



Carlisle & Hampton Hill Federation



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

This policy was reviewed:	April 2018
This policy was ratified by Full Governing Body (if applicable):	Not applicable
This policy will be reviewed again:	April 2019
Governor committee responsibility:	Achievement & Families Committee
Statutory Policy?:	No (this is not a legal requirement, but EYFS policies and procedures are referenced in statutory guidance)

Carlisle Infant School Federated with Hampton Hill Junior School

Early years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their 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.”

- “Early Years Foundation Stage Profile”

Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012

Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

A unique child

We recognise that every child is an individual learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and 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 and develop a positive attitude to learning.

Positive relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent developing secure relationships and we aim to establish caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families, right from the start.

Enabling environment

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children’s development and we offer a wide range of learning opportunities. Through observations we assess the children’s interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning. Children are encouraged to become independent by selecting their own resources and tidying up after themselves.

Learning and development

The Foundation Stage 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. Equally there are opportunities for physical, active learning.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Carlisle Infant School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS for children is from birth to five years of age. All children begin school with a wide variety of experiences and learning and it is the privilege of the adults working in the

foundation stage to accept the task of building upon that prior learning experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning ensuring that parents and carers, support staff and the Reception team work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children in their charge.

Aims

The aims of the EYFS are to recognise every child's right to grow up in a safe environment, to be healthy, enjoy and achieve what they set out to do, to make a positive contribution in their own community and prepare themselves for life in the working world.

We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

At Carlisle Infant School, we aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child including children with additional needs.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Work in partnership with parents and guardians and value their contributions ensuring all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability are valued.
- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.
- Provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs.

Learning and Development

Learning and development is categorised into three prime areas of learning:

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

Additionally there are four specific areas of learning:

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

The characteristics of effective learning:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs. All staff who work in the Foundation Stage are involved in this process.

The planning within the EYFS is based around the children's interests. These plans are used by the EYFS team as a guide for weekly planning. However, we may alter these in response to the needs of the children.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observations and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. Parents and carers are given the opportunity to meet their child's class teacher each term and, at the end of the third term, we provide a written summary in relation to the children's early learning goals to parents and carers.

Learning through Play

At Carlisle Infant School, we do not make a distinction between work and play. Children learn through planned play activities and staff will decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities.

Outdoor Learning

At Carlisle we understand the value of children learning in the outdoor environment where they can be active and fully engage their senses. Learning outside the classroom supports the development of healthy lifestyles by offering the children the opportunity for physical activity, freedom of movement and helps them to develop a sense of well-being. Outdoor learning also gives children direct contact with nature and unique learning experiences such as contact with the weather and seasons. In Reception we have a large enclosed garden with different learning zones. Children have daily sessions in the outdoors where they can mix with their peers across the year group. This provision includes structured activities led by teaching assistants and teachers as well as time for child-initiated learning.

The Induction Process

During the Summer Term prior to starting school the following September the following visits are conducted:

- There are nursery visits to Carlisle Infant School
- Where possible, members of the Reception team will visit nursery settings
- Each child and their parents and carers will be invited to a stay and play session in their new class
- There is an information evening for new Reception parents/carers
- In early September the class teacher and a teaching assistant will make a home visit so that they can meet the child and his/her parents in a familiar environment and establish a relationship with the child and his/her family

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

We split the year group into 3 teams and these start with half days, then a day with lunch and then full days. After this staggered entry it is expected that children will attend for the full school day unless the class teacher and parents or carers agree that it is not in the best interests of an individual child.

Home and School Links

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we aim for the schools and parents and carers to work in partnership. This can have a very positive impact on a child's development but relies on a two-way flow of information and knowledge. We will develop this working relationship between the school and parents and carers as follows:

- We will outline the school's expectations in a Home School Agreement.
 - We will hold a parent consultation early in the year to establish and communicate how a child is settling into the school environment.
 - We will publish a theme topic leaflet detailing the areas of learning and the overarching theme of the term or half-term.
 - We will operate an "open door" policy that will allow parents and carers to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner. Conversely, if Reception staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
 - We will invite parents to contribute to their child's learning journal giving examples and suggesting activities which can be carried out at home to support their child's learning.
- We will conduct workshops for parents and carers to enable them to be familiar with the teaching methods used in school particularly our phonics programme.
- There will be opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning by helping with reading. In the summer term, we will invite parents and carers to visit the school informally to look at the range of work that has been produced over the year.

Personal Care

"Personal" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an intimate procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene. We expect that all children entering Reception will be fully toilet trained unless there is a medical reason why this is not the case.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Children with special educational needs will be supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Individual Education Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support commensurate with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. The school's SEN Co-ordinator is responsible for

providing additional information and advice to staff and parents and for arranging external intervention and support as necessary.

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

Karen Allum

March 2017