



CASTLE VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

This policy has been reviewed on 19th June 2018 and has been impact assessed in the light of all other school policies and the Equality Act 2010.

Signed:	
Position: School Improvement Committee Chair	
Date: 19th June 2018	Review Date: 18th June 2019
Minute Number: SI06/08.21.4	

Aims

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning;
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences;
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development;
- To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere;
- Establish strong positive links with parents
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

The Curriculum

The Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage for children from birth to five. The EYFS document, is available from the school office or to download

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/299391/DFE-00337-2014.pdf. This clearly defines what we teach.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (DfE 2014: 1.3), they support children's learning in all other areas, they are known as the prime areas.

The prime areas are;

- **Communication and Language** – Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking
- **Physical Development** – Moving and Handling and Self care
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – Making relationships, Managing feelings and behaviour and Self-confidence and Self-awareness

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

The specific areas are;

- **Literacy** – Reading and Writing
- **Mathematics** – Numbers and Space, Shape and Measures
- **Understanding the World** – People and communities, The world and Technology
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – Exploring and using media and materials and Being Imaginative

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These are key characteristic for lifelong learning.

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The Early Years team plan activities within the Nursery and Reception unit with these in mind.

They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and to think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics of learning are;

- **Playing and Exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **Active Learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Learning opportunities

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. Much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, these tasks are modelled and explained prior to self-selection, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing.

In focussed adult lead learning the adult will ask a child to come and complete a focussed modelled learning opportunity; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible.

By the Summer term in Reception the children will experience many more adult directed tasks as they prepare for their transition to year 1. They also attend assemblies, access the ICT suite and undertake P.E. lessons in the main school buildings.



Play

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years unit. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own.

They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child initiated play, which is controlled, and adult led activities is very important to us.

Teaching

We include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge 'embedded learning' and it is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood and taken on, therefore transferring skills to independent play.

Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered together on the carpet as a class. In these slots we focus on our topic work, maths, literacy, phonics, and stories. These sessions help to develop vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, sitting still etc...

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Reading and story play are an important part of the day. We want to make sure our children have a love of books and will leave the EYFS with a bank of stories they know well, both traditional and modern classics. We make sure there is always time for whole class reading, which involves a variety of books including story, non-fiction and the internet, which links to the 'real world' but also that there are many opportunities to enjoy books at other times.

Planning

We believe many children need to be given a starting point to learn new things and find topics are a great way to fire the imagination. We have a three year topic cycle usually based on the following areas of learning, 'Understanding the World', 'Literacy' and 'Communication and Language'. The topics are flexible to ensure we also follow the children's interests, school themes and local or national events e.g. the Olympics. Every half term (and occasionally termly) staff plan the next topic, and book visits and visitors that will enhance the learning.

Staff plan in more detail on a weekly basis using daily notes, observations and interactions with children to inform where the learning journey should move to. Weekly plans are available for parents on the planning wall in the Foundation Stage unit.

Assessment, observations and Learning Journeys

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

To ensure we have evidence of a child's progress in the EYFS we use a range of strategies all of which come together in their individual portfolio. We are very proud of our 'Learning Journeys': these are collections of children's work, photos and observations which create a detailed picture of the child.

Where appropriate, we include individual next steps for children's learning. These next steps are discussed by the EYFS team in informal meetings after school each day and in the weekly planning meetings, these next steps inform planning for the next day and week ahead. Staff capture and note observations and next steps for learning.

Parents have access to the 'Learning Journeys' which are stored in the classroom. Parents are encouraged to add their child's experiences through our 'star message', which inform the Learning Journey's and help staff to gain an even deeper knowledge of children's interests. The Learning Journey is given to parents when their child enters Year 1.

On entry to Nursery we carry out baseline assessments for each child. Throughout the Early Years the Class Teacher submits end of term assessment data to the Head Teacher showing each child's development across the seven areas of learning. At the end of Reception the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the Reception child's end of year report and can be discussed in the final Parents' Evening in Reception.

The Learning Environment

At Castle View Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The learning environment is carefully planned and resourced to support our 'communication friendly', exploratory approach to learning. Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before



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planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Classroom organisation

Our Early Years unit has defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure children can access them easily. Each area is set up in a way to provide children with experiences and activities in all of the seven areas of learning. Classrooms have a writing area, maths area, creative area, book corner, role play area, construction/small world area, outdoor area and carpeted teaching area. A variety of activities are planned for and set up in the different areas each day.

The outdoor area is an important part of the classroom with many children choosing to learn outside for much of the day. We try to ensure that the range of activities outside reflects the different curriculum areas, for example setting up quiet spaces for a maths game, reading and for construction.

Each child has their own labelled peg in the classroom. We encourage children to take responsibility for keeping their clothes, book bag and work safely in one place!

Role of staff

Staff work together in the unit, to establish strong relationships and to create a settled environment. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs and to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents. All adults within the Early Years setting actively seek to form positive respectful relationships with the children in their care. The formation of healthy relationships between adults and children is essential in enabling children's well-being now and their future successes.

There are rare occasions when significant adults cannot be in the class and we aim to be consistent in who covers these absences.

Partnership with parents and carers

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school.

When a child gains a place at Castle View we ask them to attend a session at the school alongside all other children who will be starting and with their parents. For Nursery children we offer home visits to help with a child's smooth transition. Over the first few days at the school we encourage parents and carers to stay for as long as they wish in the classroom to ensure the transition to the school goes smoothly.

Parents are invited to attend a Parents' Meeting three times a year and teachers are available most mornings and evenings to talk and to discuss more urgent matters.

Visits and visitors

The part that visits and visitors play in the curriculum at Castle View is given great emphasis, in the Early Years. These can range from a visit to the local City Farm to travelling all the way to the seaside by train! We actively seek parental support on trips, aiming for a ratio of 1:1 children in Nursery and a minimum of 1:5 in Reception. For safety reasons we say no to younger siblings coming along on school trips.

Visitors also really enhance a topic and we like to have 'experts' coming in to talk to the children, a doctor for example. We often ask parents if they are able (and brave enough!) to share knowledge or a skill, be it cooking, how to bath a baby, painting mehndi patterns on hands or playing guitar.

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Health & safety and safeguarding

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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2014)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/299391/DFE-00337-2014.pdf.

All school's safeguarding and child protection policies are adhered to in the Early Years Unit.

It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. This is in line with Castle View Safeguarding Policy. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children's Learning Journeys, in class displays and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

We are a healthy school and our children receive fruit and snack daily at a small cost. Our staff model good eating habits by eating alongside the children. The Government currently fund a lunchtime meal for Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils, which means Reception children are entitled to a free school lunch. Nursery a.m. children are invited to bring a packed lunch and stay until 1.00p.m. This is at a cost of £2.00 each day, to cover the cost of staffing, plus £2.00 for a school meal. This supports transition in to full time school.

Personal Health and Hygiene.

We encourage all parents to try and ensure their child is potty trained before they start Nursery. We do however understand that some children are just 'not ready' or maybe are trying and as expected have accidents. In this case it is necessary for staff to change a child's nappy/pull ups or wet/soiled clothes. We expect parents to provide a change of clothes or return those supplied by school.

Any change of clothes or nappy changes will be undertaken by qualified staff in the designated changing area. All soiled nappies will be disposed of in the designated nappy disposal unit and double bagged. A form is filled out to inform parents of the nappy changing intervals and whether they were wet or soiled.

Wherever possible soiled clothes will be bagged and passed back to the parent.

All staff will adhere to 'good' hygiene practices and ensure 'good' hand washing practices are consistently applied to prevent infection control.

If staff have any concerns for example; continence, unexplained bruising, etc the appropriate professionals will be contacted and whole school policies and procedures will be actioned.