



Old Park Primary School & Nursery

EYFS policy

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Old Park Primary School & Nursery
Early Years Policy

Intent

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.

Children in the Early Years are constantly encountering new experiences. They are seeking to understand these experiences, to extend their skills, develop their confidence and build on previous learning. The Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework sets the standards that all early years providers must meet, which ensures 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 5 Matters' (2021) and 'Development Matters' which 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.

Implementation

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:

Prime Areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The school fosters and develops relationships between home, school, children's centres and places of worship in order to make links stronger for the good of the community as a whole. Children are encouraged to learn to work, share, take turns and co-operate with others. They are encouraged to be independent and make choices for themselves. They are also encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of others and to respect other cultures and beliefs. Children are enabled to become confident and develop a positive self-image.

Physical Development

Children are given opportunities to move to music, use equipment, develop and practice their fine and gross motor skills. They develop an increasing understanding of how their body works and what is needed to be healthy. This is done in both indoors and outdoors and by working with a wide range of resources.

Communication and Language

This covers all aspects of language development and provides the foundation for literacy skills. Children's developing competence in speaking and listening is focused on. We aim to extend and enrich the children's vocabulary through story time, rhymes, role-play and group discussions. Children are encouraged to share their own experiences through speaking and acting out events in imaginative play and talking about their own ideas. They are encouraged to take part in class activities such as working with puppets, participating in music sessions and saying rhymes and singing songs together.

Literacy

We have a variety of resources for the children to use to help them develop early literacy skills. Children are encouraged to use the mark-making areas indoors and outdoors independently but they also take part in teacher-led activities. These activities include whole class shared reading, RWI phonics sessions and small group guided reading and writing. The pre-writing work encourages correct pencil control, left/right orientation and correct letter formation. Children have the opportunity to develop their writing skills in accordance with their age, ability and competence within RWI.

We encourage children to treat books and other resources with respect and they are given many opportunities to listen to stories told by staff.

Mathematics

We aim for children to achieve mathematical understanding and a firm foundation for numeracy through practical activities and using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas. Pre-number work is covered through nursery rhymes and number activities. Children are given the opportunity to learn about number, shape, space, position, pattern and measurement. Towards the end of the Foundation stage children start learning to tell the time and are given opportunities to learn about money and simple calculations. We use our Whiterose and Early Years Number sense scheme to sequence the learning of mathematics.

Understanding the World

All children are given opportunities to solve problems, investigate, make decisions and experiment. They will learn about living things, their environment, the world around them and the people who are important in their lives.

Expressive Arts and Design

We provide opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design, technology, music, drama, movement, dance and imaginative play activities. Children are given opportunities to make paintings, drawings, collages, models and use basic musical instruments. Children also learn new songs and rhymes and enjoy singing them with each other. Colour recognition is taught, naming colours, mixing paints, sorting and matching. Through various times during the year children are given the opportunity to participate in school productions and assemblies.

Outside

We have an outside learning space which children have access to each day. We have all weather footwear available so children are protected and there are no barriers to learning. The outside area is an extension of the classrooms and there is a variety of resources to facilitate learning. In this area EYFS staff provide planned activities for children as well as giving opportunities for them to make their own choices.

Our Curriculum

Our curriculum has been carefully sequenced, to allow children at Old Park to develop their learning and achieve their curriculum outcomes by the end of the year. Our Foundation curriculum builds upon the experiences, knowledge and skills gained during nursery. In addition to this, it lays the building blocks for children's learning in Key Stage One. Our curriculum has been developed with the children in mind, and a strong focus on our local community.

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 in order to learn effectively throughout the EYFS and beyond. 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.

The Early Years environments are organised into areas, that 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.

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 practice. The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

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

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
- Information made available on the Nursery Family Newsfeed
- Reading diaries
- Regular emails, phone calls and/or conversations with parents/carers

Assessments

At Old Park children are assessed throughout the day, through the engagement and observations of the children. A practitioner's professional judgement and knowledge of the child and their development is the best assessment practise in the EYFS and requires no formal paperwork. Any moderation that takes place in our Foundation Stage is done through professional discussion of the children. Our other assessment procedures are useful tools which can help to develop a practitioner's knowledge of the whole child. In our Foundation Stage assessment is recorded in the following ways:

- Short observation notes – small observations of children's actions
- Focus Task Participation sheets – containing information on children's actions and achievement against set skills etc during an adult led task
- Examples of children's work are collated in a floor book, which will showcase the learning that has taken place.
- Photographic evidence

Reception children's progress and attainment is tracked against our termly curriculum outcomes taken from Birth to 5 Matters, Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception. These achievements are recorded electronically on the Insight system. These trackers highlight whether a child is on track to achieve age related expectations.

Assessment information is vital to the learning and development of the children at Old Park Foundation Stage so that all adults know each child's journey, the skills they have and the skills and knowledge that needs to be developed. This is used when considering short-term and long-term planning. All adults, who work with the children in our setting, are included in the assessment process - this includes parents, outside agencies and staff at school.

Assessment information is used to analyse the gaps and strengths of the children and cohort and is fed directly back into our planning to close gaps in learning and development, and plan challenging activities. It is also used to drive Pupil Progress meetings to ensure we are helping and encouraging children to achieve to their full potential and identify any children who need extra support. We have three data collection points throughout the year to see whether children are on track or need support.

Using data collection points helps us to notice whether a child is at risk of falling behind in their development. We can all make the difference by taking action quickly. Using our professional judgement and understanding of child development, practitioners intervene quickly and effectively. Children who seem to be at risk are monitored more closely and given support, so that the right decisions can be made about what sort of intervention is needed. Sensitive conversations with parents and carers help practitioners to better understand the child, and helpful suggestions can be offered for home. At times, a personal learning plan will be implemented, or referrals will need to be made to professionals such as speech and language therapists, physio, occupational therapists or the inclusion service. The school SENCo is involved, and parents are offered support and guidance. We understand that the EYFS is an important stage in a child's development and are committed to support all individuals with their learning.

When children enter our Nursery at two, we will complete a Two-Year Check after a full term at our setting. This check will be shared with parents/carers and other nursery settings that the child may attend. We will use the check to identify any children who need early intervention. Each child is assessed using the Reception Baseline Assessment within 6 weeks of entering Reception. Each child is screened using our speech and communication toolkit Stoke Speaks Out. Each half term Reception children are assessed in phonics using the online RWI assessment portal. These assessments are used to group children and identify gaps within learning. The Early Reading Lead then has meetings with teachers and teaching assistants to discuss children's next steps and the interventions they may need. At the end of the child's time in the Foundation Stage their attainment is recorded against the Early Learning Goals.

All assessment is quality assured by the Early Years Leader, Nursery Manager and shared with the Senior Leadership Team.

The role of the adults and key person role

At Old Park we recognise the importance of the role adults play in developing a child's education. All adults within the Foundation Stage are committed to supporting children and fostering a love of learning. This is done through:

- Assigning a Key Worker to each child in our nursery setting.
- Engaging with children during their activities and learning time.
- High-quality modelling and scaffolding to support children.
- Allowing children to be independent and manage risks.
- Actively engage the children in their learning through carefully planned activities and experiences.
- Ensuring the needs of all children are met.

Staff are available for children and their families to communicate with and build bonds.

Partnership working with parents and carers

We recognise that a child's education is a shared commitment from school staff, parents and motivated, engaged learners. As a school, we work in partnership with parents/carers and ensure that all information that is shared is used to support children's development.

Nursery parents/carers will be met at the main door when dropping off and collecting their children. Staff will be available before or after the session to discuss children's needs and parent/carers' views are always welcomed and valued.

In Foundation Reception, parents and children are greeted by the staff at the blue gates on the key stage one playground. Our Foundation Reception staff are always there and available to speak to and share any issues or concerns. Children are encouraged to enter on their own to build their confidence and independence.

At times, there may be the need for longer appointments. These will need to be booked through the nursery office or school office.

Impact

At Old Park we want to ensure children leave the Foundation Stage ready for the next year ahead. We want them to have a rich vocabulary, deep knowledge of stories and be equipped with the learning attitudes and

characteristics that will enable them to become successful learners. We strive to develop readers and writers who are phonically able and independent, mathematicians who have a deep number sense, and learners who have experiences that develop a rich sense of the world around them. We aim to create happy children, who are good citizens and friends, and who truly love to learn.

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. At Old Park all members of staff receive relevant safeguarding training and we promote that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. In addition to this we have six Designated Safeguard Leads within school: DSL's James Foster (Headteacher), Stuart Clarke (Deputy Headteacher), Andy Parton (Assistant Headteacher), Kelly Ryder (Pupil Welfare Manager), Sarah Davies (EYFS Lead) and Michael Ward (Inclusion Specialist). 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.

All members of staff at Old Park are made aware of the Whistleblowing policy and procedures. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they are made aware that they should use the other channels open to them:

- NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is available. Staff can call 0800 0280285 – 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 18:00 at weekends. The email address is: help@nspcc.org.uk. Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH.
- Ofsted provides guidance on how to make complaints about a provider: Complaints procedure - Ofsted - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).
- General guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: Whistleblowing for employees.

Child Absences

If a child is absent parents'/carers must contact the school office to report their child's absence before 9:00am on the day of the absence and advise when they are expected to return. Parents/carers are asked to provide the school with at least two emergency contact numbers for their child. We encourage parents/carers to Seek support/early help, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting our pupil welfare manager, safeguarding team or class teacher.

We have the responsibility to contact parents to investigate reasons for absence, including completing home visits where contact cannot be made by telephone. If no contact is received from the parents/carers of an absent pupil on the first morning of absence we will follow our first day calling procedure which is in our 'Whole School Attendance Policy'.

Safer Eating

At Old Park, we ensure that a member of staff with a valid paediatric first aid certificate is within the room when children are eating. Before children are admitted to our setting we obtain special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances that children may have as well as any special health requirements. This is shared with all staff involved in preparing and handling food via our MIS system

(BromCom). At snack time teachers and teaching assistants are responsible for making sure all food being served meets all the requirements for each child. At lunchtime the catering service is responsible for ensuring the food prepared meets the requirements for each child.

Old Park works with parents/carers and health professionals to regularly update and develop allergy action plans for managing known allergies and intolerances. Relevant training for staff is provided to ensure the child's needs are met.

As a school we have ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers about the stage their child is at in regard to introducing solid foods, including to understand the textures the child is familiar with. Assumptions are not made based on age. We train staff to ensure food is prepared to prevent choking using the government food safety 'Help for early years providers'. When children are eating, we ensure they are always in sight of an adult and where possible adults sit opposite children while they are eating. If a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, we record details of where and how the child choked and ensure parents/or carers are made aware. These records are reviewed to identify if there are any trends or common features of incidents that could be addressed to reduce the risk of choking.

Sleeping Arrangements

Sleeping children are frequently checked to ensure that they are safe. Being safe includes ensuring that bedding is in good condition and suited to the age of the child.

Toilets and intimate hygiene

At Old Park we have an adequate number of toilets and hand basins available and there are separate toilet facilities for adults. There are suitable hygienic changing facilities for changing any children who are in nappies. Children's privacy is considered and balanced with safeguarding and support needs when changing nappies and toileting. There is an adequate supply of clean bedding, towels, spare clothes, and any other necessary items.

Health and Safety

We have a Health and Safety policy which all staff and students are familiar with and we have designated people responsible for first aid in school. Members of the Foundation Stage staff have had paediatric first aid training. Children are taught the safe and appropriate use of equipment and materials. Children are taught to be mindful when moving around the school and are aware of safety issues. Risk assessments are undertaken before and after school activities take place and before we embark on school outings. A Health and Safety Policy is available in School and to parents on request.

Intimate Care

Intimate care may be defined as an activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child in partnership with the parent, carer and the child. In school this may occur on a regular basis or during a one-off incident.

Old Park Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. We recognise that there is a need to treat all our children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain and adults and staff must be sensitive to each child's individual needs. Parents are required to complete an intimate care permission form at the beginning of the school year. We have an Intimate Care policy available at school and on the website.

Admission arrangements

Children entering Toddlers (known as Squirrels) may be funded through Talking Twos, working parents entitlements (30 hours) 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 working parents entitlement (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 Reception 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 Reception 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 an information pack 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 school, Foundation Reception teachers speak to the staff from a child's previous nursery setting. Parents will be invited to a welcome meeting, whilst children join their new class and meet their new teacher. Foundation Reception children begin school on the same day as the rest of the school. Toddler and Nursery children start following their second visit.

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. This also ensure 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 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.

Review and further development

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

Our current targets are:

- Increase the percentage of children reaching a 'good level of development' at the end of the EYFS to be in line with the national average.
- Embed and quality assure the new curriculum for nursery/EYFS to ensure that all pupils are learning effectively.
- Continue to develop the Early years leaders so that they can clearly articulate their philosophy and pedagogical approaches for EYFS provision.

To work towards these targets, the EYFS team will:

- Hold weekly key stage and team meetings.
- Complete learning walks.
- Monitoring will take place termly, involving all Early Years staff and senior management team.
- Relevant and targeted CPD will be offered to support staff.
- Half termly meetings with EYFS governor.

For further policies and procedures please contact the Nursery Office