



Edith Cavell Primary School

Foundation Stage Policy

Signed: *G Bishop* Chair of Governors

Signed: *H Cooke* Head teacher

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EDITH CAVELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Introduction/Rationale

This is arguably the most important stage of education provided by Edith Cavell. It gives every child a firm foundation for successful learning including motivation, positive dispositions and an open approach to lifelong learning. The Foundation Stage has a high priority in our school.

“Pupils must have access to a rich learning environment where opportunities and conditions allow them to flourish in all aspects of their development. The learning environment should provide balance across the areas of learning” Early Years Foundation Stage Profile 2016

We believe that all children should be given the best possible start to their education. We therefore place great value on the quality of our provision in the Foundation Stage.

Aims of the Foundation Stage

- To foster positive attitudes to learning including confidence, curiosity, responsibility and independence.
- To promote an inclusive ethos and approach to learning for all our children to ensure that none are excluded or disadvantaged.
- To provide children with a well-planned curriculum which fosters enthusiasm for learning and is challenging and progressive within a stimulating environment.
- To develop children’s knowledge, understanding and skills in all areas of learning through first hand experiences and discussion.
- To provide opportunities for children to make choices and become independent in their learning in a variety of safe and stimulating activities both indoors and outdoors.
- To establish and maintain a close partnership with Parents/Carers, families.
- To use focussed assessment and record keeping based on direct observation of children and discussion with them. To use this to inform future planning, monitor progress and build on children’s prior learning.

The Early Years Principles

The EYFS is based upon seven key features of effective practice (Development Matters 2021)

- **The best for every child**
- **High Quality Care**
- **The curriculum: what we want the children to learn**
- **Pedagogy: helping children to learn**
- **Assessment: checking what children have learnt**

- **Self-regulation and executive function**
- **Partnership with parents**

The best for every child

We believe that all children have an equal chance at success. We recognise that children learn in different ways and at different rates. Every child is a unique individual and is treated as such. Children's special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. All children promptly receive any extra help they need, so they can progress well in their learning.

We provide a safe and supportive learning environment at our school where the contribution of all children is valued. We also employ a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's experiences, interests, skills and learning needs. In particular, we plan carefully to meet the needs of:

- Boys and Girls
- Children with Special Educational Needs
- Children with disabilities
- Children from all social, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Children of different ethnic groups
- Children from diverse, linguistic backgrounds
- Pupil Premium Children

In addition, we select our resources, equipment and materials thoughtfully, choosing those which positively reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping. We carefully track the progress of every child and interventions are put in place if and when needed. (See SEND policy).

High Quality Care

High quality care is consistent. All of our practitioners in Early Years enjoy spending time with young children and the child's experience is always central to their thinking. They understand that starting school and other transitions in Early Years are big steps for young children.

"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." Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. We carefully monitor the well-being of our children and how involved they are in their learning using Wellbeing Assessments on Insight. We know that in order to thrive and make progress, children need to feel safe, secure and happy. We are sensitive to the children's needs, feelings and interests, considering these when planning. We take time to help children understand clear boundaries with opportunities for discussion, time to reflect on behaviour and opportunities to develop empathy.

The Curriculum: what we want the children to learn

Our curriculum is ambitious with careful sequencing helping children to build their learning over time. We plan outlines for a 'theme' to be covered each half term. When planning weekly, we identify gaps in the children's learning and consider their current interests. We then plan for the next steps of learning. This child initiated approach alongside considering educational need enables us to plan for the specific needs of our children week by week. We have a strong focus on developing the children's language skills with practitioners constantly modelling and encouraging progress.

Pedagogy: helping children to learn

At Edith Cavell we believe that all children can make progress in their learning given the right level of support. We believe that effective pedagogy is a mix of different approaches and that children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other, and through guided learning and direct teaching. The Early Years environment is organized both inside and outside to allow for quality play and interactions; with a mix of adult support to extend their learning or the space to discover independently.

We also have daily adult led group work in areas such as phonics, Maths, writing and other areas of learning such as Understanding the World.

We believe that play in a well organised environment enables children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. We therefore ensure that children have plenty of opportunities to explore and experiment in a secure environment with effective support from caring adults. We organise the classroom and outdoor area so that activities are arranged and set up in a way that promotes play and learning. However, the children are free to adapt and change the activities. We will often respond to the children in the moment, helping to find and organise resources and/ or using language to help extend and formalize their ideas. Our ethos is that if a child is excited and motivated by learning, especially in the early days at our school, then we are already helping that child to become a lifelong learner. This child initiated play allows for discussion and talk between children as they develop their ideas and learn. The adults promote learning through skilled questioning, modelling, providing challenging and extending understanding in response to the children's choices and interests.

Assessment: checking what children have learnt

Our assessment of pupil progress through the Foundation Stage is based on regular and close observations as well as questioning, listening and discussion with individual children. In this way, we are able to make professional judgements about what children have learnt and understand. Staff in the Foundation Stage use an electronic programme called Tapestry to record observations for parents to see throughout the year.

On entry to school we assess each child on the Reception Baseline Assessment. This is used to measure progress made throughout their time in Primary School. We also use assessment evidence to track each child's progress against the early learning goals every half term and upload this data onto Insight. This progress is reviewed by the class teacher with the head teacher and any necessary interventions are put in place.

We involve all adults who come into contact with the children and regard Parents/Carers as especially important in this respect. We want to ensure that parents are able to contribute to the assessment process through an ongoing dialogue between home and school. (See partnership with parents).

Self-regulation and executive function

Executive function includes the child's ability to:

- hold information in mind
- focus their attention
- think flexibly
- inhibit impulsive behaviour

These abilities contribute to the child's growing ability to self-regulate:

- concentrate their thinking
- plan what to do next
- monitor what they are doing and adapt
- regulate strong feelings
- be patient for what they want
- bounce back when things get difficult.

Language development is central to self-regulation. Children use language to guide their actions and plans. Pretend play gives many opportunities for children to focus their thinking, persist and plan ahead.

(Development Matters 2021)

At EC we keep all of the above in mind when planning, assessing and interacting with the children.

Partnership with Parents

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 the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.
- The teacher offers to visit all children in their home setting prior to their starting school.
- The teacher visits children in their feeder Nursery to meet with children's current key worker.
- The children and parents have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during a transfer afternoon.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class.
- Encouraging parents to come into the classroom and settle their child in the morning.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There are formal meetings for parents at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.

- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: celebration assemblies, showcases, Open days, Sports Day etc
- Inviting parents to review and add to assessments made on the online assessment tool 'Tapestry'.
- Sending home information letters informing parents of how they can help to support their child further with their learning.
- Inviting parents into the setting to read with their child every Friday morning.

To this end we work hard to promote a successful partnership with a two way flow of knowledge, information and expertise.

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

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

Curriculum

Our core reference document is the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' and the 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage' which includes the principles for good practice which underpin the provision at Edith Cavell.

There are seven areas of learning in the EYFS curriculum. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. There are three prime areas that are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for expanding their capacity to learn.

These are:

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

There are then four specific areas through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These are:

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

Within these areas of learning, the Early Learning Goals establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. Some children in our school will exceed these goals and others will still be working towards them as they enter year one. We carefully assess and track the children's progress towards these goals and plan for their next steps in learning.

Safeguarding

At Edith Cavell we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements.

We understand that we are required to:

- 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.
- In the case of any safeguarding concerns staff record and share incidents via schools electronic CPOMS system.
- All staff undertake data protection training and follow school guidelines.

Transitions

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

Starting Reception – Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an Induction Meeting in the Summer term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff and learn more about the Reception curriculum. This is an opportunity for staff to

- To go through the school handbook

- Explain about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals
- Explain about holidays and absences
- Purchase uniform and book bag if requested
- Explain the arrangements for the gradual induction in to reception

New class sessions - The children are given an opportunity to come in to school to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class. They will spend an afternoon in their new class. Parents can stay with the child during this session.

This means that before they join their new class the Reception environment is already a familiar place to them.

Home Visits – The class teacher and another member of the team will come to visit the child and their parents in their home in September, before the child starts school. This enables the children to become more familiar with the adults at school, provides an opportunity for the staff and parents to have a private discussion about the child and their individual needs and encourages a strong partnership with parents.

September Intake - When children join the school in September the following procedures will apply in order that they can gradually adjust to their new surroundings:

- During the first week the children gradually increase their time in school from 3 hours on the first day to a full day at the end of the week. They stay for lunch every day.
- During the second week, and thereafter, children will attend for the full school day unless Foundation staff and parents or guardians agree that it is not in the best interests of an individual child.

Starting in Key Stage 1 (Year 1) - Throughout the Reception year, each child’s involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in Key Stage and whole school assemblies as well as sharing playtimes with the Key Stage 1 children.

Children have the opportunity to meet their new class teacher and spend an afternoon in their new class during the summer term

Admission

In our school we offer:

Termly entrance into Nursery: September, January and Easter in the term after the child turns three. Nursery sessions are held in the afternoon 12:30pm – 3:30pm.

We offer one intake into reception in September. Children will need to be four years old before the 1st September to be in the reception class. Children are all offered a full time place from 8:45am – 3:30pm, regardless of when their birthday is.

Arrangements for children settling into our school begin with a staggered start so that children are given enough time to feel secure in their new environment. Parental involvement is valued and welcomed with plenty of opportunities for cooperation and collaboration.

Staffing and Organisation

Our Nursery/Reception classes are taught by teachers who have an Early Years qualification and/or experience. They work alongside Nursery Nurses and well-qualified Teaching Assistants.

It is fundamental to keep our practice up to date; we therefore ensure that all our staff working in the Foundation Stage attend courses and training on a regular basis as part of our schools Professional Development Programme.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy is monitored on an annual basis by the:

- EYFS Leader
- Head teacher
- Governor Responsible for the Early Years Foundation Stage

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Equal Opportunities
- Special Educational Needs
- Safeguarding
- Health and Safety
- Behaviour Management
- Visitors Teaching and Learning