



Calow Church of England (V.C) Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

At Calow Primary School we endeavour to ensure that children “learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.” We aim to support children in their learning through “teaching and experiences that give children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life.” (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2012)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies from birth to the end of the Reception Year. In our school most children start Nursery the term after their third birthday and we have three entries a year. However, recently if spaces are available children have been starting nursery from two years nine months in the term in which they become three. All children attend for five mornings a week and our nursery sessions are for three hours each morning. Due to fluctuating numbers we have also operated an afternoon nursery from the start of the Spring or Summer term when necessary. All children move into full- time school (Reception) in September of the year in which they become five. The Christian ethos of our school will be reflected in all aspects of our provision.

The new revised EYFS was introduced in September 2012 is still based upon four principles:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development

A unique child

At Calow Primary School we recognise that "every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured". We understand 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 and rewards, to encourage children to have a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

In our school we believe that all our children matter and every child should be exposed to a full range of activities in line with our school's Equal Opportunities policy, Gifted and Talented policy and SEND policy. 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. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/guardians at an early stage. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of 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/gifted and talented, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds including travellers, 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.
- Use a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- Provide wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children to help them learn effectively
- Provide a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.

- Use resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- 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 support where necessary in accordance with the school SEND policy.

Keeping safe

It is important to us that all children in school are safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them to know why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take some risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of our children. Risk assessments are carried out for all areas of our provision. A separate risk assessment has been carried out for our outdoor area and all Foundation Stage staff are aware of this and the Governors have reviewed the risk assessment. This will be reviewed in line with the School's Health and Safety policy. Foundation Stage staff have first aid certificates and are able to deal with any accidents. The Nursery teacher and Reception teacher have both attended a St John Ambulance course in "Emergency aid for people who work with young children" and have a valid certificate. All accidents are recorded and parents/carers informed. In the case of any serious injury or bump to the head parents/carers are telephoned immediately in line with the school policy.

In the case of a fire drill children will remain outside and assemble at the same point as if they were inside (See whole school Safeguarding policy)

Health and well-being

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure and when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them" At Calow Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of and safeguarding 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 children or who have supervised 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 the adults caring for them."

Positive relationships

Respecting each other and supporting learning

At Calow Primary School we recognise that children "learn to be strong and independent from having secure relationships with their parents, carers and others including their key person at their Early Years setting". We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with our children and their families. All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and by taking time to listen to them. At our school the class teachers (Nursery and Reception) act as a "key person" to all children in their class, supported by any Teaching Assistants.

Parents as partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played and their future role in educating their children. We do this through:

- Inviting parents and children to come and visit Nursery before their start date and to join in with Nursery activities.
- Talking with parents about their child before they start our Nursery.
- Inviting all parents to a meeting during the term before their child starts Reception.
- Formal parent consultations twice a year in Nursery and Reception.
- Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of nursery and again at the end of Reception.
- Parents are invited to attend a variety of workshops and information sessions in Reception and in Nursery parents are regularly invited to come and join in with nursery activities during themed activity sessions six times a year i.e. "Fairy Tale Communication and Language and Literacy activities", "Transport Mathematics activities" and "Mini-beast Understanding the World activities".
- Parents are invited into school to look at their child's "Learning journey" every term (six times a year) and to make contributions to this.
- Parents receive emails informing them about their child's learning and development through the use of our assessment app "2 simple to build a profile" six times a year. They can respond via email and make comments about their own child's progress.
- Parents are encouraged to give feedback about children's learning and development at home verbally and/or by writing a note. This is a two way process and EYFS staff regularly give parents verbal feedback about their child.
- Parents are invited to give their views about EYFS provision via questionnaires.

Enabling Environments

At Calow Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged.

The Learning Environment

We endeavour to ensure the emotional environment is warm and accepting of everyone. The indoor environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. Resources are appropriate, well maintained and accessible. Both EYFS classes have access to an enclosed outdoor area and sometimes share outdoor learning experiences together. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling children to develop all areas of learning. Indoor and outdoor learning experiences are linked. The environment supports every child's learning through planned experiences that are challenging but achievable.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

In the EYFS we plan around six termly themes each year and follow an annual cycle of themes. Nursery and Reception plan to cover the same themes at the same time. Termly plans cover all seven areas of learning and act as a guide for weekly planning; however the teacher may alter these in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning. We make regular on-going assessments of children's learning and use this information to inform future planning,

On entry to Nursery and Reception children are assessed through observation against age related expectations in all seven areas of learning to assess if they are below, in-line with or above age related expectations. This gives a baseline from which we can track progress.

Assessment throughout the EYFS takes the form of observation and this involves the class teacher and any other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded primarily using the iPad app “2 simple to build a profile” and are used to inform children’s progress against the Development Matters Outcomes and Early Learning Goals. All children have an individual “Learning journey” in which evidence is kept (work sampling, photographs, “2 simple to build a profile” observations and post-it note comments) to show progress made for all seven areas of learning throughout the Foundation Stage. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally). Practitioners make time to carry out planned observations of individuals and groups of children regularly. They also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children’s learning. All practitioners are involved in observing children. Practitioners use observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children’s abilities, needs, interests and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children’s learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress.

All children are tracked every term against all seven areas of learning to record which stage of the curriculum they are working at i.e. 22-36 months, 30-50 months, 40-60 months or at the Early Learning Goal. At the end of the Foundation stage children are assessed as to whether they are working at the expected level or emerging or exceeding that level. Parents are informed of their child’s achievements and the Year 1 teacher will also be informed of the children’s outcomes at the end of the Foundation Stage.

Learning and Development

Areas of Learning and Development

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning and development of which three are “prime areas,” and four “specific areas.”

The prime areas are

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

The specific areas are

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive arts and design

Each of these areas is divided into two or three aspects. There are 17 aspects and each aspect has its own Early Learning Goal. These goals define the expectations for most children to achieve by the end of the EYFS. All areas of development are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities, both indoors and outdoors. When children enter Nursery they may need to spend more time working on the "prime areas" of the curriculum but as children grow and develop all seven areas should become more equally balanced. “Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part of children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.” (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2012) Planning and guided children’s activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At Calow Church of England Primary School we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These 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. (Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2012)

Religious Education is also taught in the Reception classes in accordance with Derbyshire guidelines.

Monitoring and Evaluating

It is the responsibility of the Foundation Stage teachers and teaching assistants to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Foundation Stage leader will monitor EYFS provision as part of her role. An action plan is developed yearly leading to an end of year position statement about teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The link governor is actively involved, meeting with the Foundation Stage leader to discuss action plan progress regularly.

Approved by Governors: April 2015

Review:

All quotations included in this policy are taken from the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (September 2012)