



## **EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY**

### **Rationale**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021, is the area of education upon which young children build the rest of their lives. It is a single framework for care, learning and development. All children should be given the opportunity to experience the best possible start to their education to develop solid foundations which will ensure that they flourish throughout their school years and on into adulthood.

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and Early Learning Goals refer to the children from birth to the end of Reception class. It sets a series of learning goals for children to work towards by the time they reach the end of EYFS at the age of 5+. This is supported by the Development Matters document which suggests how to support children through enabling environments and positive relationships as unique children.

For most children, the end of the reception year will be the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, when the expectation is that most children will achieve the Early Learning Goals. Although the Early Learning Goals are intended for children at the end of the reception year, younger children will be provided with experiences which will support them in reaching the goals at the appropriate time.

In Nursery, Reception and Year 1, a high quality, well resourced, integrated early education should make a positive contribution to this distinct stage in a child's development with the key learning skills of personal, social and emotional development, listening, speaking, concentration, persistence, and co-operation. We promote literacy and numeracy, cultural development and focus on the Characteristics of Effective Learning.



Rich, stimulating and appropriate experiences will provide each child with opportunities to develop these skills, their competencies and their thinking to the best of their ability across all areas of learning.

## **Purpose**

- To make the child's first experience of school happy, positive and fun.
- To ensure that all children feel valued and secure in the Foundation Stage setting with positive relationships between carers and staff.
- To ensure a breadth of balance in the curriculum through carefully planned adult input and sensitive interaction using the Early Learning Goals while having regard for the skills and attitudes the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum will demand.
- To encourage parents / carers to become partners with the school in the education of their children.
- To provide a curriculum firmly based on active learning to meet the needs of the individual child. Within any Early Years Foundation Stage cohort there will be wide variations in terms of development and maturity as well as family, religion, cultural background and special needs. Children will have differing experiences, interests, skills and knowledge, which affect both their learning pace and styles. This diversity must be catered for within planning which has a flexible approach, using a wide range of strategies and teaching styles to address the particular needs of the children, families and the community. No child should be disadvantaged but each encouraged to develop self esteem and confidence in their ability to learn.
- To further a love of learning, enquiring minds and the ability to discuss, adapt and negotiate. Well planned play and purposeful activity with challenge and enjoyment, both in and out of doors, will provide opportunity for teaching and learning. Within a well-planned, organised environment, children should be able to explore, question, test, observe, experiment, plan, make decisions for themselves and participate in activities which are planned by adults as well as those which they plan and start themselves.
- To provide the children time to become engrossed in what they are doing, to work in depth and to complete activities in order to develop positive attitudes to learning while staff need to understand how young children learn and develop, in order to observe and respond to them.
- Appropriate intervention can help children to become more involved in the learning process and provide opportunities for new learning and development, so that they can make progress.
- To monitor progress throughout the Early Years Foundation stage, while taking action to identify areas of concern and provide necessary support.
- To help children develop self-control and to respect the feelings, needs, culture and the abilities of others.

## **Guidelines**

### **Positive relationships**

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 and value their independent learning. At Caister Primary Federation a "Key Person" will be assigned

### **Parent Partnership**

We recognise that parents / carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

- Before children begin Nursery (and/or Reception) parents/carers are given information and invited in to meet the staff, other children and to become familiar with the environment.
- Parents/carers are asked to complete an admissions form, and in Nursery a New Starter Information

booklet.

- Parents/carers are required to sign permission slips for photographs and images of their child and using the internet at school.
- We ask parents/carers for a transition report from any previous nursery or pre-school experiences. Once read, a copy is kept on file at school.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to talk to the child's teacher/Key Person if there are concerns. There is also an opportunity for Reception parents to meet the teacher formally each term. Nursery staff are in daily contact with the parents.
- There is regular communication with home through informal chats, newsletters weekly 'Our Week In...' posts, and in Mars Class through the child's reading record. Parents are invited to share in their child's learning and development by contributing to their child's learning journey. Each child is a Focus Child once per term.
- Parents/carers are regularly asked to provide information on their child's achievements and their current interests. We use 'Tapestry', a secure, online assessment tool for completing the children's 'Learning Journeys'. Parents/carers are encouraged to log on to their child's 'Learning Journey' in order to see what they have done at Nursery/School and to add their own assessments of things that they have seen the child doing when they have been with them. Reading cafes are held which provide an opportunity for parents to engage in Literacy based activities with their child(ren). As a school, we value the parents input as their child's first educators. Stay and Play sessions take place in Reception every week.
- A gradual, well supported introduction to the various aspects of Nursery and School life and its members is catered for. The children are introduced gradually to the routines of school which require more conforming, socialising and directed learning.
- Parents/carers are greeted at the door at each session.
- The Little Stars toddler group for parents / carers and children from 0-4 years, meets in school weekly.

## Curriculum

A carefully structured curriculum based on the "Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021" will offer provision which takes account of the differing starting points on which to build the various elements and match differing levels of need in the seven areas of learning. These stepping stones may need breaking down or to be missed altogether for some children. This provides a progression through to the end of Reception year, laying the foundations for K.S.1.

### Areas of Learning and Development

The EYFS consists of the characteristics of effective learning, and the seven areas of learning and development – there are three "Prime Areas" and four "Specific Areas" – these are...

Prime Areas:

1. Communication and Language
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, Social and Emotional

Specific Areas

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the World
4. Expressive Arts and Design

Key persons working with the youngest children will focus on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas.

The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop effectively.

Each of these 7 areas shape educational programmes within Early Years Settings and form part of the Early Learning Goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that each child will achieve by the end of their reception year.

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.

Planning will take place collaboratively between the teachers and other staff involved with the class. These describe teaching and learning activities linked to objectives and assessment opportunities. In Reception and Nursery many activities and learning opportunities are planned from the children's interests.

The children will be given opportunities to explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world through structured play. They will practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules and boundaries. They will have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They will communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

### **The Learning Environment and Children's Play**

The Early Years settings and outdoor areas are 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 classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

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

Through play children explore and develop learning experiences which helps them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules and boundaries. They think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own and they communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

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 satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

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 opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying and exploring ideas and asking them open questions. Also by modelling language, showing, exploring, demonstrating, exploring and providing a narrative for what they are doing, adults can facilitate and set challenges.

The learning environment is planned for both indoors and outdoors to encourage a positive attitude to learning. The children make their own selection of the activities on offer as this encourages independent learning. The Early Years classrooms have their own enclosed outdoor areas. These have 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 the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

The Characteristics of Effective learning support the development of the Unique Child in **how** children are learning. There are three characteristics of Effective Learning: 1) Playing and exploring – engagement. 2) Active

learning – motivation. 3) Creating and thinking critically – thinking.

These are key skills that provide the ‘behaviours for learning’ that children will need throughout their Primary education.

### **Assessment**

- In Nursery, at the start of the year and/or when they start the setting, informal assessments are carried out to gauge individual children’s abilities and interests.
- The class teacher assesses children on entry to Reception against the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Monitoring of each child will take place through regular observations, discussion, photographs, record keeping and planned assessments.
- The Two Year Old Progress Check will be carried out by the child’s Key Person during the year they are two (unless it has already been completed at a previous setting). This will be shared with parents/carers, who will be encouraged to share it with health professionals.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed by the end of June in the child’s Reception year and the LA is given a summary of each child’s achievement profile. This information is also used to report to parents/carers on the progress in each of the seven areas of learning and the Characteristics of Effective Learning.
- An end of year report summarising the achievements from the Foundation Stage profile (noted as emerging (1), expected (2) or exceeding (3) the early learning goal), is sent to parents.
  - The profile data is moderated externally and discussed with Year 1 teachers so that they can continue to help the children to achieve the early learning goals if they have not done so, before they can access the KS1 curriculum.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Children will be encouraged to develop a positive attitude towards people of different ethnic groups, cultures, beliefs, gender and ability.

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;
- celebrating other cultures and festivals.
- supporting children with their social, moral and ethical education;
- promoting British Values;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- identifying groups whose progress may need support and allocating additional resources accordingly.
- 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.

Agreed by the Governing Body:

To be reviewed: October 2024