



COBHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Caring, Proud, Successful!

Early Years Policy

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Statement of intent

At Cobham Primary School, we greatly value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life, in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's readiness for the next stage of their education, and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We seek to provide:

- **Quality and consistency**, 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 child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and parents.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2021) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
- DfE (2021) 'Development Matters'
- DfE (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2015) 'The Prevent duty'
- Early Education (2021) 'Birth to 5 Matters'
- UK Council for Internet Safety (2020) 'Education for a Connected World'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Procedure for Managing Allegations Against Staff
- Grievance Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Fire Safety Procedures
- Safer Recruitment Procedures
- GDPR Policy
- Early Years Assessment Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring there is a policy in place to safeguard children that includes an explanation of the action to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child, the use of mobile phones and cameras, and staff safeguarding training requirements. These issues are addressed in part in this policy and in further detail in the school's Child Protection Policy.
- Ensuring there is a policy in place in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (including supply staff) or a volunteer. These issues are addressed in the school's Safeguarding Procedure for Managing Allegations Against Staff
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the school's Grievance Policy.

The EYFS teacher / headteacher, have responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.

Staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers, are responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy.
- Remaining alert to any issues of concern in children.

3. Aims

Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Give each child a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.
- Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- Work alongside parents to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.

Four overarching principles shape our practice:

- 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 with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between the school and parents.
- **Learning and development** is important. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

To put these principles into practice, the school:

- Provides a balanced curriculum, which takes children's different stages of development into account.
- Promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Works in partnership with parents.
- Plans challenging learning experiences, based on individual needs, which are informed by observation and assessment.
- Provides a safe and secure learning environment.

4. Learning and development

In partnership with parents, the school promotes the learning and development of pupils to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education.

The EYFS provision and practice is based on an observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development. Learning and development in school are planned to reflect these interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape education programmes in EYFS settings. These are split into two important and interconnected sections – prime and specific:

The 'prime' areas of learning and development are:

- Communication and language:
 - Listening, attention and understanding
 - Speaking
- Physical development:
 - Gross motor skills
 - Fine motor skills
- Personal, social and emotional development:
 - Self-regulation
 - Managing self
 - Building relationships

The 'specific' areas of learning and development are:

- Literacy:
 - Comprehension
 - Word reading
 - Writing
- Mathematics:
 - Numbers
 - Numerical patterns
- Understanding the world:
 - Past and present
 - People, culture and communities
 - The natural world
- Expressive arts and design:
 - Creating with materials
 - Being imaginative and expressive

The school will ensure that children have opportunities to experience a broad range of both independent and planned activities, having regard to the three Characteristics of Effective Learning in the EYFS:

- Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things.

- Active learning – children concentrate, keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Further information regarding learning and development, including how these link to and underpin the national curriculum in KS1 and beyond, is set out in the school's Teaching and Learning Policy.

Planning

We plan using a range of approaches with the aim to provide first-hand experiences; giving clear explanations, making appropriate interventions and extending and developing play and vocabulary. Our timetable allows for focused, teacher input taken from suggested themes and the children's own interests. This is carefully linked to teacher directed and teacher led activities to broaden and extend the learning, whilst ensuring an enabled environment for the children to develop their own learning through child-initiated play

Children are given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and skilfully asking open ended questions.

During child-initiated learning children have free access to a range of resources both inside and out. Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests and stage, of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. We believe that children in EYFS should have regular access to outdoor learning opportunities that are, planned to complement the whole learning experience

5. Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping the school to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support.

Parents will be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development, and the EYFS lead will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents.

Ongoing formative assessments are used to assess the day-to-day learning and development of children in the EYFS. Practitioners interact and observe children to understand their interests and learning needs, and will use this information to inform practice and provision for each child.

The use of Tapestry, an online learning journey helps us to document and follow the children's learning throughout the year. We share these journeys with parents and ask them play an active part with sharing the children's learning experiences from home.

The EYFS settings will undertake a summative assessment of the level of each child's development at certain stages. These are:

- Reception Baseline Assessment – a short assessment which is taken within the first six weeks of a child starting reception year.
- The EYFS Profile – a comprehensive assessment completed at the end of the EYFS to provide a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, attainment against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs). This will assess whether the children have met the expected level or development or are emerging at the ELGs.

The school reports EYFS Profile results to the LA when these are requested. The LA is under a duty to return this data to the relevant government department.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to the assessment process for children with SEND as appropriate.

The school will discuss any cause for concern in a child's progress with the child's parents, especially where this concern relates to the prime areas of learning. A strategy of support will be agreed upon and consideration will be taken as to whether the child may have SEND which requires additional support.

The school takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children with EAL to use their home language in play and learning whilst also ensuring that these children have sufficient opportunities to reach a good standard of English. During assessment, if it is found that a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, the EYFS lead will contact the child's parents to establish their home language skills to establish whether there is cause for concern about a language delay.

Assessment procedures are set out in full in the Early Years Assessment Policy.

6. Inclusion

All children are valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. The Equal Opportunities Policy: Pupils ensures that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy ensures all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible. SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the school's SENCO.

The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.

7. The learning environment and outdoor spaces

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The classroom is organised with defined areas and clearly labelled resources to ensure that children can access these easily, confidently and independently. The children have opportunities to experience writing, maths, creative play, role-play, construction, small world play and reading opportunities, enabling them to develop in all seven areas of learning.

The outdoor area is as important as the classroom, ensuring that we make links between both environments. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales from being inside. All environments allow the children to make their own choices to explore and learn securely and safely.

In addition to the outdoor area, children also take part in Forest School throughout the school year. The philosophy is to encourage and inspire individuals of any age through positive outdoor experiences. The children enjoy engaging, motivating and achievable tasks, as well as child-led play in the woodland, giving the children opportunities to develop intrinsic motivation, emotional and social skills and self-awareness.

8. Parental involvement

At Cobham, we understand how crucial a parent's role is in their children's education and therefore want to ensure that these relationships begin in the EYFS and continue throughout the school. We work in partnership with our families providing a strong induction process, involving home visits and informative parent workshops.

Parents are invited to regular parents' evenings; however, the school has an open-door policy and parents are welcome to talk to the head teacher and class teachers freely. The head teacher office or meeting room in school house will be utilised for confidential discussions between staff and parents.

Parents are invited for termly 'Stay and Share' sessions. This gives the children an opportunity to share their learning with their parents, but also for parents to spend time in our environment, learning with their child.

Parents are asked for their opinions on their children's learning and to share with us any new learning which has taken place at home.

9. Transition periods

Transition from Preschool/Nursery to Reception

- Children are be invited to attend two afternoon sessions at Cobham. This gives the children an opportunity to visit the learning environment and meet the teaching staff.
- The class teacher will visit our main feeder Preschool – Cobham Preschool to meet with the staff and familiarise ourselves with the children. The teaching team will make contact with other known feeder Nurseries and Preschools of children joining us.
- In the summer term, children are given a welcome bag; this includes information about school and photographs to share over the summer, as well as information for parents.
- Parents are invited to a welcome meeting hosted by the head teacher and teaching team.
- Home visits are carried out in the first week of September.
- Children begin on a staggered basis. The week at school staying for the morning and lunch. Followed by full time.

Transition from Reception to Year 1

- Parents are kept informed to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes, and to voice any concerns they may wish to express. If they should like a meeting with the Reception teacher or Headteacher, this is facilitated.
- There is a transition day to their Year 1 class.
- In the Summer term, Reception and Year 1 staff will meet to discuss each child's development in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1.
- For any child with Special Education Needs, or who may be feeling anxious about the transition, the class teachers and Senco will have additional meetings with the family and will introduce a personalised transition package to support that child.

10. Safeguarding and welfare

All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well. Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection Policy, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.

The DSL is **Jacqui Saunders (Head)**. The deputy DSL is **Phil Burns**.

The DSL is responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate. The deputy DSL will undertake the duties of the DSL in their absence, but overall responsibility for safeguarding will remain with the DSL. The DSL and deputy DSL will undertake child protection training as required.

Staff will receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect.

11. Health and safety

The school will promote the good health of children in the EYFS, including the promotion of good oral health.

The EYFS teacher will report any accident or injury involving a child to their parents on the day it occurs (or instruct the Office Manager to support with this), and any first-aid treatment administered to a child will also be reported to their parents. Accidents and injuries will be recorded in an accident book, located in school office. The headteacher will report any serious accident, illness, injury, or death of a child whilst in the school's care to Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the incident occurring. Local child protection agencies will also be notified.

A first-aid box is located on both the infant and junior playgrounds, including a first aid book in both to record accidents as they occur.

The school's Supporting Pupils With medical Conditions Policy outlines the procedures for administering medicines.

Any food or drink provided to children is healthy, balanced and nutritious. The headteacher will notify Ofsted of any incidents of food poisoning affecting two or more children within 14 days of the incident. Information about any dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and any special health requirements a child has will be recorded. Fresh drinking water is available at all times.

Smoking is not permitted on the school premises.

The Health and Safety Policy outlines the full health and safety policies and procedures.

12. Staffing

Robust Safer Recruitment Procedures are in place, which aim to ensure that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable.

Upon employment, all EYFS staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection and health and safety.

Staff will be supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience.

All members of staff who have contact with children and families will be supervised by the headteacher or, for the EYFS teacher, will use external supervision. The supervision will provide opportunities for staff to:

- Discuss any issues, particularly concerning the development or wellbeing of children, including any child protection concerns.
- Identify solutions to address issues.
- Receive coaching to improve their effectiveness.

There will be at least one member of staff who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate on the school premises at all times, and will accompany children on any school outings.

The school provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.

The school adopts the following staffing ratios:

- For children in Reception classes:
 - Class sizes will be limited to 30 pupils per school teacher.

Only under exceptional circumstances, and where the quality of care and safety of children is maintained, will changes be made to the ratios. Parents will be informed about staffing arrangements and, when relevant and practical, will be involved in staffing arrangement decisions.

13. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the governing board and the headteacher.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

All members of staff directly involved with the EYFS are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction.