



## CHILTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

### EARLY YEARS POLICY

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|----------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Person Responsible:</b> | Mrs G Shaw     |
| <b>Date of Policy:</b>     | June 2024      |
| <b>Date of Review:</b>     | September 2025 |
| <b>Minuted as approved</b> | September 2024 |
| <b>Approved by</b>         |                |

#### The Curriculum

The EYFS curriculum at Chilton has been amended and updated to reflect the requirements of the most recent government guidance:

- 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage', effective from 1 September 2021, Department for Education.
- 'Development Matters', Revised July 2021, Department for Education.

This clearly defines what we teach. The following policy details the specifics of our setting. EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (DfE 2021: 1.3).

#### **The prime areas are;**

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

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

#### **The specific areas are;**

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

## **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

The Reception staff plan activities within the class with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

### **The three characteristics 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.

## **Teaching strategies**

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. The interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible.

## **Play**

Learning through play is an important part of Early Years. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. We provide children with stimulating, play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. Children have opportunities 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. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending play.

## **Teaching**

We include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered together on the carpet as a class and then given follow up tasks to be completed at desks in small groups with an adult. These sessions help to develop vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, sitting still etc.

Read, Write Inc. phonics is used to support the teaching of reading and writing; a group reading and phonics session takes place daily.

Our long term plan reflects the CUSP planning and Literacy spine which prepares the children for Key Stage 1 but the topics are flexible to ensure we also follow the children's interests, school themes and local or national events.

## **Classroom organisation**

The classroom (both inside and outside) has defined areas to ensure children can access them easily. These areas are set up in a way to provide children with experiences and activities in all of the areas of learning. A variety of activities are planned for and set up each day. The adults move around the areas (both inside and outside) to move learning on and observe the children. We try to ensure that the range of activities outside reflects the different curriculum areas, for example setting up quiet spaces for a maths game, reading and for construction.

We encourage children to take responsibility for keeping their clothes, book bag and work safely in one place.

### Assessment, observations and portfolios

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. The children are assessed on entry with the Baseline assessment ([Reception baseline assessment framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reception-baseline-assessment-framework)) and then at the end of the year with the EYFS profile against the Early learning goals [Early years foundation stage profile handbook 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101444/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-handbook-2023.pdf). During the year assessment involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. To ensure we have evidence of a child's progress in the EYFS we use a range of strategies including children's books and Tapestry. RWI (phonics) is assessed every 4 weeks. Half termly reports are sent home to parents which details whether children are working towards or at where they should be in reading, writing and maths and how many sounds they know.

### Role of staff

All adults within the Early Years setting actively seek to form positive respectful relationships with the children. The formation of healthy relationships between adults and children is essential in enabling children's well-being now and their future successes.

### 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. As well as Reception visit sessions, we invite parents into the school on a number of occasions throughout the year.

### Health & safety and safeguarding

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. It is important to note that members of staff do not use any personal devices (e.g phones and cameras) and will only use school equipment.

We acknowledge that young children often have 'accidents' (i.e. wet themselves!) and have stocks of spare clothes and change anyone who needs it. Please see the intimate care policy for further information.

We follow whole school procedures for child protection (see separate policy).