

CUDDINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS 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 and develop

EYFS Statutory Framework 2017

Mission

We provide a safe and inclusive learning environment where everyone is valued and encouraged to be the best that they can be.

Rationale

Our Early Years' Policy and practices are guided by the Early Years Statutory Framework 2017 which sets out clear expectations for children's learning, development and their welfare. The Early Years is based upon four principles:

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

A Unique Child

At Cuddington Primary School we believe that providing outstanding Early Years' education is essential as it secures a firm foundation for future learning and development.

Children develop rapidly during their early years - physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. They will come to school having experienced a wide range of pre-school provision that may include nursery, playgroup, childminder and, of course, home. We aim to provide an Early Years' education that supports and extends the knowledge, understanding, skills and confidence that the children have already gained from their pre-school experiences.

At Cuddington Primary School we aim to:

- Provide a safe, caring and enabling environment in which children can learn how to work, play and cooperate with others
- Help children develop their self-esteem and a sense of identity, positive attitudes to learning, self-motivation and independence
- Help children develop an awareness of the needs of others and an understanding of what is right and what is wrong
- Recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates
- Use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning

Equal Opportunities (see school policy)

All children in the EYFS have access to a broad, rich, topic based curriculum both indoors and outdoors. Activities are carefully planned to appeal to all children, irrespective of gender and ethnicity. We ensure that all children have access to the curriculum.

Ongoing assessments provide opportunities to identify any special educational needs a child may have. A significant lack of progress will trigger concern and monitoring of that child. Concerns will be discussed with parents and with the SENDCO. Advice will be sought from other agencies where appropriate. All children in the EYFS are given the opportunity to achieve their best: the range of life experiences and abilities is taken into account when planning the learning. Work is appropriately differentiated to meet the needs of all children.

Positive Relationships

At Cuddington we aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Transition

We believe that an effective transition is essential to starting a positive relationship with the child and their family and to secure a positive start into primary school life.

Therefore, we implement the following practices:

- The families who have accepted a place at Cuddington are contacted as soon as notification is received
- The parents are invited to attend an information meeting where they meet the Reception staff and receive relevant documentation
- The families who are new to the school are visited in their own home by the Reception staff
- The Early Years teacher will communicate with the previous settings
- The children are invited to attend two sessions in school where they can meet with their teachers again, visit their classroom and begin to make new friends. They will also meet their Year 6 buddies
- The children are also invited to weekly story and sing sessions in their new classroom
- There is a staggered intake starting with the youngest children. These children will start school on the first day of the new term in September and the remaining children will start school 2 days later
- Everything is done to ensure the children feel safe, secure and happy
- They are introduced to the school's routines and procedures
- Weekly updates are sent out to keep parents fully informed
- There is a "Stay and Play Session" each Friday

Enabling Environments

The Early Years classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn safely and securely. Play forms the basis of learning and it is through play children are able to:

- Explore and develop learning experiences which help them make sense of the world
- Practise taught skills
- Learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules
- Communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems
- Express their fears and overcome difficulties
- Challenge themselves through weekly rainbow challenges

Outdoor play is a very important part of children's development. In our Foundation Stage the outdoor play space is securely fenced and provides a safe play space where children can develop their physical skills and

learn to share with others in structured and informal play. Across the Foundation Stage we encourage free flow between the classrooms and outdoor area. Activities set up outside support all areas of learning.

Health and Safety (see school policy)

All precautions are taken to ensure the health and well-being of the children in the reception class. A paediatric trained first aider is assigned to the class. Staff make sure that equipment used and activities planned are safe and conform to current health and safety regulations. All educational visits will have a risk assessment carried out and recorded prior to the visit.

Learning and Development

At Cuddington we provide a broad and balanced curriculum based on the 7 areas of learning:

Prime areas of learning:

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

Specific areas of learning:

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

We provide rich and varied experiences which support the **3 characteristics of effective learning**. These are as follows:

- **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

Curriculum

The **prime areas of learning** will involve the following opportunities:

- **Communication and Language** development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment: to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves and to speak and listen in a range of situations
- **Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive, developing their co-ordination, control and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices
- **Personal, social and emotional** development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others, to form positive relationships and develop respect for others, to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings, to understand appropriate behaviour in groups and to have confidence in their own abilities

The **specific areas of learning** will involve the following opportunities:

- **Literacy** development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading and writing materials, to develop their interest.

- **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems and to describe shapes, spaces and measures.
- **Understanding the World** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as, providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.

Planning

This is based on the children's interests. EYFS staff constantly observe what is popular amongst the children in Early Years and activities are planned accordingly. This will then correlate to the Development Matters statements to ensure all assessments are covered with detailed observations.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Children in Reception are assessed using the Early Years Foundation Stage. This assessment is on-going and is observation based using an online app called Tapestry. It is used to give an accurate picture of each child's stage of development in the 7 areas of learning. Records of assessment are made by all the EYFS staff as well as additional adults that are in contact with the children. Parents are encouraged to add their own observations on to Tapestry.

The use of Twitter keeps everyone informed of the activities during the week and a weekly update is sent to all parents at the end of each week.

Blogs are uploaded onto the school website to give detailed accounts of the work being done. A written report is sent to parents at the end of their time in Reception, reporting achievement and progress across the 7 areas of learning. In addition, there is the opportunity to meet with the class teacher 3 times a year to share current progress

Teaching and Learning

Features of high quality teaching and learning in the EYFS include:

- An effective partnership between teachers and parents
- A clear understanding of how children develop and learn
- Clear aims and objectives
- Regular monitoring and evaluation of practice to secure continued progress
- A range of teaching approaches and styles
- A carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional skills
- The encouragement for children to develop their independence and self-management
- Appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor spaces, facilities and equipment
- High quality ongoing assessment which identifies the attainment, progress and future learning needs of the children
- Continuing professional development of all adults working within the Foundation Stage

The Role of an Early Years Leader

The Early Years' Leader will:

- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and functioning of the foundation stage
- Take the lead in ensuring the children's positive well-being and discipline
- Promote effective communication with parents/carers and pre-school settings
- Liaise with the EYFS Governor
- Oversee an effective transition into Reception and then support the transition from Reception into Year 1
- Lead the EYFS staff in planning, assessment and recording procedures
- Manage early years' resources

Policy agreed with Governors: May 2019

Stephanie Larbey (EYFS Teacher)