

Lewknor Church of England School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

October 2017 – October 2020

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;
- 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

Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage

(EYFS) profile documents, which can be viewed or downloaded at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335504/EYFS_framework_from_1_September_2014_with_clarification_note.pdf

This clearly defines what we teach. The following policy details the specifics of our setting.

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 are:

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

- **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

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The Reception teacher plans activities within and outside the Reception classrooms with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics 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.

Teaching strategies

We ensure there is a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, 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. The adults will often participate in a child's game, extending it where possible.

Each day the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task, game or read with them. The adults will hear each child read at least three times per week.

Adult-led activities often include specific English or maths based tasks. There will also be topic based tasks and games that focus on the other prime areas.

Children that are identified as needing additional support may have more regular adult-led activities both individually or with a group of peers to support their learning.

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

Play

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms. 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. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood and taken on.

Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place. We set aside times 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, English including phonics. These sessions help to develop vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, sitting still etc...

Reading and listening to stories play 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 a whole class story during the day but also that there are many opportunities to enjoy books at other times. Every child has their own book bag and an adult will hear them read a minimum of three times per week. Group 'guided' reading sessions also take place from the spring term onwards.

Planning

We choose a topic for each half term or full term. These topics are decided both by the class teacher but also from the children's input and interests.

Topics are usually based on the following areas of learning: 'Understanding the World', 'Literacy' and 'Communication and Language'. Topics can include: Dinosaurs, Transport, People who Help Us or Traditional Tales. The topics are flexible to ensure we also follow the children's interests, school themes and local or national events e.g. the Olympics.

The EYFS teacher plans in more detail on a weekly basis using daily notes, observations and interactions with the children to inform where the learning journey should move to. Long Term plans are available to view on the school website.

Classroom organisation

Our Early Years classrooms have defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure children can access them easily. The classroom 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 adults move to whichever area their focus for the session/day is.

The outdoor area is an important part of the classroom with many children choosing to learn outside. 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 and tray in the classroom. We encourage children to take responsibility for keeping their clothes, book bag and work safely in the correct place.

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Assessment, observations and portfolios

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 portfolios: these are collections of children's work, photographs and observations which create a detailed picture of the child.

Where appropriate, we include individual next steps for children's learning, these next steps inform planning for the next day and week ahead.

Parents have access to the portfolios which are stored in the classroom. They are encouraged to contribute through the use of home/school books, in which parents share achievements from home.

On entry to Reception we carry out baseline assessments for each child. Throughout the Early Years the class teacher submits termly 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 (ELGs) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'. This information is also communicated to parents in the Reception child's end of year report.

Role of staff and key worker

The class teacher is the named key worker for each child in the setting. The teaching assistant also takes on the key worker role for a smaller group of children on the days when she is at school. 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 are 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.

We follow the child to adult ratios as stated in the EYFS profile handbook.

3.38. Reception classes in maintained schools are subject to infant class size legislation. The School Admissions (Infant Class Size) Regulations 2012 limit the size of infant classes to 30 pupils per school teacher while an ordinary teaching session is conducted.

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. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. We offer induction days in the summer term before the children start school when the children and parents both get to meet the class teacher and other adults that will be working within the class. In both the autumn and spring terms the school holds parent teacher consultation meetings and in the summer term an end-of-year report is sent home to all parents.

Throughout the school year we offer several other opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning including a phonics workshop, transformation evening and stay and play sessions.

Teachers are available after school to talk and to discuss more urgent matters.

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/335504/EYFS_framework_from_1_September_2014_with_clarification_note.pdf

Our whole school Child Protection and Safeguarding policy contains further school specific details. These can be found on the school website.

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. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads and cameras to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children's portfolios, 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.

The whole school e-safety agreement contains further school specific details. This can be found on the school website.

We are a healthy school and our children receive free fruit and milk (free for four-year-olds) from a Government scheme but we ask that parents provide a healthy snack for morning break time.

Our children in reception are offered a healthy school lunch which has been free to all EYFS and KS1 children since September 2014.

We take all accidents seriously and always log and phone home immediately if a child has a serious injury. Smaller injuries are logged in the whole school accident book and treated as required by trained first aiders. If a child has a head injury/bump, a head injury form with advice is sent home with the child. If we are at all concerned by the head injury the child's parent will be called immediately.

We encourage all children to start school able to use the toilet independently. We acknowledge that young children often have 'accidents' and have stocks of spare clothes and we will change any child who needs it. We ask parents to help keep our stocks of clothes high by returning anything their child has borrowed. Children are changed in the toilet area, ideally by themselves. If a child requires cleaning as they cannot do it themselves, we refer to the whole school Intimate Care Policy. If a child requires regular changing, either due to a medical condition or regular accidents, the class teacher will request parents complete an Intimate Care Policy Agreement Form to allow staff to change and clean the child.

Whole school fire alarms are held regularly in line with whole school policy.

We follow whole school procedures for child protection (see separate policy). Mrs Cole, Head Teacher, is the named Child Protection Officer and all concerns are discussed with her.

We have separate policies for medicine in school.

Whole school policies can be found on the school website:

https://lewknor.eschools.co.uk/website/policies_procedures/68822