

2Ai. EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Date Reviewed: Autumn Term 2022

Next Review: Autumn Term 2023

Revision number: 8

Reviewed by: CT

Introduction to the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Cameron Vale School children can join the Nursery from the age of 3 months old. They begin in the Chelsea Nursery and subsequently join Reception in the academic year in which they turn five. The EYFS sets the standards that all Early Years Providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range and knowledge of skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- **Quality and consistency** in all Early Years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly;
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;
- **Equal opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. The **learning and development** requirements cover:

- The areas of learning and development which must shape activities and experiences (educational programmes) for children in Early Years settings;
- The early learning goals that providers must help children work towards (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five) and;
- Assessment arrangements for measuring progress (and requirements for reporting to parents and/or carers)

The four overarching principles of the EYFS set the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. At Cameron Vale School, practitioners use the principles of the EYFS to guide everyday teaching and learning:

- **A Unique Child** – every child is a competent learner
- **Positive Relationships** – children learn to be strong and independent
- **Enabling Environments** – supporting and extending a child's development
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**

These principles run alongside the government's Every Child Matters outcomes.

There are three **prime** areas of learning and development, which are:

- Communication and Language which is split into three areas; Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking.
- Physical Development which is split into two main areas; Moving & Handling and Health & Self-care.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development which is split into three main areas; Self-confidence & Self Awareness, Managing Feelings & Behaviours and Making Relationships.

There are four **specific** areas of learning and development, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific areas** are:

- **Literacy** - *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 materials including books, poems, and other written materials to ignite 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.*

For further details regarding the curriculum, please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

Through teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, we aim:

- To provide children with opportunities to initiate their own learning and to learn from each other
- To encourage children to develop positive dispositions towards their learning
- To allow children time to consolidate their learning
- To provide a safe, stimulating and comfortable learning environment
- For children to develop a positive self-image
- For children to learn through movement and use of all the senses
- For children to make links in their learning
- To promote the development and use of language
- To ensure that play is progressive and matches children's level of development and interest
- For practitioners to use their expertise to gauge when it is appropriate to teach skills and knowledge directly
- For practitioners to model a range of positive behaviour and promote rich language experiences
- To plan the indoor and outdoor learning environment in a manner appropriate to their level and which encourages purposeful play
- To work with parents in partnership and recognise their continued role in their child's development
- To undertake skillful and well-planned observations to assess children's development and progress

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

In order to support learning and development we have adopted an exciting, engaging and varied curriculum at Cameron Vale School, which operates on themes that are based on the children's interests. We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

Playing and exploring - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

'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, 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.

Active learning - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

'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 some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

"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 the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

The Cycle of Observation, Planning and Assessment

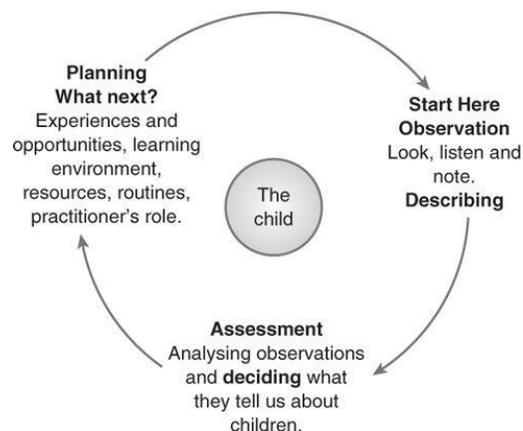
At Cameron Vale School we hold the individual child at the centre of our planning. This is achieved through recording significant observations (on the 'Blossom' (Nursery) or 'Tapestry' (Reception) system) and assessment (using Development Matters and ELG tracking). Staff achieve this through:

- Observing children as they act and interact in their play, everyday activities, child-initiated activities and planned activities, and learning from and sharing with parents about what the child does at home.
- Considering the examples of development as stated in the unique theme: observing what children can do, and identifying the stage on their developmental pathway.
- Considering ways to support the child to strengthen and deepen their current learning and development.
- Considering the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care. This information is then effectively used to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.

At Cameron Vale School we use one of two systems called 'Blossom' (Nursery) or 'Tapestry' (Reception) to create an online learning journey for each child. Significant observations and assessments are recorded through the use of photographs, videos and annotations and are uploaded to the online learning journey in order to track children's progress and achievements. We encourage all practitioners who work with the children to regularly contribute to their learning journeys to create a holistic view of each child.

In the moment planning in Nursery

At The Chelsea Nursery we use the concept of 'in the moment planning' which is a child-led approach to teaching and learning. 'In the moment' planning is a very simple idea, the adults observe and interact with children as they pursue their own interests, whilst also assessing and moving the learning on in that moment. When children are playing and selecting what to do themselves, they become deeply engaged. While this is happening, the adults will be observing and **waiting** for a moment in which they feel they can make a difference. They should then interact to '**teach**' the 'next step' as appropriate for that unique child at that precise moment. Each time they interact with a child, they are observing, assessing, **planning for**, and responding to, that individual child (shown in the 'traditional' teaching cycle below). The whole teaching cycle is completed with a child 'in the moment' and will happen numerous times each day. Such interactions are the most important and powerful teaching moments. The written account of some of these interactions becomes a learning journey recorded in the 'Blossom' or 'Tapestry' online system. This approach leads to deep level learning and outstanding progress.



Parental Engagement

We recognise that partnership with parents is a vital part of our school's success.

Parents/carers are invited to register with 'Blossom' or 'Tapestry' online learning journal, when their child starts school or nursery. This allows them to access all observations of their child online and updates them when regular observations are added. Information on the learning journeys can be supplemented by feedback from parents/carers. We encourage parents to contribute to learning journeys by adding their own observations onto the system or through passing information onto the practitioners. These learning journeys along with other pieces of evidence form the children's EYFS Profile, which is given to parents at the end of the Nursery and Reception year.

- Parents are actively encouraged to support their child's learning and we operate an open-door policy at all times to parents.

- We invite parents into school to meet their child's teacher prior to transition. Furthermore, we offer stay sessions which parents come into school to take part in their child's learning with a key worker. This gives us the opportunity to support parents to play an active role in their child's learning and build strong, supportive relationships with parents.
- All Nursery and Reception children are assigned a key worker as a point of contact for parents and a means of fostering good relationships.
- Nursery parents will also receive a daily update in the child's Blossom journal regarding their child's activities and day to day care.
- The Reception parents are invited to attend a Curriculum evening in September to provide them with information on how to support their child with their Maths & Phonics learning, as well as the daily routines and expectations of the Reception year.

Behaviour

We use praise and encouragement to help our children to develop positive learning behaviours and to build good relationships with others. Please refer to the Behaviour Policy for further detail.

Safeguarding and Welfare

Safeguarding in the EYFS is outlined in the whole school Safeguarding Policy and staff in the Foundation Stage unit follow guidance on the whole school policies with regards to use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting and the production and use of images.

For details around toileting and changing children, please see the **Intimate Care and Toileting Policy**.

Promoting Independence

We encourage all parents to send their children to school with appropriate clothing that they can begin to learn to manage themselves, this includes outdoor clothing. We advise that all children in the EYFS should wear school coats and shoes that they can fasten independently. Children in Reception should also adhere to the whole school Uniform Policy.

Transition

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.

For details around settling children into the Nursery environment, please see the **Settling Policy**.

Transition into the Foundation Stage

The children are given opportunities to come in to meet their new class teacher and the other children in their class. This means that before they start school the environment and adults in it are already a familiar place to them. Many of the children starting in Reception will have already attended Nursery at Cameron Vale School and so the environment and adults are very familiar.

Transition to Year 1

Throughout the Foundation Stage, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been gradually 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 and other cross key phase activities/ days as part of the curriculum. Children should be familiar with their new class teacher who will spend some time with them in their current class before inviting them to spend the day in their new class during the summer term.