Chidham Parochial Primary School

Early Years Policy

Ratified: 18th March 2026
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Chidham Parochial Primary School Early Years Policy

Our Philosophy

Through a positive caring environment, we provide the opportunity for every child to reach their full potential. We believe children will become motivated, engaged, lifelong learners by providing a broad, balanced and creative curriculum in a safe, caring and stimulating environment.
Enabling and encouraging children to become independent learners lays the foundation on which ambition and achievement can be built.

Whilst building a community with shared vision and respect, we equally value the unique contribution each individual has to offer. Children must be provided with opportunities to express their creativity and thinking, whilst learning how to control themselves and understand the need for rules.

Our Aims

When children come to school at the age of 4 they need:

- To feel valued as an individual and to develop a high self-esteem
- To develop self discipline and form positive relationships
- To work with increasing independence, feeling safe and secure
- To develop their language and communication skills
- To be offered a wide range of meaningful contexts for learning which are exciting and fun
- To learn through first hand experience and play
- Time and space to explore and develop their own ideas
- To be active learners both physically and mentally

We aim:

- To provide and plan a high quality curriculum in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage framework which is:
    1. Broad and balanced
    2. Creative and stimulating
    3. Meets the individual needs and interests of the children
- To plan and provide safe, secure and stimulating learning environments, both indoor and out.
- To foster an understanding of:
    1. Rules
    2. Respect for others
    3. Moral and social issues within our school and wider world
    4. Cultural diversity within our school and community
    5. The Christian ethos of the school
- To foster positive home school links and share a common purpose with parents

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The EYFS is based on four overarching principles:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

The content of the curriculum is set out within the EYFS framework. Guidance is given on effective learning and teaching in the 7 areas. They are split into the Prime areas (Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED), Physical Development (PD), Communication and Language (C+L)) and the Specific areas (Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World (UW), Expressive Arts and Design (EAD))
The teachers and teaching assistant also look closely at 3 characteristics of effective learning: Playing and Exploring, Active Learning, Creating and Thinking Critically. The key principles of the children's welfare requirements are addressed and checked by the class teacher, linking planning, provision and environment closely. These characteristics are an essential structure for practitioners to support children and make sense of how the children in their setting are learning.

Each of the areas are of equal importance and are interlinked in both planning and learning. The areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated learning opportunities. Within each of these areas there are stepping stones which show the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that children need to acquire during the EYFS in order to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of their Reception year.

Planning

The curriculum for the Early Years forms the first stage of our whole school curriculum. The planning links to the 7 areas of learning which are interconnected whenever possible.
The 4 specific areas strengthen then apply the skills learnt from the 3 prime areas (PSED, PD, C+L):
Literacy – children will be taught to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest. The school uses the phonics scheme Little Wandle Revised Letters and Sounds that provides a systematic approach to learning phonics and links reading material to match the children's reading ability.
Mathematics – children will be provided 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. The school uses the NCETM (National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics) to shape

mastering number across the year and White Rose to ensure coverage of measure, shape, space and pattern.
Understanding the World – Children will 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 Art and Design – Children will explore and play with a 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.

The curriculum is planned through a series of themes that reflect and respond to the children's interests, offering experiences in all areas of the curriculum and which carry equal importance to provide a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities for play and child-initiated activities. Developing children's language and providing support for vocabulary development is also key at this stage and all adults support with this. Children requiring support for language programmes are identified early. Medium term plans map out the 7 areas over the term, with an emphasis each week. Short term plans for Phonics/Literacy and maths are written/followed with the learning focus clearly mapped out. An indoor/outdoor provision plan also uses photos for ideas and activities and other related learning experiences.

Assessment
On entry to Reception children are assessed within the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). The purpose of this is to establish a point from which future measurements and predictions can be calculated. The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory assessment of each pupil and the results are reported each June to parents/carers, governors and the county. The profile is completed by the class teachers and supported by the teaching assistants.
The profile provides reliable information to parents about the child's level of development and attainment as they reach the end of their reception year. It provides the class teacher with a clear understanding of the next steps for each child, allowing them to plan appropriate opportunities and support individual needs.
Monitoring of each child will take place through regular observations, discussion, photographs, record keeping and planned assessment. This enables the Reception teachers to plan the next steps of learning. All adults who interact with the children contribute to the assessment process. Informal assessments are used to gauge individual children's abilities and track progress over the 7 areas of learning, making reference to the characteristics of effective learning. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations, on-entry assessment such as sound/number work, annotated examples of work, celebration books and photographs or videos shared with the parents on our online learning resource SeeSaw.
The teacher and headteacher track the progress and identify gaps in learning using a visual tracking document and through discussion and focus on whether the children are Emerging (still on their EYFS learning

journey) or Expected (at a point where they are ready to move forward onto the National Curriculum)

Equal Opportunities and Special Educational Needs

All children have an equal entitlement to a good Early Years Curriculum, regardless of gender, race, culture, religion, disability and special or medical needs. Provision should therefore reflect the individual needs of the child.

It is important to identify early, those children who find some areas of learning difficult so that strategies can be put into place as soon as possible. These children may need an Individual Support Plan, which is written in full consultation with the parents, child, and SEND coordinator. These are reviewed regularly to monitor the effectiveness of intervention and plan next steps. Where outside agencies are involved parents are informed. SEND children have access to the full curriculum and are involved in all areas of learning.

Parent Partnership and Transition

Teacher's work in partnership with parents and carers and value their contributions. Prior to starting Chidham visits are made by the class teacher to the pre-school/nursery setting. The children are also invited to make several visits to school in the summer term to help familiarise them with the staff, classroom and outdoor environment. Examples of these informal and welcoming events are 'Songs and Story', 'Teddy Bears Picnic' and 'Come and Play...'. At the beginning of the Autumn Term parents are invited to accept an invitation for the class teachers to visit the children and families in their home environment immediatly prior to a 4 day 'soft start'.

Parents have the opportunity to meet regularly with teachers and the school has an 'open door' policy. The first parent consultation at the 6-8 weeks in point gives parents an opportunity to feedback and talk in depth about their child.

Throughout the year parents will attend parents consultations, have staff available at the start and the end of the day, weekly newsletters, topic letters/curriculum guidance and various workshops such as phonics and reading throughout the year.