

# Our Approach to the Early Years Foundation Stage

April 2021

## *‘Making Aspirations Achievable’*



## *Our Mission, Vision and Values*

**We believe that children need to develop four key qualities whilst at our school:**

- Children who have **courage** and self-belief are most likely to achieve their aspirations;
- Children who are **curious** about learning will question the world around them and always challenge themselves and others;
- Children who have **compassion** will be, and teach others to be, better human beings;
- Children who are **creative** will be able to solve the problems of the future.

**To enable children to embody these qualities we must:**

- Nurture children as individuals and help them recognise what they have to offer as members of society;
- Motivate and inspire children to achieve the highest standards in core skills;
- Ensure children have the opportunity to achieve in all areas of learning and excel in those in which they have a passion or talent;
- Provide children with memorable learning experiences.
- Teach the children to respect the world, other cultures and beliefs.

**As a result, the children will:**

- Know that they have something to offer that is valued.
- Be excited about learning.
- Be brimming with further questions that they want to explore.
- Be motivated to further their learning outside of the classroom.
- Be knowledgeable and highly skilled.

*Document Number: FPS-POL-EAR-002*

*Body reviewed and approved by: Teaching and Learning Committee, December 2021*

*Date adopted: Full Governing Body, July 2021*

*Date for review (latest): Not defined*

# *Our Aims*

## **Early Years Foundation Stage – A year of discovery**

- Our EYFS children access a broad, engaging, and balanced curriculum that inspires in them a love of learning, and provides them with the firm foundations and skills they will need to make good progress throughout school and their lives.
- Our EYFS children receive consistently high-quality teaching and learn through play in a safe, motivating, exciting learning environment to ensure every child makes good progress and no child is left behind.
- Our EYFS children are supported through equity of opportunity in a fully inclusive environment, where they learn to respect others.
- We develop positive relationships and work in close partnership with parents and carers to maximise each child's progress and achievement.
- We meet the requirements set out in the 2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

## *How we will achieve this*

### **Curriculum**

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. The three prime areas are particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

Through an overarching termly theme, continuous provision inside and outdoors balances opportunities for children to develop their skills across the curriculum and explore both their topic and own areas of interest, with activities that consolidate the week's focuses in Literacy and Mathematics.

Our early years provision follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS.

In addition to these areas of learning, we strive for our children to develop effective characteristics of learning which will enable them to become learners for life.

Children will play and explore their environment showing engagement by:

- finding out and exploring

- play with what they know
- be willing to 'have a go'

Children will be active learners, showing motivation by:

- being involved and concentrating
- keeping on trying
- enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Children will be creators and think critically by:

- having their own ideas
- making links
- choosing ways to do things

## Planning and Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. Daily reflection on provision and children's interest and engagement leads to adapted provision across the week. The children are involved in decision making about what resources are available, and they have free access to many resources in the indoor and outdoor learning environments.

Termly topics engage and motivate children, but practitioners aim to follow children's interests on a day-to-day basis. This is reflected in daily planning and the frequent adjustment of continuous provision indoors and outdoors.

At Fulbourn Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe and work with children to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

At the end of their Reception year, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Children are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Exceeding expected levels or,
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

## Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn.

In doing so we can provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning and to help them make sense of the world. Children 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 experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language.

## Assessment

### Transition into school

The school works closely with pre-school providers and carers to share their knowledge of the children and assessment information. Wherever possible, practitioners also make home visits prior to the children starting school to allow staff to talk with parents and continue to build an understanding of children's interests, knowledge and skills. The combination of these is then used to plan successful transition and to ensure initial provision effectively meets the needs of all children.

### Baseline assessment

Practitioners make a baseline assessment judgement against the 'Development Matters' ages and stages by the end of the children's third week in school. This judgement is based upon pre-school assessment information and observations of the children engaged in child-initiated and adult-directed activity in their new setting. This information is shared with the Local Authority.

### Observation and formative assessment

Formative assessment is based upon highly skilled practitioners observing children in the learning environment, using these observations to make assessments of children's attainment and using these assessments to inform planning which will support children to make progress.

*Extended observations* – Each child will have an extended (up to 10 minutes) observation recorded each half term. The holistic nature of young children's learning means that these extended observations will capture evidence of attainment across many different areas of learning and present a breadth of possibilities for supporting children's next steps across the EYFS curriculum.

*Planned observations* – Practitioners plan opportunities to observe children in a range of independent and adult-led activities across each half term to ensure a holistic picture of their development is created. Over a half term, children will have a recorded observation for each area of learning as a minimum.

*Incidental observations* – practitioners observe children demonstrating new skills, knowledge or interests. Where possible, these incidental observations will be captured on Seesaw to develop a holistic record of children's on-going development which is instantly shared with their families.

*SeeSaw* – All recording of observations will be done through the SeeSaw programme. An observation could include practitioner comments, photographs of the children or photographs of the children's work. Each observation will be tagged with which area/s of learning the observation relates to.

*Parents and Carers* – Parents and carers will be encouraged to contribute towards their child's learning journey on Seesaw to support a holistic assessment of each child's development. Parents will be able to upload comments and photographs to share children's learning at home and these will be acknowledged by the child's class teacher.

### **EYFS Profile**

Teachers make summative assessment judgements against the statutory 'EYFS Profile' at the end of the children's Reception year. The summative assessment is based upon the practitioner's knowledge of the child, including recorded observations. These judgements provide parents, carers and practitioners with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels and their readiness for Year 1.

EYFS Profile judgements are rigorously moderated, within school and with local cluster schools annually, and by the local authority when required. EYFS Profile assessments are used to inform provision for children as they enter Year 1 and where appropriate, children continue to work within the EYFS framework to support their development.

### **Working in partnership**

We believe in the positive impact that working in partnership with families can have on children's progress and development. Home visits and robust transition processes ensure that children are familiar with their new setting and key adults before they start school, and parents and carers are strongly encouraged to engage with their child's learning journey on Seesaw, and to use the channels of communication available – including brief chats at drop off/pick up, EYFS teachers email account, liaison with the office to book a meeting and parent consultations.

### **Inclusion**

All children are valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace. Our Equal Opportunities Policy ensures that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have. Our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy ensures all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible. Children with SEND in the EYFS setting are monitored and managed by the school's SENCO.

## *What this looks like*

### **When you walk into EYFS you will notice:**

- A happy, purposeful and energetic community.
- Children that are learning to regulate their behaviour and be polite, thoughtful and reflective.
- Children enjoying their time in school; engaged in learning and able to speak passionately about their interests and what they are doing.
- An inclusive environment where all children thrive.
- Children that are confident to ask questions and embrace challenges.
- Children demonstrating high levels of attainment and exceptionally competent and knowledgeable staff.
- Free-flow between the indoor and outdoor learning environments throughout the day.
- Practitioners demonstrating strong positive relationships with all children, and their families.

## *Appendix 1: List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS*

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See Health & Safety Policy First Aid & Medicine Management Policy Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions in School Policy
Administering medicines policy	See Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions in School Policy First Aid & Medicine Management Policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Fire Safety Policy Health & Safety Policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Protocol for Children Not Collected Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See Complaints Policy

### **Other relevant policies:**

SEND policy

Equal Opportunities policy

