

Offham Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date Reviewed- March 2017

Next Review Date- March 2018

Signed – Head Teacher

Signed – Chair of Governors

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Introduction

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school we give all children the opportunity to start school in Term 1 of the academic year. Children will attend school in the mornings only for the first two weeks and then begin full-time.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

A Unique Child

At Offham Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise 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/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of "differences". All children at Offham Primary School 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 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, 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.



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- Providing a safe, stimulating 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.

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

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

Welfare

"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."

At Offham 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 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.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

At Offham Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.



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We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Inviting all parents and children to a teddy bears picnic during the term before their child starts school.
- The teacher to visit all children in their pre-school setting prior to their starting school, discussing Record of Transfer with each child's key worker.
- The teacher and teaching assistant to visit all children in their home setting the week before starting school, giving the opportunity to talk to parents individually about their child and talk to the children themselves.
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during taster sessions.
- Offering parents regular/daily opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class.
- Information is shared through a Home School contact book.
- Providing an 'All about me' book for parents to leave comments relating to their child's achievements and hobbies.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- Holding a formal meeting for parents three times a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress.
- 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: Christmas play, Easter service, Class assembly, Sports Day, Parent helpers on trips out of school, etc.
- Children's observations are emailed to parents at the end of each term, through the 2Simple website.
- Stay and play sessions.
- Informing parents on a termly basis whether their child is age related/below/above.

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. At our school the EYFS teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the Teaching Assistant. The EYFS teacher meets with staff to discuss new intake children.

Enabling Environments

At Offham Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

We regularly use the field and woodland area. Outdoor sessions mirror a mixture of child initiated and teacher directed activities.

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Observation, Assessment and Planning

The Planning within the EYFS is led by the children's progression through Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012) using the schools' Long Term Plan and Medium Term Plans (MTP's), which are based around half termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning; however the teacher may alter these MTP's in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Pupil Progress Meetings are held with the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher 6 times a year and are used to plan and track pupils' development in the Early Years. This is shared with the Governors as part of the School Improvement.

The EYFS Profile is based on the ongoing observations of the 3 prime areas and 4 specific areas and the three characteristics of effective learning.

It consists of a level descriptor of the level of attainment in relation to the 17 Early Learning Goals and a short narrative of how the child demonstrates the three characteristics of effective learning. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's and assessment scales.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS class has its own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access the outdoors that provide learning opportunities in all 7 areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At Offham Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 2. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- The understanding that teachers 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;

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- 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;
- The good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

The 3 Characteristics of effective learning of the EYFS underpin learning and development across all areas and support the children to remain effective and motivated learners.

Play and Exploring

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.”

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. 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. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

“Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.”

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

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Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

3 Prime Areas

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

4 Specific Areas

- Literacy.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding the world.
- Expressive Arts and Design.

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head Teacher, SENCO and subject coordinators will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

The governors and staff of Offham School are committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all pupils, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background. All pupils have access to the curriculum and the right to a learning environment which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping.