

Early Years Policy



Date: October 2022

(Review October 2023)

Old Park Primary

Early Years Policy

This document is a statement of the aims and principles for Early Years at Old Park Primary School. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all Early Years' staff. The policy provides a basis for the monitoring and evaluation of good practice.

Rationale.

Children in the Early Years are constantly encountering new experiences. They are seeking to understand these experiences in order to extend their skill, develop their confidence and build on their previous learning and development. The Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

Early years teaching and learning at Old Park Primary School and Nursery follows the guidance within 'Birth to Five Matters' (2021) and lays secure foundations for children's later learning. We intend to foster independence and confidence in every child.

At Old Park we seek to provide:

- Quality and consistency, so that every child makes good progress.
- A secure foundation through learning and development opportunities, planned around the needs and interests of each individual child, which are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- Partnership working between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.
- Safeguarding and welfare requirements to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

Principles and Aims

At Old Park Primary the EYFS four guiding principles shape our practice. These are:

- Every child is a **unique child** who is constantly learning and can show resilience, perseverance and confidence.
- Children can 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.
- Children **develop and learn** in different ways and at different rates.

The EYFS learning and development requirements comprise:

- The seven areas of learning and development
- The early learning goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the Reception Year; and
- The assessment requirements (when and how practitioners must assess children's achievements)

At Old Park we support learning through the **3 prime areas** and the **4 specific areas**.

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
 - Communication and Language
 - Physical Development
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- Literacy
 - Mathematics
 - Understanding the World
 - Expressive Arts and Design.

As practitioners we consider the individual's needs, interests and stage of development, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development. When working with the youngest children we focus strongly on the three prime areas. These are the basis for successful learning in the other specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills all children need to develop and learn effectively in order to become ready for school. It is expected that the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children grow in confidence and ability. Throughout the early years, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, we will discuss this with the child's parent/carer and agree how to support the child. We will consider whether a child may have a special education need or disability and may require specialist support.

Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, problem solve and relate to others. We respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through positive interaction.

In guiding children's activities, we reflect on the different ways that children learn and implement these in our practise. The **three characteristics of effective teaching and learning** are:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Welfare requirements

At Old Park we provide an environment which is safe, welcoming and stimulating to ensure that children's unique needs are met and that they have a positive relationship with the adults caring for them. We safeguard and promote the welfare of children in our care. DSL's Mandie Haywood (Head teacher), Jackie Gray (Inclusion manager) and Kelly Ryder (Deputy Inclusion manger) are all responsible for safeguarding children. We adhere to the Old Park Primary School Child Protection Policy and complete safeguarding forms to record any safeguarding incidents, which are then followed up by DSL's. Staff adhere to Old Park Primary Behaviour policy. Where any physical intervention takes place, it is for the purposes of averting immediate danger of personal injury or to manage a child's behaviour if absolutely necessary. All staff undertake regular child protection update training, and it is part of new staff induction.

We maintain the ratio of adults to children, as set out in the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS statutory framework.

Ways of working

Admission arrangements

Children entering Toddlers (known as Squirrels) may be funded through Talking Twos (15hours) or fee paying.

Children enter Nursery the term after they reach three. The children attend Nursery under the universal offer of 15 hours per week (known as Badgers - am group or Foxes - pm group). They may also be eligible for 30 hours - although places are limited (known as Owls). The children enter Nursery from a range of provisions, Toddlers and pre-school settings. Admission to the Nursery follows guidelines set out by Telford and Wrekin Council. The nursery has capacity for 120 part-time places.

Children enter their allocated Foundation class in September. All children can start school in the September after they turn 4 years old. Admission to school is administered by Telford and Wrekin and a place in our nursery does not guarantee a place in school. The admission form is available online from www.telford.gov.uk/admissions. This must be completed by 15th January of the year prior to starting school. National School Offer day is 16th April each year.

There are three Foundation classes with a capacity for 80 children. If your child is not offered a place at Old Park, parents can appeal. Appeals are organised by Telford and Wrekin Council and decisions given to the Headteacher in writing after the appeal is heard.

Induction procedures.

Prior to starting Toddlers or Nursery, parents/carers are given key information about the setting. Children new to Old Park Nursery will initially be invited to attend a couple of short introductory sessions before starting full time. If individuals need a longer settling in process, then we will work with them and their parents/carers.

Before starting to school, Foundation teachers speak to the staff from the child's previous setting. Parents have an information meeting while the children join their new class and meet their new teacher. Foundation children begin school on the same day as the rest of the school. Toddler and Nursery children start following their second visit.

The curriculum and effective practice.

The Early Years environments are organised into areas to link with the 7 areas of development and learning. We follow the children's interests and observe and interact with the children

Active learning takes place through both child initiated and adult led learning where the children are encouraged to organise their own resources and equipment. Regular physical activity is important across the Early Years to develop both fine and gross motor skills.

Assessments

Staff make ongoing assessments of children based on any evidence that has been collected and the practitioner's/teacher's knowledge of the children. Children's progress is discussed regularly at team meetings.

Children throughout the EYFS have a termly focus week, where the staff will be recording the interactions and how learning has been moved on during that week. Staff will share the focus sheet with parents giving them the opportunity to respond to the observations and also discuss the child's next steps and ways that parents/carers could support development at home.

Staff in Squirrels complete a two year old check once a child has settled in. This will be a short, written summary of the child's development, focusing on the three prime areas of learning. This will be completed by their keyworker and will take into account the views of parents and any information they have shared with staff.

In the final term of Nursery children receive a post card celebrating their time in nursery

In the final term of Foundation, class teachers make a final judgement against the Early Learning Goals, which are submitted to the Local Authority. They will indicate whether children are meeting **expected** levels of development, or not reaching expected levels (**emerging**) in each of the Early Learning Goals.

Early Years staff use a variety of ways to keep parents informed about the curriculum and activities on a regular basis.

- Information on the weekly school newsletter
- Nursery activity sheet
- Reading diaries
- Regular emails, phone calls and/or conversations with parents/carers
- Termly observation sheet shared with parents/carers

Meeting the Diverse needs of the children.

Meeting the individual needs of all children is at the heart of Early Years at Old Park. We promote positive attitudes to diversity and differences so that all children and families feel included, safe and valued and that all children and adults are treated as individuals.

We plan for each child's individual care and learning requirements. We focus on helping all children to reach their potential in a variety of ways. We identify and respond early to needs which could lead to the development of learning difficulties. Similarly, we provide for children who are working at their developmental age and extend their learning.

The role of the adults and key person role.

Every child in Squirrels and Nursery has an identified key person, however, all adults will support any of the children at any time.

In Foundation each class has a class teacher and teaching assistant. However, all staff support any of the children at any time.

Review and further development

The policy will be reviewed annually by all Early Years Staff and updates will be shared with all staff.

- Key stage and team meetings, learning walks and monitoring will take place termly involving all Early Years staff and senior management team.
- All staff to access CPD-, Sept '19 Moving and Handling Training, Autism training , Nov '19 Maths training, Jan '20 Speech and Language training, Paediatric First Aid, Speech and language virtual training (Visuals, Makaton, Information Carrying Words, Contrastive Pairs), Jul' 21 Communication Training led by The Bridge, Jun '22 Stoke Speaks Out Screening tool training, Jun '22 Early Talk Boost training, Sept '22 Listen with Lucy training, Nov '22 Sensory training, Dec '22 Food Hygiene training
- Speech, Language & Communication Consultancy partnership Nov' 22 - ongoing
- Half termly meeting with Early Years Governors
- Policy will be shared with Governors and staff.

Policy review October 2023

For further policies and procedures please contact the Nursery Office.

Early Years Governor - Gloria Dey