

## **PETERSFIELD CHURCH of ENGLAND (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL, ORWELL.**

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### **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

#### **Introduction**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to pupils from birth to the end of their Reception year. In our school, all pupils join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. Pupils joining our school have been to a range of settings within the community, and we continue to build on what our pupils already know. We aim to ensure that the transition from home to school is a smooth one. Petersfield is an inclusive school, where we offer a rich and stimulating environment in which the pupils can reach their full potential.

The EYFS is important in its own right and we recognise it as a crucial stage in education, preparing children with the basic skills that they will need for their later school years. The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Learning and developing – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

#### **Our Philosophy**

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils learn best through play-based activities and firsthand experience. Every child deserves the best possible start in life, in the Early Years we aim to give this by observing what the pupils can do and supporting them to fulfil their potential. Pupils become independent learners through the provision of a balance of child-initiated and adult-led experiences. Through indoor and outdoor play our pupils explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of their world.

They practice and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other pupils as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. At Petersfield School we provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop emotionally, socially, physically, creatively, and intellectually to their full potential and at their own pace. Each pupil is unique and is valued as an individual.

#### **Aims and Objectives**

## **PETERSFIELD CHURCH of ENGLAND (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL, ORWELL.**

- To provide a happy, caring, safe and secure environment for learning, which meets the individual needs and interests of the pupils.
- To develop warm and secure relationships between pupils and adults.
- To provide a high quality curriculum in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage document and Every Child Matters.
- To develop the moral and social values of the pupils.
- To encourage active learning through first hand experiences, both in indoor and outdoor play, and through verbal and non-verbal communication.
- To encourage pupils to become self motivated and independent learners with a positive attitude to learning and self-discipline.
- To value the cultural diversity within our school and community.
- To foster positive home school links and share a common sense of purpose with parents.

### **Teaching and Learning Styles**

In the Foundation Stage, teaching and learning includes whole class teaching, small group work and paired and individual work which are all supported by on-going observations. The Foundation area is an open plan classroom, with one teacher and a teaching assistant. This opens out onto an outside enclosed area. The class has an interactive whiteboard.

### **Play in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

Through play, our pupils explore and develop learning experiences which help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. Pupils are given the opportunities to explore and discover within a safe and supported environment. Play underpins the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. Pupils are involved with group and individual play, some initiated by adults and some by pupils. Pupils are able to take controlled, measured risks and sometimes to make mistakes in order to learn from them. All of this helps children to develop and foster the characteristics of effective early learning; playing and exploring, active learning and creativity and thinking critically.

### **Playing and exploring**

"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development." Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences which enable them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, learning how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. "Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part of children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1." (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2012).

### **Active Learning**

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods." EYFS Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning, and room to develop their confidence in order that they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

### **Creating and thinking critically**

"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions." EYFS Children should be 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 asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

### **Outdoor Learning**

Each week the Foundation Stage children also take part in a Forest School style session. "Forest Schools, is an inspirational process, that offers children and young people opportunities to achieve, develop confidence and self-esteem, through hands on learning experiences in a local woodland environment" (Definition by 'Forest Schools England').

This offers children regular opportunities to undertake learning and play in a local outdoor area called 'Chapel Orchard'. It is complementary to the learning taking place within the classroom environment and helps develop the characteristics of learning. Sessions in Chapel orchard are driven by the learners themselves, drawing on their interests and imagination. Children lead their own learning, based on their own interests and unique way of learning. Children are able to develop at their own pace allowing learning to be remembered. Risks are identified and children are taught how to manage the dangers in order to keep safe.

Through these experiences children are able to develop a lifelong love and understanding of the natural environment, whilst developing the core purposes of the Forest School ethos, namely, development of self-esteem, confidence and social skills. It raises expectations and develops insights into individual learning styles and schemas.

Activities include: den building, willow weaving, pond dipping, bug hunting, mud sculpting, natural art, whittling etc. It is a great learning experience and more importantly it is fun. We try to go to Chapel Orchard whatever the weather. The children will need to wear warm, waterproof clothing and boots.

### **Curriculum**

The curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage in our school reflects and complements the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals.

Three Prime Areas are:

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

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### **• Physical Development**

Pupils are also supported through the 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 experiences that our pupils have are designed to enable them to develop a number of competences, skills and concepts across several areas of learning. None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from others. They are equally important and are interdependent. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and pupil initiated activities. Within each of these areas there are stepping stones which show the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that pupils need to learn during the EYFS in order to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of their Reception Year.

### **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against pupils because of any 'differences'. All pupils at Petersfield School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or ability. All pupils and their families are valued within our school.

We meet the needs of boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs, pupils who are more able, pupils with disabilities, pupils from all social and economic backgrounds, pupils of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Teachers identify targets in specific areas of learning for those pupils who require additional support, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy. The EYFS leader discusses these targets with the pupil and his/her parents/carers. Progress is monitored and reviewed every term. The school's SENCO is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary. For further information see Petersfield's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy.

### **Assessment**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a framework which came into force in September 2012 and is the regulatory and quality framework for the provision of learning. An EYFS profile is completed for each pupil in the academic year in which they reach the age of five. It is statutory to complete the Foundation Stage Profile for each pupil and it is completed in partnership with parents.

It provides Year 1 teachers and parents with reliable and accurate information about each pupil's level of development as they reach the end of the EYFS. This enables the teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet all pupils' needs, to support their continued achievement more fully.

### **Recording and monitoring**

Each pupil's development is recorded against 17 assessment scales, based on the early learning goals and divided between the seven areas of learning and development. Judgements against these scales are made from observations of consistent and independent behaviour, predominantly from pupils' self-initiated

activities. Assessment and observations inform planning, enabling teachers to complete the profiles and to deliver a curriculum that is specific to the pupils' needs. We make regular assessments of pupils' learning, and we use this information to ensure that our planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Early Years Foundation stage is ongoing and is an integral part of the learning and development process. The observations and assessments are used to identify learning priorities and to plan the next stages in the learning experiences for the pupil. The observations are then matched to the early learning goals and are recorded as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

### **The Role of Parents**

We recognise that parents/carers are the pupil's first and most enduring educators. When parents/carers and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the pupil's development. A successful partnership involves a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise. All parents have an important role to play in the education of their children. We develop this through:

- Inviting all parents to an evening induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- Making time for the pupils to visit their teacher and partake in typical activities in their classroom
- Organising playgroup/nursery visits – an opportunity for staff to discuss EYFS
- Induction sessions in the summer term prior to entry
- Holding a Foundation Curriculum session for parents
- Parent consultations in the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms
- Encouraging parents to help in the classroom, with Forest School style sessions and with trips and swimming.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the pupil's teacher, whenever concerns arise
- Encouraging regular communication through the pupil's Home & School Learning Link

### **Equal Opportunities**

We aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that everyone is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas. All pupils have an equal entitlement to a good Early Years curriculum regardless of gender, race, culture, religion, disability and special or medical needs. Full consideration has been given to Safeguarding (child protection) Inclusion, Equality and Access in the preparation of this policy.

### **Safeguarding**

Please refer to the Child Protection group of policies.

### **Health and Safety**

Please refer to the Health and Safety Policy with specific reference being made to Risk Assessments and the Medical Needs and Intimate Care policies. Mrs. Peachey and Mrs. Squires are both paediatric first aid trained so there is always a paediatric first aider on site. Ratios of children to adults are adhered to both in school and on school trips. Additional reference should also be made to the EYFS Risk Assessment.

**Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator to follow and develop the principles in this policy.

The Head Teacher and EYFS coordinator will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school Self Evaluation monitoring schedule.

The Headteacher, Governors, EYFS Coordinator and staff will review this policy every three years. Any amendments will be presented to the Outcomes and Provision Committee of the Governing Body.

Reviewed: June 2017

Next due for review: Autumn 2020