



'EYFS Policy'



Updated	Feb 2022
Reviewed	Feb 2022
Next Review	Feb 2023

**With God's help we
CARE - BUILD - FOLLOW - THINK**

In accordance with our vision and mission - with God's help we, **care, build, follow and think** lies at the heart of this policy. We believe that all people are made in the image of God and are unconditionally loved by God. Everyone is equal and we treat each other with dignity and respect. Our school is a place where everyone is able to flourish in a loving and hospitable community.

Introduction and Aims



At Cottingham CofE Primary School we strongly believe that the opportunities and relationships in Early Years forms the crucial foundations for a lifelong love of learning. We believe that we are able to provide this through:

- Building strong relationships with children and families right from the beginning.
- Creating a joy of learning and curiosity in an engaging environment.
- Enabling each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to their full potential, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- Offering a range of learning opportunities with a balance of adult directed and child led learning.
- Respecting and valuing the uniqueness of each child.
- Encouraging children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere;
- Supporting children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- Helping each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals with limitless opportunities.

In doing so, we nurture the 'Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning' in everything that we do.

Our Curriculum



The Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021 sets out the framework for which must guide all learning and development which takes place in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

At Cottingham CofE Primary School, we have a curriculum which is unique to our school. We identify strong links with our locality and local community and understand the needs of our children.

Development Matters (2021) has been used to support the development of our Early Years curriculum and is used to support assessment.

Our Early Years curriculum identifies areas of learning as set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage.

The prime areas are:

Communication and language

Physical development

Personal, social and emotional development

The specific areas are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the world

Expressive arts and design

The EYFS also includes the 'Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning', Foundation Stage teachers plan activities with these specifically in

mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude towards their learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The 'Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning' are the ways in which children approach learning.

In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- *playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'*
- *active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements*
- *creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things*

Statutory framework for the EYFS

Teaching strategies



Play - Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years provision. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, alongside Learning Quests, provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them.

“The truth is, they all ‘need the play’. Even the most able. It is through quality play experiences that children will be engaged and challenged and that is how you facilitate truly effective learning.”

Alistair Bryce-Clegg

The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, be creative, investigate and ask questions.

Adults within children’s play

We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child- initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. When an adult is present and can join in with a child’s play, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult’s response to children builds understanding and provides opportunities for new learning. Adults use their own judgement to decide when and how to join children’s play. Adults are encouraged to be timely and sensitive in their role, this is a demonstration of good practice.

High-quality interactions should demonstrate adults and children taking part in ‘sustained and shared thinking’ whereby both parties are in tune, completely absorbed in conversation and with genuine interest.

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. Our continuous provision ensures that true self-initiated play can take place. Through a well-organised and carefully resourced environment, children are encouraged to select and use different areas of the provision indoors and out.

Our continuous provision is designed to offer equipment and resources which are continuously available, some areas may be enhanced by adults or ‘dressed’ for interest.

Children are encouraged to tidy things away to their correct places ‘choose it, use it and put it away’. This is taught as part of our school values, encouraging respect for our environment.

Towards the latter part of the Foundation Year, children will be asked to use the ‘Lolly Stick Challenge’. This challenge invites children to take part in some ‘must do’ activities to support specific areas of learning. During this time children will be encouraged to build up some time management, respond to instruction, develop perseverance and also ensure breadth of experiences.

Direct teaching



There are times throughout the day when more formal 'direct teaching' sessions take place. These activities are led by the teacher or one of the other members of the Early Years team and will have a particular focus depending on the next steps of the children. These sessions have a clear focus and will involve all of the children being engaged and focussed in the learning. Children will work with an adult on the following directed activities across the week:

- Phonics (Read Write Inc)
- Talk4Writing
- Maths (White Rose Mastery)
- Reading (Individual)

Phonics

We have fidelity to the Ruth Miskin 'Read Write Inc' phonics programme. Phonics sessions begin straight away in September, at the beginning of the year the children are taught as a whole group in a directed session. All set 1 sounds are taught with a new sound introduced each day. Sounds previously taught are revisited daily. During these sessions the children learn to blend and segment sounds to read and write short words.

Regular assessments take place to ensure that children are learning and retaining sounds. Once all set 1 sounds have been taught, children are then grouped according to progress. Those more confident move on to reading Ditty books and learning to write a simple sentence. Those not yet confident spend time revisiting set 1 sounds and securing segmenting and blending. This includes reading first short ditties.

Talk4Writing

Talk4Writing is an approach developed by Pie Corbett. This approach to writing enables children to move from dependence to independence. The children learn to talk a story, this enables them to get to know a story and internalise it along with actions before moving on to developing a story of their own. For children in early years the focus is on developing speaking and listening skills through high quality texts. We build on vocabulary, develop understanding of story structure and sequence. This is applied through drawing story maps, retelling stories and making up stories of their own. Later in the year children may begin to write down their ideas.

White Rose Maths

At Cottingham CofE we are committed to a mastery approach to maths. Using the White Rose resources, we are able to teach key mathematical concepts and skills to children through engaging and interactive lessons. All lessons ensure that children are able to use concrete resources to secure understanding before moving on to pictorial and abstract methods. In early years, maths lessons are fun and active whilst building on skills and knowledge. We take time to develop knowledge of one number at a time, developing a deep knowledge of each individual number. There are lots of opportunities to apply maths knowledge within the provision, this may include, counting, sorting, measuring, developing spatial awareness, patterning, shape and much more.

Reading

In addition to the approaches outlined above, we ensure that all children have the opportunity to read individually to an adult. During this time, we share a book, encouraging the child to talk about what is happening, make predictions, talk about characters, learn to sequence a familiar story, link to their own experiences and think about emotions linked to characters. During the first few weeks children are given a wordless book which enables them to work on the skills listed. As soon as children have retained the first sounds, we begin to give books which are phonetically matched to enable them to begin to blend short words. After initial sound blending books, banded reading books are then matched accordingly and progress tracked. As well as books to support decoding, we ensure that children take home a book which may be read by parents and carers. We strongly encourage and demonstrate reading for pleasure, finding enjoyment in reading and being read to.

Assessment and observations



Assessment is an essential and important part of the Early Years for children's learning and development. This involves practitioners observing children in a variety of opportunities to gain an understanding of each child's level of understanding. This happens live throughout any taught session as well as during 'Self-Choosing' times when children are embedding and extending any previous learning. These observations and assessments will then be used to shape and deepen any future learning. All members of staff with the Foundation Stage are involved within the assessment cycle and feedback their assessments of the children to the class teacher daily. Weekly meetings take place to discuss the progress of the children and their next steps to follow the children's interests and help them to progress in their learning.

Written assessments and production of physical evidence are no longer required for evidence of children's learning, however, a range of evidence may found in children's books, photographs and videos on Tapestry (online) and teacher's notes.

Time spent with and interacting with children provides a more in-depth knowledge and insight into children's current attainment and allow for immediate support in next steps.

Assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement and should not be required to prove this through collection of physical evidence.

Statutory Framework for the EYFS

As well as ongoing formative assessments, we are required to carry out a Baseline assessment at the beginning of the Reception Year as Statutory.

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception.

At the end of the Reception year the Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) is completed. This information provides a picture of the child's progress and current attainment against the Early Learning Goals.

This information is also communicated to parents and carers as part of the child's end of year report and also serves to inform Year 1 teachers.

Partnership with parents and carers



We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. This begins well in advance of children beginning school through home visits and opportunities to visit our provision, with a carefully planned induction, in the summer term before the children begin school. Staff get to know children and families quickly, building warm and trusting relationships.

We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. We meet and greet our parents every morning and encourage home school connections. We have two 'Parent Days' within the academic year which enables a two-way dialogue. Parents are encouraged to add photographs and home news onto Tapestry and to comment and interact with observations made by staff. Class Worship, church visits and other school trips provide opportunities for parents to come and join the children and adults in school. Further themed days may be planned throughout the year also.

Health & Safety and Safeguarding

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, demonstrate high levels of emotional wellbeing and when their individual needs are met. This includes positive relationships with the adults caring for them.

All staff have received safeguarding training and are regularly updated as required. Safeguarding procedures are in place and followed by all members of the early year's team.

Our children receive free fruit and milk from a Government scheme. They bring water bottles from home so that we can ensure regular hydration. Parents contribute to the purchase of a healthy snack, which the children access during the mornings.



During home visits, we endeavour to seek out individual needs and ways in which we can support these. This may include toileting needs. Children are encouraged to be independent in accessing the toilet and if they need to change clothes, they do so with the need for limited support. If children are not fully toilet trained we ask all parents to provide spare underwear and clothes for their children in case needed in their book bags, however, we do have some spare items. We ask that all clothing items are be named.

We take accidents in school seriously and record all accidents in our own accident book. We will always ring home if a child has an injury to the head or face. This also applies if we feel that an injury needs more attention. There is a trained Paediatric First aider in Foundation Stage at all times.

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