

Ash Croft and Cottons Farm Primary Federation

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY



Enjoy. Achieve. Succeed.

Approved: November 2016

Signed: Chair of Governors _____

Signed: Headteacher _____

Next Review: November 2018

Introduction

This policy outlines the provision Ash Croft and Cottons Farm Primary School offers to all its pupils aged three to five years. Children within this age range are taught in The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The Foundation Stage has its own framework and is therefore treated as a separate Key Stage. Foundation Stage 1 (FS1) refers to three to four year olds and is formally known as the Nursery. Foundation Stage 2 (FS2) refers to four to five year olds and is formally known as Reception.

Early childhood education is valued in itself and should not be seen merely as a preparation for the next stage in learning.

This policy has been informed by DfE documentation.

For the purpose of this policy the term ‘Federation’ or ‘school’ will refer to both Ash Croft Primary School and Cottons Farm Primary School.

Our aims

Our school is a place where everyone is treated equally, encouraged and respected. We believe that all children should be able to achieve their full potential academically, socially and emotionally. We are committed to our school being a safe and inclusive place where learning is nurtured and encouraged in a happy, caring and fun environment. We all work for our school to be a happy place where good behaviour is expected and all children enjoy their educational journey. At Ash Croft and Cottons Farm Primary Federation we believe in nothing but the best!

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. The EYFS is based upon four principles

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

Effective Early Years Education

Effective education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements. At Ash Croft and Cottons Farm Primary Federation we believe that children develop rapidly during the early years – physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. Therefore, practitioners should ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued. Early years experience should build on what the children already know and can do. No child should be disadvantaged. Parents and practitioners should work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

To be effective, the early years curriculum should be carefully structured (recognising different starting points; relevant to levels of need). There should be opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that they plan or initiate for themselves. Practitioners must be able to observe and respond appropriately to children informed by knowledge of how children develop and learn. Well planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process. For children to have rich and stimulating experiences, the learning environment should be well planned and well organised. Above all, effective learning and development for young children requires high quality care and education by practitioner.

The Early Years Framework

The Early Years Framework in its current form became statutory in September 2012 and was revised in 2014. At Ash Croft and Cottons Farm Primary Federation we adhere to this framework. All children in the EYFS have access to a broad, rich topic based curriculum both indoors and outdoors. The seven areas of learning and experience, ages and stages, and the Early Learning Goals now provide a National Framework for individual schools and other pre-five settings in planning, teaching and assessing the early year's framework. They also provide an essential link between the pre statutory framework and the Key Stage One programmes of study. We have adopted these areas of learning and experience and the national ages and stages, as the basis for our planning as they provide a framework which enables us to achieve our aims for under five provision.

The Seven Areas of Learning

The seven areas of learning covered by the framework are:

PRIME AREA: Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

This area has three sub sections. These are Making Relationships, Self-confidence and Self-awareness and Managing Feelings and Behaviour. The outcomes focus on children learning how to work, play, co-operate with others and function in a group beyond the family. They cover important aspects of personal, social, moral and spiritual development including the development of personal values and an understanding of self and others.

PRIME AREA: Communication and Language (C and L)

This is broken down into three sub sections. These cover Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking. These outcomes cover important aspects of language development and provide the foundations for literacy. The Early Years Policy places a strong emphasis on children's developing competence in speaking and listening and Understanding. Other areas of learning also make a vital contribution to the successful development of literacy.

PRIME AREA: Physical Development (PD)

This covers both fine and gross motor development and keeping healthy. Physical development is implicit in all areas of the EYFS framework. Teaching concentrates on

children's developing physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulative skills in indoor and outdoor environments. Positive attitudes are encouraged towards a healthy and active way of life.

SPECIFIC AREA: Mathematics (M)

This is broken down into two sub sections. These are Number and Shape, Space and Measures. These outcomes cover important aspects of mathematical understanding and provide the foundation for Mathematics. They focus on achievement through practical activities and are using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas.

SPECIFIC AREA: Literacy (L)

This area of learning has two sub sections of Reading and Writing. The objectives ensure success in early reading and writing skills. Phonics plays a big part in this area and the ability to blend for reading and segment for spelling are skills that are promoted daily in the Foundation Stage.

SPECIFIC AREA: Understanding the World (U the W)

This covers the subjects Geography, Science, DT, History, RE and ICT. This is a major area of learning and enquiry focusing on children's developing knowledge and understanding of their environment, other people and features of the natural and made world. It provides a foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning.

SPECIFIC AREA: Expressive Arts and Design (CD)

This covers art, music, and drama. This area of the EYFS framework focuses on the development of children's imagination and their ability to communicate and to express ideas and feelings in creative ways.

Characteristics of effective learning

The characteristics of effective learning describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner. They are vital elements of support for the transition process from EYFS to Year 1. The characteristics of learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes. Information describing the child's characteristics of effective learning will provide Year 1 teachers with vital background and context when considering the child's next stage of development and future learning needs.

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

Planning

At Ash Croft and Cottons Farm Primary Federation planning is divided into long term, medium term and short term. Long term plans state the topics to be covered for each year. Medium term plans illustrate the objectives being taught each term. Short term or weekly plans, show specific activities planned to achieve the objectives. Staff ensure that all children are encouraged to experience all areas of activity during the week, although they may not experience them each day.

A mixture of directed and free choice activities are planned and children's choices are carefully monitored to ensure a balanced programme. The children begin by having free choice of activities for most of the session. This free programme is gradually directed by staff as children get older and more mature, so that as they approach transfer to Key Stage One, they are prepared for the Key Stage One framework.

Admission Arrangements

Children enter Foundation Stage 1 the term after their third birthday, subject to availability. Children enter the Foundation Stage 2 classes in September of the school year in which they are five. Places in Foundation Stage 1 are offered in accordance with the school's admissions policy and Foundation Stage 2 classes are offered in accordance with Derby City Council admissions policy.

Organisation of classes

Ash Croft Primary School

Our Foundation Stage Two offers a 1-point entry, in September, and has capacity of 40 children. The school day begins at 8.55am and ends at 3.20pm. All children must be accompanied to and from school by a known adult.

Cottons Farm Primary School

In Foundation Stage One we offer 52 part time places where children can attend for 15 hours per week. Children can attend each morning or each afternoon for 3 hours per session or a mixture of these depending upon availability.

Our FS2 offers a 1-point entry, in September, and has a capacity of 20 children. The school day begins at 8.55am and ends at 3.20pm. All children must be accompanied to and from school by a known adult.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at Ash Croft and Cottons Farm Primary Federation are treated fairly whatever their race, gender, 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 the Foundation Stage 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, 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 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 provide support as necessary.

Special Educational Needs

Continual informal and formal assessments undertaken by staff provided opportunities to identify any special educational needs a child may have. As children all develop differently it is recognised that a significant lack in achievement after the initial settling in period represents initial concern and careful monitoring. Children identified with special educational needs are monitored and initial concerns are discussed with parents, SENCO, and advice may be sought from other agencies e.g. Speech and Language Therapy Service. In the Foundation Stage we give all children the opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of their range of life experiences, and abilities when planning for their learning.

Equal Opportunities

All areas of provision will be made accessible to all children regardless of age, sex, gender, creed, race, ethnicity, or ability.

Safeguarding

The school takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously. Any concerns, which the school has, will be noted and, if deemed necessary, will be reported to the relevant agency. The safety of the child is always of paramount importance. The full Safeguarding Policy is available in school for parents to read if they wish.

Parents as Partners

We value the involvement of parents in school. Parental involvement with school begins even before children start Nursery with an invitation to visit the school, meet their child's teacher and visit their classroom. Both Nursery and Reception parents are invited to a workshop in the summer term to provide them with essential information for the next academic year. Parent consultation meetings are held throughout the year at which parents are invited to discuss their child's progress.

A report is sent out at the end of the summer term and parents are invited into school to discuss this report if they wish. It is important to stress that if parents are concerned in any way about their child they should telephone or call into the school to make an appointment to discuss their concerns with the class teacher, Head(s) of School or Executive Head teacher. Parents are kept informed of all happenings in the school by regular newsletters. The Parents are informed via notices on the window. Parents are invited to various assemblies and functions throughout the year.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS is based on the Development Matters statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. These plans are flexible so that teachers can respond to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations. Staff use the 'Tapestry' software to complete 'snap shot' (short) observations and photographs to demonstrate children using skills independently in provision. The iPads are also used for photographic evidence of the children completing activities.

These observations are recorded in a variety of ways, and contribute to the child's individual 'Learning Journey' profile book. At the end of the reception year in school, the child's progress is recorded on to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

Parent/Carers are able to access a log into Tapestry to see their child's Learning Journal. Parents sign an agreement to ensure they will **not** share or publish any images or observations from their child's Learning Journal on any social networking site to protect images of other children that may appear in any photos contained in their child's Learning Journal. The Learning Journal is only begun once the child has started in the school and parents have signed consent forms and completed the email request form. In all written observations other children are not referred to by name.

Parents/careers are able to add observations from home once they have been set up on the system. They will be able to upload images and write a description of what their child can do. Teachers will then approve the observations which will go onto their journal.

The Learning Environment

The Foundation Stage classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet, creative etc.

Each classroom has defined learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

The Foundation Stage has enclosed outdoor areas, and children are able to free-flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Being outdoors offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. They are able to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

EYFS Key Person

In line with the EYFS:

- Each child will be assigned a Key Person who will help them to become familiar with their surroundings and will develop a genuine bond with the child and immediate family that forms the basis of a settled, close relationship.
- The Key Person will meet the needs of each child and respond sensitively to their feelings, behaviour and ideas.
- A child's patterns of attendance will be considered when appointing a Key Person.
- We will inform parents of the name of the Key Person, and explain their role, when a child starts. The parents will be given an information leaflet on the role of the Key Person and will have an opportunity to meet with their child's Key Person prior to their child starting. Information regarding Key Person groups will be displayed within the setting.

The Key Person will:

- Act as the key contact for the parents and have links with other carers involved with the child, such as a childminder. They will co-ordinate the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
- Try to meet with the child and their family prior to them starting.
- Provide a secure attachment and develop a genuine bond with the children and offer a settled, close relationship. They will respond sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour.
- Help their key children to become familiar with the setting and to feel confident and safe within it.
- Take primary responsibility for the observational records of their key children. Using these to inform next steps and individualised planning.
- Be responsible for completing the Individual Learning Journey for children and writing Next Steps for the child's development each term.
- Encourage the Child's Voice by:
 - Making regular opportunities throughout the year to look at each child's Learning Journal with them and give the child opportunities to make comments.
 - Sharing and valuing the child's WOW sheets
 - Sharing the child's Focus Child information sheets and developing learning opportunities based on them
 - Ensuring that every child's play and learning is displayed and valued in the environment.
- Develop an effective two-way flow of information between themselves and the parent/carer. This will support parents in guiding their child's development at home. It will also enable the Key Person to learn more about any significant aspects of family life that may be important to the child to ensure that every child's learning

and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. Some of the ways in which we facilitate an effective two way flow of information are:

- o An open door policy encouraging informal dialogue at the beginning and end of each session
- o Focus Child information sheets that the parents fill in regularly with their child about their interests at home. These sheets are displayed and the children are encouraged to bring in a favourite toy and story from home. These are then shared with the other children and used as a stimulus for planning play opportunities that will motivate the child.
- o WOW sheets that are filled in regularly to celebrate the child's home experiences and achievements.
- o Termly parent evenings where the child's Learning Journal and Next Steps in Development will be shared.
- o Take responsibility for identifying any additional needs and help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate. Work effectively with any professionals involved with the child e.g. speech and language therapist and OT and implement any advice given

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow this policy. The Senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring system.