

Crosscanonby St John's C of E Primary School

Big enough for opportunity



Small enough to care

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

This policy reflects the values and philosophy of Early Years Education within Crosscanonby St John's C of E Primary School in relation to teaching and learning. It gives a framework in which all staff work.

Aims

We aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children, giving them a strong foundation for future learning.

- We aim to create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent and where they feel secure and valued.
- We value the individual child and we work alongside parents and other agencies to help every child to reach their full potential.
- We aim to promote a positive interaction between home and school.
- We aim to provide a curriculum that is underpinned by the four guiding principles that shape practice within the Early Years setting:

Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured.

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships, where support is given to take risks and explore.

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments where rich learning opportunities are offered through play and guided play.

Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates and need to be given opportunities to play and explore, engage in active learning and to create and think critically.

Principles into practice

To put these principles into practice we will:

- Provide a balanced curriculum across the seven areas of learning, providing opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult led and child initiated.
- Promote equality of opportunity providing early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- Provide challenging experiences, based on individual needs and interests which are informed by observation and assessment.
- Provide a caring environment which enables development of close positive relationships with all children.
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out.

The Foundation Stage Curriculum

In the Early Years Foundation Stage classes at Crosscanonby St John's C of E Primary School, we aim to provide a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum which addresses the children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, spiritual, moral and cultural development within a safe, secure and stimulating environment both inside and outside. Our curriculum enables children to learn and develop skills, attitudes and understanding within the areas of learning.

There are seven areas of learning and development which are all important and interconnected.

The three **prime areas** are important to develop children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their ability to learn and to thrive.

The prime areas are;

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

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The specific areas are;

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the world**
- **Expressive art and design.**

Practitioners working with the youngest children in our nursery setting will focus strongly on the three prime areas of learning. As the children grow in confidence and ability, within the three prime areas, the balance will then shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning. However, the three prime areas will continue throughout the EYFS with the aim that all children will have the skills in the prime areas that will enable them to be ready to access the Year 1 curriculum.

Children will have small group time for directed learning. These will become more frequent as children progress through the EYFS which will enable them to be prepared to access the year one curriculum. As reception children progress through the year they will also access some whole class activities. The group activities will involve:

Phonics

Synthetic phonics is the key approach for teaching reading. Our youngest children in our nursery setting will access phase one phonics. Their phonics sessions will focus upon sharing books and nursery rhymes and playing games to develop their knowledge and ability to discriminate upon environmental, instrumental and body percussion sounds. Adults will model speaking and listening by interacting and talking with children throughout their time with us.

Children will access short phonic sessions in ability groups to allow targeted support and challenge to be effective. Children will progress onto recognising alliteration and rhyme and they will begin to orally blend and segment through guided and child initiated phonic activities. When children are developmentally ready, they will begin to learn to link sounds to letters which will then enable them to begin blending to read and segmenting to write.

When children begin their reception year, their phonics development will continue from nursery. Children will continue to access short daily phonic sessions in ability groups. Children will progress through the phonics phases at a pace that is appropriate to their knowledge and understanding allowing them to secure

their skills for reading and writing. When children are confident at blending and segmenting words they will begin to read and write captions. When children are confident at reading captions they will progress onto our school reading system.

Mathematics

Mathematics is taught in focused groups within nursery (3 year olds) and reception. Wherever possible a multi sensory approach is adopted and children are given opportunities and resources in order to practise the skills taught both indoors and out within the environment during child initiated time.

Literacy

Children will experience a rich continuous provision where children will have the opportunities to mark make and write about the things they are interested in in every area.

Short focused literacy sessions are taught when children begin reception. Children learn to develop their skills in writing through sessions which are linked to a book or the topic that they focus upon each half term. Purposeful writing opportunities are essential and play a key part of these directed sessions. Children are given opportunities to develop and extend the skills they have learned in writing and phonics through the application of them in child initiated activities.

There will also be some planned adult led activities related to topic work, these could take the form of outings or visitors to the setting, or enhanced provision within the setting.

The EYFS framework states that, "***Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult led and child initiated activities.***"

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own activities and those that are planned by adults. During children's play practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further.

Child Initiated Play

At Crosscanonby Primary School, we believe that through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences which help them make sense of the world. Child initiated learning is crucial to allow children the opportunity to practise skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually. Through these play based learning experiences, children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They become engaged for sustained periods as they have ownership over their own learning.

"The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner."

Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage – non statutory guidance material 2012.

At Crosscanonby Primary School, we provide experiences and opportunities which promote the characteristics of effective learning:

Playing and Exploring – Children within our Early Years setting are given opportunities to develop their skills through play based opportunities. We believe that play and exploration are key to the way that children learn. Each area of learning and development will be implemented through planned and purposeful play and a mix of adult led and child initiated play.

Active Learning – We aim to promote an active learning environment within our Early Years setting. Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and they enjoy achievements.

Creativity and Critical Thinking – Children in our early years setting are given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults support children’s thinking and help them to make connections and find alternative ways of doing things. They offer encouragement, and ask questions which help children clarify ideas.

To support the development of the seven areas of learning and the characteristics of learning, through play based learning opportunities, we will provide opportunities for children to be able to:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world
- Practise and build up concepts, ideas and skills
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules
- Be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk to rehearse their feelings
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems
- Express fears to relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

Adults in the setting will support play by:

- Planning and resourcing a stimulating environment
- Supporting children’s learning through planned play
- Extending and supporting children’s spontaneous play
- Extending and developing children’s language and communication in their play.
- Listening to all forms of children’s communication and their ideas and taking these into account when developing play and planning.
- Narrating children’s play.
- Asking questions about children’s play.

Observations and Assessment

As part of our daily practise we observe and assess children’s learning and development to inform our future plans. Observations are recorded in a variety of ways. The team are all encouraged to contribute as are parents and regular discussions take place about achievements and the next steps for each child. These discussions inform our short term planning. Each child’s achievements are tracked and recorded on the schools Scholar Pack system. Children also have their own learning journey in which observations are placed to record that child’s personal journey. These include information about the child’s learning from home. These ongoing observations are used to inform judgements against the age related development bands and at the end of the reception year against the Early Learning Goals. During the final term we produce a report based on the child’s progress towards the Early Learning Goals and the three characteristics of learning which is shared with parents.

Behaviour

All children are encouraged to give their best both in and out of the classroom. We recognise the need for children to feel happy and secure in school to be able to learn most effectively. In our EYFS setting children are expected to follow these rules which link to the school’s golden rules.

- Listen to and follow instructions;
- Keep hands, feet and unkind words to yourself;

- Use indoor voices inside the school building;
- Walk quietly and calmly inside the building;
- Look after equipment and belongings.

We recognise the need to reward good choices in behaviour. It is impressed upon children from an early age that they have a choice in how they behave. We use a positive approach in encouraging good attitudes, setting good examples, rewarding and praising appropriate behaviour.

Children and parents/carers are encouraged to discuss any problems with staff at the school if they are experiencing difficulties or feel concerned about the behaviour of others towards themselves.

Safeguarding

Children's safety and welfare is very important to us. We provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks.

The school has in place a safeguarding policy, health and safety policy and other procedures and documents are in place to ensure children's safety.

Due to the nature of our ongoing assessment of each child and the need for photographic evidence, we do promote the use of cameras within the setting. Photographs are stored on memory cards and are uploaded to the server within school. The school seeks parental permission before photos are ever shared on the school website and used by the media.

Inclusion/SEND

We value all our children as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that supports each child at their own stage of development allowing all children to achieve their potential. We believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support they need. We work closely with parents and outside agencies to identify learning needs and respond with appropriate strategies as soon as possible. We feel that early referrals to professional agencies when needed is extremely beneficial, for example, referrals to the speech and language team.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all children including boys, girls, children with additional needs, more-able children, children with different life experiences, children from diverse ethnic groups and linguistic backgrounds other than English.

We do this 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 and approaches.
- Planning challenging activities for more-able pupils.
- Monitoring children's progress and supporting as necessary.

Early Years Pupil Premium – Extra support funding for children in receipt of early years pupil premium funding will be spent in discussion with the head teacher, teacher and other professionals.

Administering Medicines

Should any child have an accident or feel unwell while within our setting, one of our staff will administer first aid if necessary. We have fully trained staff who are also trained in administering paediatric first aid. We will make every attempt to keep parents informed if their child has experienced a health problem during the day by telephone or letter. If we consider an illness or accident to be more serious we will comfort the child as well as we can and contact the parent, or a person that has been identified as a contact, as soon as possible.

Doctors occasionally advise that children should attend school while still receiving medicine, either because they are suffering from some chronic illness or allergy or because they are recovering from short-term illness and are undergoing a course of treatment needing anti-biotics.

Where possible parents are asked to administer the doses before and after school. However if necessary they are invited to come into school to administer medicine to their child as needed. If they are unable to meet this requirement the Headteacher may be contacted to discuss if arrangements can be made for the medicine to be administered in school, provided the school procedures have been followed, including parents/carers signing the appropriate consent forms:

Children with medical conditions which require ongoing nursing support may be admitted to the school after consultation with the Local Authority, Headteacher and parents. If pupils are identified through the health service as needing medical support they will be monitored and supported by a health plan which may include identified support on the school site.

Parents

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers, recognising that together we can significantly impact children's learning. We actively encourage parents to participate in their child's education in a number of ways.

- Planned visits to the new setting.
- Making contributions to their child's learning journal.
- Using the home loan reading book scheme in Nursery.
- Attending pre arranged meetings in regard to helping their child with early phonics/math.
- Attending cookery sessions with their children.
- Attending assemblies and other class based opportunities to celebrate their child's growing confidence and successes.
- Daily contact with staff.
- Helping children with their homework and reading.
- Providing information from home and resources as requested.
- Attending pre-arranged meetings to discuss their child's progress.

Transition

Transitions at each stage are carefully planned for to ensure continuity of learning. We believe that in order to feel safe, children need to experience a gradual transition into their new setting. Examples of the way that we provide effective transition for children include:

- Regular opportunities to meet staff from their new setting
- Regular opportunities to visit their new setting
- Information sessions for parents
- Joint transition projects between the old and new settings
- Joint events e.g. teddy bear's picnic
- New starters lunch (new to reception children and parents)
- Regular transition meetings between teachers and staff

When children first begin our nursery, several visits are planned before a child begins. The new pupil and parents or carers are invited into nursery for the child to familiarise themselves with the environment and meet the adults. Parents are also invited to share information about their child and are able to form a relationship with the child's teacher during this period. We believe that every child is unique and because of this, we do not have a set way of introducing children into nursery. Our main aim is that our children feel safe, secure and above all happy. Because of this, we understand that children will require different amounts

of time and visits with their parents before they are comfortable to join a whole nursery session without them. Our provision is flexible to allow a transition period that is right for each and every child.

Complaints Procedure

We appreciate feedback from parents/carers and promote an open door policy. If parents and carers have any concerns, we encourage them to come into school and speak to a member of staff. We would much rather tackle any small issues, rather than take the risk of them escalating.

If, in the hopefully unlikely situation that parents/carers do have a complaint, it is expected that you would in the first instance raise your concern with the Headteacher. Alternatively parents/carers are invited to write or make an appointment with the Chair of Governors through the school office.

If parents/carers wish to make a formal complaint, details of the procedure are available to them and are obtained from the Headteacher or the Local Authority. The Local Authority has an established procedure for the consideration of complaints from parents relating to the school curriculum, the changing admissions policy of schools, religious education and collective worship.

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Agreed by governors