

EPWORTH PRIMARY ACADEMY



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

'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'. "Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage", 2017.

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. Our Early Years Foundation Stage accommodates children from the age of 3 to 5 years.

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 fulfil their true potential 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 secure and friendly atmosphere;
- 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 importance of the Foundation Stage

The DfE 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (2017) sets the statutory standards that all early years providers must meet and this is the curriculum that we follow. Effective practice in the EYFS is built on four guiding principles. Along with ensuring that children are kept safe in line with KCSIE 2020.

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, 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 assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to 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 and stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging activities and experiences to extend their learning.

Learning and Development

We recognise that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates, and that all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

The EYFS curriculum

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development :

Prime areas:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development
Physical Development
Communication and Language
Expressive Arts and Design

Specific areas:

Mathematics
Literacy
Understanding the World

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the Characteristics of Effective Learning and activities are planned with these in mind. They are vital elements of support for the transition process from EYFS to Year 1. The characteristics of learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development. 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

Teaching and Learning

We ensure that there is a balance between adult-led, adult-initiated child-initiated activities during the day. Although much of the time is spent with children selecting their own tasks, the interaction between adult and child is essential as the adults can respond and guide new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. Sometimes the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them. At other times they will join in with a child's game and extend it where possible.

In Nursery and Reception there are planned sessions for phonics which encourage sound discrimination and listening skills. When the children move to Reception there are planned differentiated daily phonics sessions. Currently we use the Read Write Inc programme. Parents are invited to attend phonics workshops in the Autumn term to explain how phonics is taught.

The importance of play

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms. We believe that children learn best from activities that inspire and interest them. Using the children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively with other children or on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own pace. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe that it is

important that adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play.

Outdoor Learning

Children are encouraged to take part in a full range of outdoor experiences. Our outdoor area has a variety of surfaces including grass, hard surface and soft surface. Resources outdoors and indoors are organised in a similar way to enable children to access them independently. The main resources in the outdoor area for the Reception children are set out in sheds. Nursery outdoor equipment is set out in the area or under the shelter. Children from Nursery and Reception can access and share the water play equipment and the digging areas.

Indoor and outdoor resources

The learning environments are organised into clearly defined areas which the children are able to access independently. These areas may include :

- A reading area
- Water play (indoor and outdoor)
- Sand play
- Construction area (including outdoor crates, planks, tyres etc)
- Mathematical area
- Investigation
- Small world
- Mark making areas
- Imaginative role play
- Creative areas including a modelling table
- A variety of outdoor play equipment
- ICT equipment including Interactive Whiteboards, laptops, iPads, beebots, remote control toys.
- A quiet area

In the Nursery, there is a kitchen area which can be used by both Nursery and Reception for baking activities.

Snack time

In Nursery the children are offered a snack including a drink of milk. In Reception the children can access the snack table during the morning session to have a piece of fruit and milk. Each child also has access to their own water bottle during the day.

Planning

Medium term plans are completed every term and are very flexible in order for them to be adapted towards children's interests. They are divided into the seven areas of learning to ensure coverage of the whole Curriculum. Short term plans are completed on a weekly basis to ensure adaptations can be made in accordance with children's needs and interests. Play

planning is written in a way which allows for coverage of the curriculum to be met as well as developing children's interests and responding to significant events during the year. The play planning is annotated on a weekly basis to note down interests and 'next steps' and to add enhancements into the provision areas.

The planning allows all Foundation stage staff to feed information into the following week's plan taking into account planned and incidental observations. The Foundation staff to discuss provision planning for the following week to ensure the needs and interests of the children are met. We also ensure that the children have chance to practise new taught skills in a familiar context.

Assessment

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves staff observing children to understand their level of achievement, interest and learning styles. We use the information to inform our future planning and to move the children on with their learning.

A Learning Journey is created for each child and includes examples of activities and ongoing observation and assessment, covering all seven areas of learning and their Characteristics of Effective Learning. The Learning Journeys are collections of the children's work, photos and observations which create a detailed picture of the child. We also include the next steps for each child's learning. These 'next steps' are discussed by the EYFS team and are used to inform future planning.

Parents/carers have regular access to the Learning Journeys and they are encouraged to contribute through our WOW moments sheets. These are sent home for parents to record significant events or evidence of learning and are then added to the Learning Journey. In addition the children in Reception take home a 'Home-school' book where they can record their own events and achievements. These are shared in school on a weekly basis.

Children in the Foundation Stage are assessed on entry. The children are also assessed throughout the year against their progress towards the Early Learning Goals using the Development Matters and Early Years Outcomes documents. Each child's characteristics of learning are also considered. We use the information to inform our future planning and set up interventions where necessary. Target groups are identified and extra support is given. In Nursery and Reception this data is recorded and tracked using our own tracker system. In Reception the data is also recorded onto the SIMs system to be taken by the LA at termly intervals. At the end of Reception, staff assess each child against the 17 Early Learning

Goals. When the children move from Nursery to Reception, the staff complete a transition form to show which developmental band the child is working within for each aspect.

All assessment is based on evidence, which is collected in a number of ways, including:

- Observations of children carried out by the teachers, Early Years Practitioners and teaching assistants. Some observations may be carried out jointly between practitioners for moderation purposes.
- Outcomes of conversations between staff and children and between the children themselves;
- Assessment of the work children have produced;
- Conversations with parents/carers and other settings.

The information which we collect is then taken with evidence to termly LA moderation cluster meetings. At these meetings judgements in one of the areas of learning are discussed and moderated. We are also visited by an LA moderator to carry out joint observations.

A formal report detailing children's progress and attainment towards the Early Learning Goals is sent home annually along with a commentary on the children's Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Expectations

At the end of the Foundation Stage, the expectation is that children will reach the Early Learning Goals in the Prime areas and the Specific areas of Maths and Literacy to achieve a 'Good level of development'. Although the Early Learning Goals are intended for children at the end of Reception, younger children will be provided with experiences which will support them in reaching the goals at times appropriate to them and opportunities are provided for children who are on track to exceed the Early Learning Goals.

Role of staff and key person

In Nursery there are at least two members of staff and the staffing and necessary qualifications follow the EYFS Statutory Framework expectations as set out in paragraph 3.35 -

3.35. For children aged three and over in independent schools (including in nursery classes in free schools and academies), where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another suitable level 6 qualification, an

instructor³⁷, or another suitably qualified overseas trained teacher, is working directly with the children:

- for classes where the majority of children will reach the age of five or older within the school year, there must be at least one member of staff for every 30 children
- all other classes there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children
- at least one other member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.

Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage - Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five.

(2017)

More staff will be employed as necessary depending on numbers and needs. Each child is assigned a key person on entry. The role of the key person is to ensure that the child's individual needs are met, to help the child to become familiar with the setting and to build a relationship with the carers. Parents/carers will be informed about their child's key person as they begin attending the setting.

In Reception there are two members of teaching staff - one of these is the Foundation Stage Leader who is responsible for leading developments across the Foundation Stage. There is also an Early Years practitioner and Teaching assistants (dependent on numbers and needs). Each child is assigned a key person in September.

Partnership with parents and carers

At Epworth Primary Academy we work very closely with parents and carers to ensure that they are involved in their child's learning. We have an 'open door' policy that enables parents and other providers to speak to staff at the beginning or end of the day. We also offer :

- Parent/teacher evenings twice a year to discuss the children's achievements.
- Parents/carers are also invited to look at Learning Journeys at other times throughout the year.
- A curriculum letter at the beginning of each term outlining our planned themes.
 - Parent meetings and workshops, for example, to explain how phonics is taught.
 - Events during the year to which parents/carers are invited, for example, craft sessions, concerts, assemblies, lunches, sports day, family reading mornings.
 - In Reception homework tasks are sent home on a regular basis, for example, related to the sounds we have learnt that week.
 - Parents are asked to record their child's home reading activities in their reading record book.
 - Staff also visit other settings, for example, as part of the transition process.

15 hour Flexible Entitlement in Nursery/ 30 hours funding

We offer all of our carers the opportunity to express an interest in sessions which most suit their needs. Session changes are offered on a termly basis. A child can access their free place

with up to two providers registered with the Local Authority, not exceeding 15 hours per week. Some families will be entitled to 30 hours of free childcare.

Currently we offer a fully flexible entitlement which is outlined below. Children can attend;

- Any morning session (9.00 a.m.– 12.00 p.m.) or any afternoon session (12.00 p.m. – 3.00 p.m.) provided that places are available, up to a maximum of 15 hours per week for the Flexible Free Entitlement or up to 30 hours for families who qualify for the extra funding.
- Children can also stay for a full day 9.00 a.m. – 3.00 p.m. and bring their own packed lunch.

Lunchtime Organisation for Reception

All the Reception children eat their lunch in the dining hall with the main school. The children go down to the hall first so that they are settled before the older children arrive. Initially they are supported by a member of staff for the first 15 minutes of the lunchtime. All Reception children are currently entitled to a free school meal.

After they have eaten lunch these children go out to play with the Key Stage 1 children on the KS1 playground, supported by our lunchtime supervisors.

Transition

We aim for our children to enter Epworth Primary Academy happily and smoothly, and for carers to be comfortable with their child's transition from home to our Nursery and then from Nursery into Reception and Reception into Year 1. A comprehensive programme is in place to help ensure that the children's admission into our school is a happy experience, which they look forward to with excitement.

Admission into Nursery

Parents are welcome to make an appointment to visit our Nursery. Children can attend as soon as they are three by paying for sessions directly to school. From the term after they are three, children can attend either using the funding from the Flexible Free Entitlement up to a maximum of 15 hours (or 30 hours for families entitled to the extra funding) along with extra paid sessions.

For admission to the Nursery parents/carers can apply for a place directly to the school. Admission and funding forms are available in the school office. Home visits and an Open session take are offered prior to the children starting in Nursery.

Admission into Reception

The term before children are due to start Reception, the Foundation Stage team along with the Principal hold an induction meeting for parents. This meeting gives carers information about the Reception year of the Early Years Foundation Stage, uniform, staffing structure,

self-care, curriculum overview including assessment, phonics and reading and the importance of learning through play both indoors and outdoors.

At the induction evening, each parent/carer is given an information pack containing; a school prospectus, information about school uniform, breakfast club etc. The parents/carers are also informed about home visits. All children will be offered a home visit. At the end of the evening all parents/carers are given the opportunity to visit the Reception classrooms with the Foundation Stage Team.

Two members of staff carry out the home visits. At the home visits, the staff discuss any specific needs and concerns / queries the carers have on an individual basis. Home visits are very beneficial for the staff to gain an understanding of a child's background and home setting.

In the Summer term before the children start Reception, they are invited to visit the setting, once with their parents/carers and once on their own.

Staff will also arrange to visit other settings, for example, local pre-schools and day nurseries to meet the children and to talk to staff.

In September the children will initially attend for mornings only followed by a few days of mornings and lunchtimes. By the end of the second week, the children will be attending full days.

Transition to Year 1

Transition to Year one is of vital importance to ensure that the children settle well into their new class. We have a programme in place which allows the Reception children to visit their new class teacher in their new classroom for short sessions. We also take part in the whole school 'push-up' morning. This is when children spend time with their future teacher. The new and existing class teachers meet to discuss information about transition towards the end of the summer term. Information from the EYFS profile is also shared with Year 1 teachers.

Equal Opportunities

In the EYFS, children are given equal opportunities to engage in activities regardless of their ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability. Please see the Equal Opportunities Policy for more information.

Leadership and management

The Early Years Foundation Stage Leader is part of the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that the quality of the education provided meets the needs of all the children.

Welfare:

At Epworth Primary Academy, it is important to us that all children in the setting understand how to stay safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they

exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children are allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. All staff are aware of and follow our whole school safeguarding procedures. (See Whole School Safeguarding Policy).

Every pupil should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse. The Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. As is stated in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019): "Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is childcentred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child"

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

- *Ensure that children are kept safe in education
- *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.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements. "Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with adults caring for them." (Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, April 2017)

To ensure children are discharged safe at the end of the day, we hold a list of parent nominated people whom are to collect a child in the absence of the child's parent. Children will not be allowed to leave with anyone who is not on list unless a message has been given verbally to the teacher or via telephone through the office. Any child that is uncollected will be looked after in school while parent or carer is contacted. If contact cannot be made the secondary contacts will be contacted. If we are unable to make contact we will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who will attempt further contact. If contact is still not made after 30 minutes the local authority safeguarding team will be contacted.

North Lincolnshire Social Care Assessment Team – 01724 296500

At Epworth we recognise that everyone is responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of our children. Should a concern arise it will be reported to our Safeguarding team:

Sean Woolley – Designated Safe Guarding Lead

Helen Hodson – Assistant Principal/Deputy Safeguarding Lead

Michelle Banner – Progress and achievement lead/ Deputy Safe Guarding Officer