the classroom, the grouping of children and the management of their learning ensure that children have opportunities to:

- become confident learners within a safe secure learning environment,
- learn in a range of different ways and at different rates according to need,
- learn through all of their senses and through movement,
- initiate activities that promote learning and enable them to learn from each other,
- have time to explore ideas and interests in depth,
- make links within their learning,
- experience creative and imaginative play activities and a range of experiences that promote the development and use of language.

Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners 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, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

Assessment

At Cockton Hill Infants' ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. These observations are recorded on 'Tapestry', an online learning journal or are recorded on individual record sheets for each child in a shorthand format. In the interests of workload, there is no requirement to record lengthy observations. Staff hold weekly development meetings to discuss what they have observed and how this can inform planning.

When a child is aged between 2 and 3, practitioners review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

Equal Opportunities

Through our school ethos and philosophy we provide equal opportunities for all pupils regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, belief, disability or ability. This is achieved through the planning, and organisation of the curriculum, resourcing of the structure of the school. Staff employ organisational strategies and teaching approaches that ensure no child is discriminated against, and actively intervene to ensure that all children access fully the learning opportunities provided

Parental Involvement

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

We adopt a key person approach. The key person helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

Liaison

Links have been established with our feeder Nurseries. Reception staff visit children and teachers prior to transfer to our school.

Regular contact with outside agencies such as, health, speech therapy, social services and the educational psychology service, ensures that education and care for all our children is a holistic process.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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

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