



Lewknor Church of England School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

January 2022 – January 2025

Introduction

At Lewknor Church of England Primary School we are committed to providing all children with learning opportunities to excite and drive children's curiosity in the world around them. This policy reflects the school's values and philosophy in relation to the teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

"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." (Department for Education, 2017, p. 5)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to five years old. The EYFS is an important starting point for all children in our school and is a crucial phase of their learning and development. We recognise that children's early experiences have a significant impact on their learning later in life. Therefore we aim to provide high-quality teaching and learning for all children in our school, so that they receive the best education.

The EYFS is based upon four overarching principles that shape early years practice:

- every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- 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
- children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We ensure that:

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

Implementation

A Unique Child

At Lewknor, we recognise that every child is unique and different. We understand that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Therefore, we use a range of different approaches to teaching and learning that are appropriate for the child. We always encourage a positive attitude to learning and praise challenge and effort. We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'.

All children at Lewknor 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 our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that support our children. We achieve 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 our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- using resources which reflect diversity and encourage independence and creativity
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

Positive Relationships

At Lewknor we recognise that children's independence is formed from secure relationships with adults and children. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with all children and families. All staff aim to develop good relationships with children, interacting with them in a positive manner and taking time to listen to them and support them. We recognise that every opportunity is a learning opportunity and so developing these relationships form a crucial part of our practice. We also note that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we highly value the contribution that parents make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We aim to develop a partnership with parents through:

- arranging visits for parents to see the Reception classroom and school
- home visits and pre-school visits for Reception pupils
- providing children with opportunities to spend time with Miss Harjette prior to starting in our Reception class during our induction sessions
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress and allowing free access to their children's books and folders
- encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher about any concerns they might have
- organising a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents
- inviting parents to formal parent's evenings to discuss their child's progress and development with their teacher
- running Stay and Learn sessions for parents to come to work in class with their child
- running phonics, literacy and maths workshops for parents
- sending home reading books and homework each week
- providing parents opportunities to share 'WOW Moments' for their child which can be celebrated in class

Enabling Environments

At Lewknor we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We aim to create a challenging, stimulating environment with multiple opportunities for learning. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

The Reception classroom environment changes regularly depending on the topic for the half term. It is designed to promote children's curiosity and wonder yet challenge their thinking also. Outdoor learning is a significant aspect of children's early years experience. Being outdoors offers opportunities for exploration in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. Children are provided with a range of resources outdoors that support them to develop in all seven areas of the curriculum. Children are given opportunities outdoors to play with a range of natural and open-ended resources. This allows the children to use their imagination and problem-solving skills to create different things to support their play.

Adults play an important role in observing and interacting with children in their play to enhance and extend their learning at an appropriate level. The children become involved in activities of their choice. The adults observe the children carefully, join them when appropriate, and engage in quality interactions to move the learning on. We also offer opportunities for 'risky play' within the outdoor learning environment. We believe that children should be given opportunities to take risks in a safe environment and learn how

to manage risks. Children are encouraged to challenge themselves, test their limits, explore boundaries and experience trial and error. Children are learning important life skills during risky play and adults facilitate this carefully.

Learning and Development

The planning within the EYFS is based around the children's needs and interests. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. On-going assessment in EYFS follows the cycle of observation, assessment, and planning and involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in the child's individual 'Learning Journey'.

All children in EYFS are tracked through the ages and stages for all areas of development. Tracking in Reception is monitored by the Reception class teacher, Miss Harjette, throughout the year to monitor the progress of the children and to highlight any areas for development.

We use the Read, Write Inc. phonics scheme to support children's reading. Language development is also an important aspect of our curriculum and we ensure that children are given opportunities to talk everyday. We use the NELI (Nuffield Early Language Intervention), to support those children who need support with their language development.

Planning our EYFS curriculum defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school.

Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between staff and parents so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- the understanding that staff have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents

There are three characteristics of effective teaching and learning which teachers use to support planning and guiding children's activities.

These are:

- Playing and exploring – within EYFS, children are taught through a balance of child-initiated play and adult-focus activities. Through play our children explore learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. 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. Similarly, adult-focus activities are planned to support children's individual needs. Children work in small groups with an adult to improve and develop a certain skill.
- Active learning – active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. Each day they are encouraged to work independently, with their peers and with an adult. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. As children take ownership of their learning, they are provided with a sense of satisfaction.
- Creating and thinking critically – children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open-ended questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the setting to extend their learning.

Curriculum

From September 2021, we have introduced the new EYFS framework with updated early learning goals, and changing requirements for the assessment and moderation process. The objective of these reforms is to improve outcomes for all children aged 5.

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

They are:

Prime Areas

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Specific Areas

They are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

In each area there are Early Learning Goals that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Children are expected to:

Communication and language:

Listening and attention: Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions. Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding. Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

Speaking: Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary. Offer explanations for why things happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate. Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Physical development:

Gross motor skills: Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others. Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing. Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

Fine motor skills: Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases. Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery. Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Personal, social and emotional development:

Self-regulation: Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly. Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate. Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

Managing self: Be confident to try activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge. Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly. Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

Building relationships: Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others. Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers. Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Literacy:

Comprehension: Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary. Anticipate (where appropriate) key events in stories. Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role play.

Word reading: Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs. Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending. Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

Writing: Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters. Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

Mathematics:

Number: Have a deep understanding of numbers to 10, including the composition of each number. Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5. Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

Numerical patterns: Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system. Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity. Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Understanding the world:

Past and present: Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society. Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

People, culture and communities: Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and (when appropriate) maps.

The natural world: Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants. Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Expressive arts and design:

Creating with materials: Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function. Share their creations, explaining the process they have used. Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

Being imaginative and expressive: Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher. Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs. Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and (when appropriate) try to move in time with music.

EYFS Profile and Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. On-going assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. In our interactions with children, we aim to respond to our own day-to-day observations about children's progress, and observations that parents and carers share.

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The profile must reflect: on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development must be assessed against the Early Learning Goals. Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. These inform a dialogue between the Reception and Year 1 teacher about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assist with the planning of activities in Year 1. The Profile is shared with parents at the end of the Reception year and parents are invited to come into school to discuss the Profile with the class teacher and arrangements for transition to Year 1.

Transition to Year 1

The primary purpose of the EYFS profile is to provide Year 1 staff with reliable and accurate information about each child's level of development at the end of the Foundation Stage. This will enable them to plan an effective responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet their needs.

To prepare for the transition to Year 1 we ensure that:

- children visit their new class during the summer term and become familiar with the learning environment
- children meet their new class teacher during the summer term
- staff share or suggest useful key resources
- tracking sheets are passed on, evidencing children's progress across the full year, (not just the last term), and that teachers are clear about how to use the tracker to support day-to-day and periodic assessments

- we have addressed those children working well within a phase although not secure, and plan carefully to ensure progress for these children
- we identify any children who have made insufficient progress and ensure differentiated support is given in lessons
- we identify any children who have special educational needs, disabilities or language needs and write support plans for these individual children

We share assessments and any additional information on children's reading and writing

- parents/carers are fully involved in transition and given key information on the process
- we provide an opportunity early in the autumn term for parents/carers to visit their child's new class and meet the Year 1 teacher to discuss progress