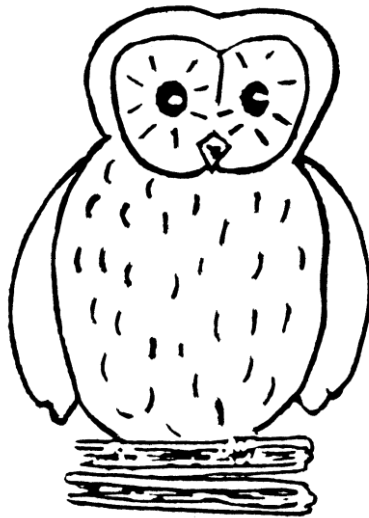


Overstone Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Approved by Governors: June 2021

To be reviewed: June 2024

At Overstone Primary School we have a clear understanding of how children learn and continually strive to provide the best possible conditions to facilitate this. We acknowledge that we live in a changing world and that we need to prepare our children for tomorrow's needs. Consequently we not only place value on the key skills of reading, writing, oral communication and mathematical understanding, but also on developing skills for life in modern Britain. We aim to deliver a world class curriculum that will challenge and inspire all our pupils and prepare them for the future.

We have three overall aims:

That pupils will become:

- Successful learners who achieve and enjoy learning
- Confident individuals who can live safe and healthy lives
- Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well being

Overarching principles:

- 1) Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- 2) Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- 3) Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- 4) Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- 5) Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early year's provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

(DfE, 2021: page 6)

At Overstone Primary we believe it is crucial that all children get the best start to their education and that their first year in school is a positive and informed process.

'The foundations we lay are to be the bedrock for lifelong learning.'

(Fisher, 2002: page 119)

The Foundation Stage curriculum:

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.'

(DfE, 2021; p.5)

We aim to provide a positive and holistic curriculum, fostering and promoting all 7 areas of learning from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to ensure that all children develop the necessary skills needed to learn and make sense of the world around them. We will encourage individuals to explore, investigate, challenge, discover, create, practise and strengthen their skills through first hand experiences and play based learning.

Through play children:

- develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally;
- explore and develop learning experiences that help them to make sense of the world;
- practise and build on ideas, concepts and skills;
- learn how to understand the need for rules;
- take on and rehearse new skills and new and familiar roles;
- take risks and make mistakes;
- think more creatively and imaginatively;
- through trial and error try things out, investigate and solve problems;
- extend and develop their language and communication skills and learn new vocabulary.

The seven areas of Learning and Development are taken from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS: birth to five):

Prime Areas – Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
Self-regulation. Managing self. Building relationships.
- Physical Development
Gross motor skills. Fine motor skills.
- Communication and Language
Listening, attention and understanding. Speaking.

Specific Areas – Through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

- Literacy
Comprehension. Word reading. Writing.
- Mathematics
Number. Numerical patterns.
- Understanding the World
Past and present. People, culture and communities. The natural world.
- Expressive Arts and Design
Creating with materials. Being imaginative and expressive.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

- Playing and exploring – engagement
Children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’.
- Active learning – motivation
Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically – thinking
Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

The EYFS begins from birth and continues up to the end of the Reception year. The Development Matters curriculum guidance for the EYFS is split into: **Birth to three** - babies, toddlers and young children. **3 & 4-year-olds. Children in reception.**

The **Early Learning Goals** state the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

- Crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives.
- Fundamental to their cognitive development.

Physical Development:

- Vital in children’s all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives.

Communication and Language:

- Underpins all seven areas of learning and development.
- Form the foundations for language and cognitive development.

Literacy:

- It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading.

Mathematics:

- Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically.

Understanding the World:

- Guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community.

Expressive arts and design:

- The development of children’s artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity.

Outdoor Play and Learning:

- Play underpins the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children have the opportunity to play both indoors and outdoors. Most children play spontaneously, others need adult support, but it is through play that they develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally.

- Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.
- Children need opportunities for fresh air and exercise in a secure environment, in order to promote their physical development, health and general well-being. Some learning can only happen outside. It gives first-hand contact with weather and the natural world.
- The outdoor environment allows for children to learn by working on a larger, more active scale, and can provide for a wide range of different experiences. Individual modes of learning can be addressed effectively outdoors. E.g. some children are more interested in learning through movement, which requires space.
- The outdoor area is based directly next to the classroom and fenced off, with a main gate at the bottom of the play area. Children are supervised through double doors, allowing the indoor classroom to open up into the outdoor area. The area is covered and free flow access is given to the children all through the day.

Admissions, transition from Nursery to Reception:

- An induction meeting is arranged during the term before their child starts school. An informed presentation is given, giving a breakdown of the curriculum, important information regarding their child's first year and about the ethos of school. A tour of the building is given and time to talk to the teacher, head teacher and teaching assistant about any queries or concerns.
- Early July in the summer term, two transfer days are allocated, where the new Reception children get to spend a series of 1 morning and 1 afternoon in their new classroom and familiarise themselves with the adults working with them and their new surroundings.
- At the beginning of term in September, home visits are arranged and the Foundation Stage teacher and teaching assistant visit each individual in their homes.

Aims of a home visit:

- Establish positive links;
 - Develop positive relationships;
 - Ease the transition into school;
 - Find out about the schools aims, policies and routine;
 - Allow staff to become aware of home circumstances and relevant prior knowledge;
 - To have one to one time to share any queries or concerns with the practitioner.
 - Initially the children start part-time after the home visits are complete. The children will attend school from 8.50am to 1.15pm for 1 week, depending on when the term starts.
 - The rest of their first term, they attend full time, 8.50am to 3.15pm.
- This staggered approach enables children to adjust to school life gradually and build on their confidence.

Partnership with parents/ carers:

Parents, as the first educators, are an important source of information. As a school we develop a close partnership with the child's parents or carers and provide many opportunities to collaborate with parents or carers in the following ways:

- Home visits (outlined above)
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school. An information pack is given to parents before their child starts.
- Parent's evenings (autumn term and spring term).
- An annual report.
- Tapestry – individual online learning journals which records photos, videos, observations, comments and next steps in each child's learning, all linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum; building up a record of their learning experiences during their year in Reception. Parents can also add their own photos, videos and comments on Tapestry.
- Show and Tell – links between home and school.
- The school blog – whole class photos of activities, topic links, visits, visitors and whole school events.
- A termly information sheet outlining the broad themes covered in the seven areas of learning and pointers of how parents/carers can support their child at home.
- Newsletters and school website.
- Well Done assemblies.
- Open door policy: opportunities to talk informally with the Reception teacher at the beginning and end of the day to discuss any concerns, issues or general aspects.

- Using parent/carers skills in the classroom e.g. extra support on visits outside school, inviting parents in as visitors and so on.

Planning:

- Long Term planning (yearly cycle).
- Medium term planning: based on the seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). In addition planning is also linked to SCARF coram Life Education, Letters and Sounds, Ruth Miskin's Read Write Inc, Talk for Writing and White Rose Maths.
- Short term planning: session grids split into whole class input, focussed activities and independent/child-initiated learning. Plans are used as working documents and may be annotated to reflect changes, observations or points for future consideration.

Assessment:

- Assessments are primarily based on observing each child's daily activities and events. In particular the learning which each child demonstrates spontaneously, independently and consistently in a range of contexts.
- Accurate assessment takes into account a range of perspectives including those of the child, parents and other adults who have significant interactions with the child.
- At the beginning of the autumn term, a baseline assessment is carried out to assess each child's prior knowledge and current stage in their learning.
- Reports from previous settings feed into the baseline assessment. The Teacher will liaise with the local nurseries to talk to nursery staff in the summer term. A visit to the child's prior setting is arranged if required or a meeting is requested due to additional factors such as SEN.
- Over the year individual targets are set regularly on Tapestry and discussed further in parents' evenings which state the next steps in their child's learning. The parent(s) and the child also provide comments and feedback on the progress made based over the term.
- Teacher assessment and knowledgeable judgements use observational assessment to understand children's learning. Teaching staff watch, listen and interact as children engage in everyday activities, events and experiences, and demonstrate their specific knowledge, skills and understanding. As a result, we build up an accurate picture of what the children know, understand, feel and are interested in from daily interactions/observations.
- Data is then compared from on entry, December, April and at the end of the Foundation Stage to check progress on all children in the three prime areas: Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Physical Development; Communication and Language; and Literacy and Mathematics.
- The statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework requires the EYFS profile assessment to be carried out in the final term of the year in which a child reaches age 5.
- The judgement must say whether the child's learning and development is:
 - not yet at the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS (emerging)
 - best described by the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS (expected)
- The EYFS profile summarises and describes children's attainment at the end of the EYFS. It gives:
 - the child's attainment in relation to the 17 ELG descriptors
 - a short narrative describing the child's 3 characteristics of effective learning
- The attainment of children at the end of Reception is compared with the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile national figures.

EYFS profile data is then used to:

- Inform parents about their child's development against the early learning goals (ELGs) and the characteristics of their learning;
- Support a smooth transition to key stage 1 (KS1) by informing the professional dialogue between EYFS and KS1 teachers;
- Help year 1 teachers plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

Transition between Reception and Year 1:

- Early July in the summer term, a transfer day is allocated, where the Reception children get to spend an afternoon in their new classroom and familiarise themselves with the adults working with them and with their new surroundings.
- Additional visits to KS1 are arranged if required e.g. for a child with additional needs such as ASD.

- By the summer term in Reception, the children will experience many more adult directed tasks as they prepare for their transition to year 1.

Special Education Needs and Outside Agencies:

- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) includes physical, emotional, sensory and learning needs.
- We aim to identify and plan for each child's individual learning requirements and to provide appropriate additional support for children with special educational needs in order to allow them to make the best possible progress.
- We monitor each child's progress to aid the early identification of any special education needs.
- If a child has special education needs the SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) is informed and the Code of Practice is followed.
- We liaise with other agencies who may be involved with a child including:
 - Speech and Language Therapy service
 - School nurse
 - Physiotherapy
 - Occupational Therapy
 - Community Paediatrician
 - Social Services.

Inclusion:

- We aim to ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged because of religion, culture, disability, gender, home language, special educational needs or ability.
- Valuing each child and treating each child as an individual.
- Providing an environment which is free of stereotypical images.
- Facilitating equal access to activities by all children.
- The school takes account of the children's range of life experiences and interests when planning for their learning.

Monitoring and evaluation:

- Moderation meetings.
- Up to date training.
- Regular cluster meetings locally.
- Head Teacher or Coordinator observations and Performance Management review meetings.
- Termly Pupil Progress meetings.
- Learning walks and cluster inspection.
- Ofsted, audits and self-evaluations.
- Action Plans, risk assessments and staff meetings.
- Parent and staff feedback and evaluation forms.

Addendum

If restrictions mean that face to face visits by parents are not possible (for example during the COVID pandemic), contact with parents will be virtual. Where possible, induction visits for pupils would still take place but may be moved outdoors.