



Kingskerswell Church of England Primary School Early Years **Foundation Stage Policy**

Our Vision – Children will develop as individuals, through a highly engaging learning environment that enables and encourages children to build the independence, creativity, resilience and love of learning needed to thrive throughout their lives.

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of 'The Early Years'.

What is 'Early Years'?

For the purpose of this policy 'Early Years' refers to children in their first year at school (Reception Year).

Aims:

- To provide a structured, secure, caring and well-resourced learning environment; both inside and out which meets all the individual developmental needs of 'young learners'.
- To enable them to become confident, motivated and happy learners, developing the skills and attitudes necessary for their own successful future learning.
- To provide a learning space and timetable that is reflective of the children in the cohort, and that allows for extended periods of independent learning
- To develop independence and individuality, whilst fostering respect and tolerance for others irrespective of ability, race, creed, gender or background.

The needs of young learners:

- Adults who are sensitive to their differing needs, abilities, backgrounds and previous experiences to teach, support, care and offer equal opportunities for them all to develop.
- Adults who will respect them and value their ideas and opinions; every child is a competent learner from birth
- A challenging and diverse curriculum offering ample opportunity to practise and develop skills and learning. The curriculum should also offer opportunities for the development of personal qualities and social skills.
- Rich and positive learning experiences with plenty of first-hand experience, varied to include all learning styles and including regular opportunity to explore and learn through practical and play activities.
- The chance to make decisions and to take responsibility - both for their learning and behaviour. This includes the chance to make mistakes in a forgiving environment and to realise that making mistakes is a learning experience.
- In all, a well-planned, carefully structured programme of academic and personal development, building on past experiences and achievements - delivered in ways appropriate to their age and stage.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:

A Unique Child

- At Kingskerswell Church of England Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

"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."

Positive Relationships

- At Kingskerswell Church of England Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.
- We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and actively encourage parents to be involved in their child's 'learning journey'.
- The key person approach is aimed at enabling and supporting close attachments between children and practitioners. Attachment provides a sense of security so that children can become confident, independent and capable young learners.
- At school, the key person is the Early Years class teacher. Their role is to meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, talking to the parents and working in partnership with them. They will work in close partnership with the class teaching assistant.

Enabling Environments

- At Kingskerswell Church of England Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences.
- Children have free-flow access to both indoor and outdoor learning spaces, each with resources that promote all 7 areas of learning. The learning environment is adapted in response to ongoing observation and assessment. In addition to this, children have access to an adventure playground, and timetabled 'Forest School' sessions, planned for by an accredited teacher.
- We use visual timetables and vocabulary cards that are consistent throughout the school. We have Makaton trained staff in Early Years, who can provide means of alternative communication, where required.

Learning and Development

- We deliver learning for all of the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level.”

- Skills based focussed activities are adapted to the child’s interests, enabling them to develop their independent learning by giving them the skills to overcome ‘wobbles’.
- Children learn to read through a synthetic phonics programme called ‘ReadWriteInc.’ This is taught daily. For the settling-in period, this is a whole-class activity. After this, children work in groups based upon their prior knowledge, and may work with children from Key Stage One, if appropriate.
- Areas of learning and development consist of 3 ‘Prime areas’ and 4 ‘Specific areas’, through which the prime areas are strengthened and underpinned;

Prime areas

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Specific Areas

Literacy

Mathematics

Expressive Art and Design

Understanding the World

- On-entry to school, we undertake a baseline assessment of the children. This process is done through observation of the children in the setting and takes in to account the views of parents and pre-school providers. The baseline assessment data is used to create a ‘gap analysis’, which provides us with the information to tailor the learning environment to the specific needs of the children. Gap analyses are carried out term and the learning environment is adapted accordingly.
- We recognise the importance of language as a prerequisite to access learning, and as an important predictor of future attainment. We undertake a ‘Language Link’ assessment during the first term of school, to identify where additional support may be required, as early as possible.
- At the end of Foundation Stage, pupils will be assessed against 17 Early Learning Goals. For each goal practitioners will determine whether children are making expected levels, are exceeding them or are below (emerging).
- On-going assessment (formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff are involved in daily observations and assessments throughout the Reception Year; they include child initiated tasks and teacher led activities in the inside and outside learning environments. We use an online learning journey to collate the evidence of children’s learning, using a programme called ‘Tapestry’. We value the parents’ input in to their child’s learning, and as such, they have a unique login to ‘Tapestry’ where they can view their child’s profile and upload evidence from outside the school setting. This enables us to form a complete picture of your child.
- Parents will receive a report detailing their child’s achievement against the 17 Early Learning Goals. In addition, there will be a commentary on children’s ‘Characteristics of Learning’ under the headings; ‘Active learning’, ‘Playing and Exploring’ and ‘Creating

and Thinking Critically'. These reports will be shared with Year 1 teachers to ensure smooth and effective transition in to Key Stage One.

- Regular moderation and standardisation activities between EYFS and Year One colleagues, both in-school, and across local schools, ensures the quality of our practice and accuracy of assessment.
- Children who do not achieve all of the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year continue to work towards them in Year One. Where children are exceeding the Early Learning Goals, EYFS teachers work alongside Year One to ensure that their needs are met.

Home-School links

- Early Years staff regularly visit the feeder pre-schools in the local area to ensure that relationships are built with staff and new children. The EYFS lead will meet each pre-school head in the Summer Term to discuss the incoming cohort to ensure that transition is smooth, and where adaptations to practice are required, these can be put in to place swiftly.
- All Reception children will have a home-visit in the July prior to their admission. The purpose of this is to share information and to begin to establish a bond between child and teacher; enabling the school and families to better prepare for their transition.
- A Parent information evening is held in July for parents of the prospective Reception group. The purpose of this meeting is, in part, to disseminate important information, to encourage discussion and to emphasize the vital importance of home-school cooperation and mutual support.
- Children spend two mornings in their new classroom in the July prior to their admission.
- Literature to support the parental role in early learning is given to all parents prior to their child's entry to the school. We also have workshops for parents to find out how we teach phonics, number skills etc.
- Two parents' evenings are held and the staff involved with the early years children are happy to meet with parents after school, often on an informal basis or by appointment if necessary.
- Parents will be able to access their child's 'learning journey' through the online programme, 'Tapestry'. This contains a collection of evidence of their learning.
- Parents will receive a weekly summary of activities covered, with an opportunity to add comments to their child's 'learning journey'.

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EYFS Leader

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