

# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

## Kintbury St Mary's CE Primary School



**Approved by:** KSM Governing Board

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**Next review due by:** Spring 2022

## Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their 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 Early Years for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

- “Early Years Early Years Stage Profile”

Department for Children, Schools and Families 2017

## Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child. 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 and 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 and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning.
- Positive relationships. We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.
- Enabling environments. We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children’s development. Through observations we assess the children’s interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.
- Learning and development. The Early Years is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. The learning environment is set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Early childhood is the Early Years on which children build the rest of their lives. At Kintbury St Mary’s School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure Early Years for future learning and development. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS for children is from birth to five years of age. All children begin school with a wide variety of experiences and learning and it is the privilege of the adults working in the Early Years stage to accept the task of building upon that prior learning experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning ensuring that parents and guardians, support staff and the Early Years Stage team work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children in their charge.

## **Aims**

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these five outcomes. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

Christian values are woven into EYFS and our school values of Respect, Friendship and Hope underpin all aspects of school life.

At Kintbury St Mary's School, we aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child including children with additional needs.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm Early Years for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Work in partnership with parents and guardians and value their contributions ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability.
- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.
- Provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs, which are inclusive rather than parallel.

## **Curriculum**

Learning and development is categorised into three prime areas of learning:

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

Additionally there are four specific areas of learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Learning within the EYFS is integral to our Whole School curriculum of which our English curriculum is central. White Rose is used to support Mathematical learning. Cornerstones is used to support curriculum coverage. Discovery and Understanding Christianity are used to develop children's religious education and

Jigsaw is used as a vehicle for PSHE. These are all whole school approaches.

Story time Phonics is a whole class approach to support Phonics. It is an interactive, engaging and practical approach to learning.

### **Characteristics of effective learning**

The characteristics of effective learning underpin achievement of these prime and specific areas of learning. They describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner and are vital elements of support for the transition process from EYFS to Year 1. The characteristics represent processes rather than outcomes. Information describing the child's characteristics of effective learning will provide Year 1 teachers with vital background and context when considering the child's next stage of development and future learning needs.

#### Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

#### Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

#### Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

### **Planning**

Planning in the Early Years is in line with the school policy. A mixture of directed and free choice activities are planned and children's choices are carefully monitored to ensure a balanced programme. The children experience child initiated learning and adult focused learning so that as they approach transfer to Key Stage One, they are prepared for the Key Stage One framework.

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs. All staff who work in the Early Years Stage are involved in this process.

Planning is based around the children's interests and children's involvement is key. These plans are used by the EYFS team as a guide for weekly planning. However, we may alter these in response to the needs of the children. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning.

### **Observation and Assessment**

We make regular 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 long, short and recorded observations and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate.

These observations are recorded using Tapestry and parents, who have constant access to this, are encouraged to engage and add observations and comments. Tapestry is used to create, and share observations made of the children's learning and as a communication tool for parents.

We appreciate that children are constantly learning and that this is not specific to the hours within a school day. We value observations shared from home of children's life experiences and hobbies and activities, which ultimately contribute to their overall learning.

Permission is obtained from parents upon starting Reception in line with meeting GDPR guidance and expectations.

### **Assessment**

Narratives are also written for each child in the form of a Learning Journey, focusing on learning and next steps. It includes parental involvement as the story continues at home.

The parents and guardians are given the opportunity to meet with the Early Years teacher each term and, at the end of the third term, we provide a written summary in relation to the children's early learning goals to parents and guardians.

### **Learning through Play**

At Kintbury St Mary's School, we do not make a distinction between work and play. Children learn through planned play activities and child-initiated activities that support or make way for adult-led activities to provide the most effective learning opportunities.

### **The Learning Environment**

The Early Years classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet, creative etc. making their own choices. The classroom has defined learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Foundation Stage has enclosed outdoor areas, and children are able to free-flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Being outdoors offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. They are able to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both

inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

### **The Outdoor environment**

Learning outside the classroom supports the development of healthy and active lifestyles by offering children opportunities for physical activity, freedom and movement, and promoting a sense of well-being. It gives them contact with the natural world and offers them experiences that are unique to outdoors, such as direct contact with the weather and the seasons. Outdoor play also supports children's problem-solving skills and nurtures their creativity, as well as providing rich opportunities for their developing imagination, inventiveness and resourcefulness. And, of course, the outdoor environment offers more space than indoors and therefore is particularly important to those children who learn best through active movement. We engage in Forest School activities led by our trained LSA and is supported by various adults. Children support or develop learning in other curriculum areas during these opportunities whilst learning to take risks and challenge themselves.

### **Transition**

New reception parents are invited to attend a meeting in the summer term prior to children starting to provide them with essential information for the next academic year.

Your child's class teacher will visit your child at their nursery or pre-school setting to meet them and their key workers to discuss your child as a learner.

Each child and their parent/carers will be invited to attend stay in play sessions so they can spend time at Kintbury St Mary's primary school with teachers in the early years environment.

Parents and children will also be invited to story sessions within the classroom with the class teacher as part of their transition into reception.

When children join school in September, children will start full time from the beginning of term in order to ensure they become familiar with staff, routines, and environments.

### **Transition into Year 1**

During the summer terms we begin to prepare children for transition into year one and the key stage one curriculum. We have put provision and opportunities in place to support this transition period. These include: Story sessions held by their new class teacher, transition visits into the Year One classroom and meeting the Year One teacher and staff.

### **Organisation of classes**

Our Early Years class has a Class teacher and teaching assistant to support learning. Each child is assigned a **key person**. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents. Children are taught Science and Music by another teacher once a week.

## **Parents as Partners**

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we aim for the school and parents and carers to work closely in Early Years. This can have a very positive impact on a child's development but relies on a two-way flow of information and knowledge.

- We will operate an "open door" policy that will allow parents and carers to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner. Conversely, if Early Years staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- We will conduct workshops for parents and carers to enable them to be familiar with the teaching methods used in school to make it easier to emulate them at home.
- We will provide 2 further parent/carer consultations/ evenings at the end of each term to inform parents and carers formally of a child's overall progress.
- Parents are invited to Family Learning sessions which enables them to join their children in their learning.

## **Intimate Care**

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. No intimate care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or guardian of that child.

## **Inclusion and Equal Opportunities**

Children with special educational needs will be supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Support and Achievement Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support commensurate with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. The school's SEN coordinator provides additional information and advice to staff and parents and is able to arrange external intervention and support as necessary.

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

## **Safeguarding**

The school takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously. Any concerns, which the school has, will be noted and, if deemed necessary, will be reported to the relevant agency. The safety of the child is

always of paramount importance. The full Safeguarding Policy is available in school and online.

### **Positive Behaviour Management**

The EY follows the same Positive Behaviour Management policy and systems as the rest of the school. Please refer to Positive Behaviour Management Policy for more information.

### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow this policy. The Senior Leadership Team, peer moderation and external moderation support the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring system.

References have been made to the following policies which can be accessed on the school website;

Behavior policy  
Marking and Assessment policy  
Child protection and safeguarding policy  
Equality policy