



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy January 2018



This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of early learning in our school.

Our Vision

To utilise a Growth Mindset and 'can do' approach to learning to support all pupils to maximise their potential through an engaging indoor and outdoor environment combined with creative curriculum; which fosters natural curiosity, independence a love of learning through hands on play based exploration.

Introduction

At Firle Church of England Primary School we aim to ensure that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provides an engaging and well resourced environment where children benefit from rich and stimulating learning experiences including indoor and outdoor activities, trips and visits, themed events and workshops.

We understand the Characteristics of Effective Learning - Playing and Exploring; Active Learning and Creating & Thinking Critically - and value our role in helping children to get the most out of every aspect of their school life. We also value the role that parents play in their child's learning and work in partnership together to support our children's needs.

The enabling indoor and outdoor environment we have created combined with our knowledge of how children learn best, means that we can support our youngest learners and help them to develop life long skills. For example we offer free flow to an outdoor area, which we utilise to support learning and development. This hands on approach helps our pupils to be engaged learners, who are willing to have a go, are self motivated and have the perseverance to complete even the most challenging activities. Our pupils are also encouraged to have their own ideas, make links and develop problem solving skills.

We focus on three prime areas, which are deemed by the Department of Education to be the 'most essential for children's readiness for future learning and healthy development.' (Department for Education - Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012)

These three areas, the *prime areas*, are:

- **communication and language;**
- **physical development;**
- **personal, social and emotional development.**

In line with statutory requirements, we also support children in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The specific areas are:

- **literacy;**
- **mathematics;**
- **understanding the world;**
- **expressive arts and design.**

The four principles outlined in 'Development Matters' - A Unique Child; Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments and Learning and Development - underpin

all the new guidance and our ethos in Reception at Firle Church of England Primary School.

We believe that the ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment - playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically - underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner in line with Development Matters.

It is essential to take a holistic view of the whole child and we use all the current guidance to help support each individual child's development pathway. We carefully observe and assess children to make sure we have a full picture of where they are in their learning and their next steps. We assess each child's level of development against their age and stage bands within Development Matters based on a 'best fit' approach. This involves using on-going observations and assessments to make best fit judgements in line with our existing legal requirements and completing an end of Year EYFS Profile for each child against the Early Learning Goals. We will keep updated of and implement any statutory changes to assessment and reporting procedures in Reception and inform staff, governors and parents of all national updates relating to EYFS.

The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1.

As part of our statutory responsibilities, we must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). We also provide a short summary on how each child is developing in relation to the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

We follow the new Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which became statutory in September 2012. By taking a holistic view of the unique child and using all the new Development Matters Materials backed up by the Characteristics of Effective Learning, we can help our pupils to develop a range of skills and attitudes including an excellent attitude to learning.

Our environment, with its dedicated outdoor area facilitates free flow from the indoor to outdoor classroom in accordance with EYFS expectations of daily outdoor provision for children. We also strive for all children to feel included, secure and valued in line with 'Every Child Matters.' As part of this, we focus on the social and emotional aspects of learning through circle time, planning activities and dedicated as well as integrated PSED sessions, a weekly session is delivered by the school's nationally accredited PSHE teacher, to help the children become familiar with their new setting and friends.

Our high quality care incorporates well planned purposeful activities, with appropriate adult intervention and interactions to help and support children as they gain invaluable new skills and experiences.

We are proud of our EYFS and the benefits that our cross curricular approach has in enabling every child to reach their potential in the Prime Areas and Specific Areas. This includes working together, talking and sharing ideas in order to adapt and improve our ideas and finished creations.

In Catkins Class we use the indoor and outdoor classroom to develop all seven areas of learning via a topic based and linked approach to learning. Our creative style includes utilising the outdoor environment and exposing the children to a variety of trips, workshops and visitors to enhance learning. Children's work is celebrated and regularly displayed in our class to support learning.

The skills and concepts formed in the early years help children to make sense of and apply their knowledge and understanding. They are the foundations upon which the quality of later life depends. We often use themed days or events and curriculum weeks to enhance our creative approach to learning and teaching.

We enjoy whole school events such as dressing up as our favourite book character for World Book Day. Here are the winners from each year group.

In Catkins Class we work especially closely with our KS1 colleagues, so the children have excellent transition sessions as well as weekly opportunities to develop topic knowledge, skills and attributes with the Year 1 and 2 children.

Our Visions, Aims and Values.

Our Vision

'We believe every child is unique and has special gifts and talents to be nurtured and developed to reach their true potential'

Our Aims

Achieve, believe, celebrate!

At Firle Church of England Primary school we aim to:-

Achieve

- Achieve our full potential
- Learn and grow together
- Try our hardest in all in that we do
- Have high aspirations and follow our dreams
- Foster a love of learning
- Develop a community of lifelong learners
- To create a safe, caring and stimulating school environment

Believe

- Believe in ourselves and others
- Happy, friendly, inclusive family atmosphere
- Developing spiritual awareness and a belief in God
- Our school is at the heart of the community
- Everyone feeling valued, respected and cared for
- A creative, inspiring, skills based irresistible curriculum
- Developing emotionally aware individuals who are confident at communicating
- Developing life skills of resilience, problem solving, determination and self-worth

Celebrate

- Celebrate, value and understand ours and other cultures and enjoy their traditions
- Celebrate, embrace and respect similarities and differences.
- Celebrate and delight in personal, group and school success
- Recognise the importance and contributions of others
- Celebrate and look after our beautiful school, village, country and the world

Our Values

- Reflective,
- Aspiring
- Inquisitive
- Resilient
- Working with Others

Through these values we expect to have a safe and happy school in which every child can learn free from bullying or prejudice.

Partnership with Parents and carers

- Parents and carers have the opportunity to spend time with their child's new teacher before starting school at an induction meeting; the Head teacher also meets with parents and an induction pack is given
- Parents and carers are invited to meetings to discuss their child's progress
- Parents and carers are encouraged to talk to their child's teacher on a daily basis if there are any concerns.
- Parents and carers receive a written report in Term 6, which includes an individual Learning Journey.
- We give parents the opportunity to record comments about their child's progress via individual communication diaries and wow cards.
- Each term, a curriculum newsletter and topic overview is sent home which gives detailed information about the areas to be covered in class across the areas of learning.
- IT is used to share key learning moments with parents including outcomes of trips, visits, special events etc
- Parents and carers receive letters, keeping them up-to-date on forthcoming events and are invited to come into school and participate.



Our Aims

We aim to develop the characteristics of effective learning as well as the prime and specific areas by:

- promoting resilience and a 'can do' attitude to learning through collaborative working and sharing ideas
- fostering high self esteem
- valuing children's own ideas and motivate children via consistent positive encouragement and praise
- encouraging children to have some control over their learning and actions
- providing a happy, safe and secure environment both indoors and outdoors
- encouraging practical exploration and discovery
- developing each child's confidence, independence and a desire for lifelong learning
- developing a feeling of fun and mutual discovery
- encouraging co-operation and mutual respect
- helping each child realise their full potential and develop the whole child
- developing children's confidence to 'have a go' at new and tricky skills
- developing problem solving skills
- celebrating individuality, personal success and achievement
- enriching and extending learning patterns and experiences
- promoting effective partnerships with parents/carers, governors, and the wider community
- introducing the children to their new school life in a gradual and sensitive manner

The Learning Environment

Young children need active exploration and opportunities for investigation and discovery.

We use our wider environment to engage children in their learning including providing opportunities to extend our creative and collaborative skills. We undertake weekly wellie walks to our local woods and the children participate in forest school themed activities.



At Firle Church of England School we provide:

A dedicated outdoor area to enhance co-operative play and provide extension activities.

- A range of IT to develop new skills and support learning across the curriculum including dedicated laptops, iPads, beebot roamers, new class interactive whiteboard, microphone, digital cameras etc
- New and challenging opportunities.
- A broad and balanced curriculum and stimulating setting.
- Opportunities for collaboration.
- Materials to develop fine and gross motor skills.
- Time for children to practise and consolidate developing skills.

Observation, Planning and Assessment

In Catkins Class we use speaking and listening, observations, photos and assessments to evaluate where the children are in their learning and to inform future planning. It is a cyclical and on-going process throughout the year.

Observations are used to help us to identify learning needs and highlight personal achievements so that all children's learning can be moved on to the next step of their developmental path.

Each child has an individual Learning Journey, containing photos, wow comments, pupil and parent voice and significant learning moments. The Learning Journey enables us to see your child's progress and development across the prime and specific areas of learning throughout the Reception year and it is used as part of the end of Early Years Foundation Stage moderation process. They are also fantastic celebratory book for parents to keep and treasure.

We believe in Assessment for Learning in which the children are directly involved in developing their Learning Journeys and adding self assessment faces to every piece of work. As educators, we also provide verbal feedback including next steps advice to each child to help them reach their potential.

Our Links to Pre-school

- We know our local pre-schools and visit their settings as part of our on-going liaison process.
- We offer transition visits in which pre-school children have the opportunity to visit Firle CEP School in the run up to starting school. The pre-school children join us for a series of weekly afternoon sessions in order to familiarise them with our setting. It culminates in a 'shuffle up' session in July, where all pre-school children get the opportunity to get to meet all their new peer group and teaching staff. This helps facilitate a smooth transition for the children when they formally join Catkins Class in September.
- Pre-school are invited by Early Years to special annual events.
- Teachers visit children in our local pre-school settings.

Governors

By sharing the principles of early childhood education and effective practise through discussion, reports and classroom visits, our Governing Body supports our work and makes informed decisions about provision and resources

Reward, Behaviour and Discipline

Every child has the opportunity to be rewarded for following the Golden Rules. Once a week every child has Golden time, which is an opportunity for children to choose their own activities. It is a special time for children to play with friends and enjoy being together. This is a time to really celebrate children following the **GOLDEN RULES**.

Celebrations

During Thursday assemblies the House winner and Birthdays are celebrated. Class Teachers will also nominate children for the Golden Book. These are children who have shown good attitude to learning and achieved well or given great effort to a task or behaviour over the week.

To support our school's aim and ethos, we have consulted and agreed upon appropriate consequences when a child does not follow the Golden Rules. The aim is to help children to learn new behaviours and take responsibility for their actions. Every opportunity will be given for the child to recover, make the right choices and regain control of the situation.

Sanctions

The Cloud/Rainbow system works as follows:

- Verbal reminder or warning
- Further incidents then result in names being moved to the white cloud and names are recorded in the class Behaviour Book
- In Catkins pupils have an immediate 'time out' from whichever activity they are doing in class.
- If pupils are moved to the **dark** grey cloud they miss five minutes of Golden Time
- Each session starts with all children able to make a fresh start on the Cloud/Rainbow behaviour system

Organisation

Staffing

At present the Early Years Foundation Stage class is taught by Mrs Ricca, with dedicated teaching assistant Mrs Ness.

How we work

- Children have the opportunity to work alone, in pairs, small and large groups, and sometimes as a whole class
- We recognise that children have different learning styles. A particular approach is selected which matches the children's needs and learning styles including visual, auditory and kinaesthetic styles.
- Groups change depending on the activity and children work in different combinations designed for the specific situation.
- Children work in different ways and at different times throughout the day by utilising both the indoor and outdoor classroom as well as our large school grounds.
- We work as a joint EYFS and KS1 unit two afternoons a week as part of our Outdoor Learning experiences.

The Buddy System

At our transition visits, each child is carefully allocated a year 6 'Buddy' to support them in their integration into their new school life. The Buddy will help the children to settle quickly into Firle Church of England Primary School and enjoy playtimes and lunchtimes.

Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and the more able pupils

The Early Years Foundation Stage follows school policy in regards to Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and challenging the more able pupils.

We understand that children develop quickly in the Early Years and as outlined in Development Matters 2012, we practitioners 'can help children have the best start in life. Children have a right, spelled out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to provision which enables them to develop their personalities, talents and abilities irrespective of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities or gender.' School Policies are available from the office on request.

Learning through play

Our pedagogy is based upon our understanding of the value of high quality learning through play. We know that each area of Learning & Development must be implemented through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity.

'Play is essential for children's development' (DFE 2012) and it is a major vehicle by which children gain access to the curriculum and learn to take turns and share. As well as activities guided by adults, purposeful play led by the children features highly in our early years curriculum planning and permeates across all areas of learning and development.

We encourage high-level play and exploration as this sustains interest and motivation. Young children take their play experiences very seriously and enjoy exploring through construction and tactile resources and role play based scenarios.

Research indicates the benefits of productive play and in their play we see children:

solving problems	sharing	initiating ideas
predicting	taking risks	ordering
communicating	reflecting	planning
applying skills	leading	following
sequencing	co-operating	building confidence
showing empathy	anticipating	having mutual respect

Firle Church of England Primary School Summary of Early Years Ethos:

We want every day in Catkins Class to be full of wonder and exploration.

We provide a resource rich environment both indoor and outdoor, which encourages investigation and active learning through purposeful playful experiences.

We use trips, visitors and workshops to engage children in their learning.

Our good provision helps children to fulfil their individual potential and to develop a lifelong love of learning.

'Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people and in the world around them. Development is not an automatic process, however. It depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments. Development Matters in the EYFS 2012