



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Date agreed by the Headteacher: January 2024

Review Date: January 2025

Introduction

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to achieve 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.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. Children entering our reception classes come from a range of settings, and we work with parents and other professionals to provide a smooth transition into our school.

Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the EYFS are as follows:

- To celebrate diversity, and promote equality of opportunity for all children;
- To provide a curriculum which is broad, relevant and personalised that offers continuity and progression and develops their physical, intellectual, emotional and social abilities;
- To acknowledge each child's individual strengths and address their individual needs;
- To provide a secure and stimulating environment that encourages children to be active learners, and enables each child to develop her/his unique pattern of interests and talents;
- To build positive partnerships with parents and the wider community and to promote the development of the whole child.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and Development

1. A Unique Child

At our School, 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, at varying rates. We respond to the interests, experiences and needs of individual children, providing stimulating and engaging activities and learning opportunities to promote a positive attitude to learning.

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of difference. All children at our school are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school, we believe that all children matter, and we provide realistic challenges to ensure that all children achieve. We do 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.

We meet the needs of all children by:

- Listening to and observing children and using this knowledge to help plan learning opportunities which build on children's own experiences, interests and next steps in their learning
- Promoting children's self-esteem and confidence through praise and realistic challenges
- Using resources which reflect children's own families, cultures and language
- Monitoring children's progress and providing support and early intervention where necessary, including involving outside agencies where appropriate

At our school, we recognise the need for all children to feel safe and secure. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

"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."

At our School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children;
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill;
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose;
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

2. Positive Relationships

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. In reception, the children are organised into two smaller classes, to provide quality time for adult and child interaction in a smaller group.

At our school, we recognise that children learn to be independent learners from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators, and we value the contribution they make. We aim to build on this by:

- Providing an induction meeting for all new reception parents the term before their child starts school;
- Visiting new children in their home setting prior to their starting school;
- Giving parents and children the opportunity to visit the school setting prior to starting school;
- Providing opportunities each term for parents to discuss in more detail children's progress through parents' evenings;
- Sharing special events throughout the year such as picnics and sports days;
- Building links with the wider community to help support both children and parents;
- Providing regular updates of their children's learning through the online learning journal, with also the opportunity for parents to contribute to this by updating school on home achievements and events.

3. Enabling Environments

At our school, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable 'next steps' activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

In the reception classes, the learning environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely.

The environment is organised in order to help children find and locate equipment and resources independently. The reception classes have their own outside area, where learning across the seven areas is supported. We continually review the environment to ensure that it meets the changing needs and interests of all the children.

4. Learning and Development

At our school, we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning. Three Prime Areas and four Specific Areas:

Prime Areas

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Physical Development
3. Communication and Language

Specific Areas

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the World
4. Expressive Arts and Design

All areas of learning are delivered through a balance of adult led, adult supported and child-initiated activities.

We recognise that, through play, children often make sense of the world around them. Play underpins the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Children are able to explore, make connections and put forward their ideas and thoughts in a safe and secure environment. Staff recognise their role as facilitators and support children's learning in a variety of contexts. The children are involved with both group and individual play, some initiated by adults and some by children. Children are able to take risks and make mistakes, and learn from them.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we plan using long, medium and short-term planning. Long term plans take into account themes and festivals, the needs of the children at different times of the school year such as induction and transition and seasonal changes. Medium term planning reflects skills progression. Short term planning responds to the needs of groups of children and individuals, their developing interests and providing next steps in learning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning meets children's next steps. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations record children's progress against the stages of development and are analysed termly by the EYFS Lead and SENCo, and shared with parents through parents' evenings and their end of year report. Teachers' assessment can also include information provided by parents and other professionals.

Within the final term of reception, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their child's progress against the seven Early Learning Goals – Emerging or Expected. We also report on the Characteristics of Learning of each child. We then give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with their child's reception teacher.

Admissions

Our admissions procedure is managed by Hampshire County Council and a copy of admission arrangements for both the current year and the following September entry are available on the school's website.