



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage is used to describe children who are in our nursery and reception classes.

Aim

At Colindale Primary School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

As outlined in the EYFS 'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.'

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children 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**

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Liaise closely with our AHT/Inclusion and Assistant SENCo in order to meet the needs of children with SEND
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-led and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Have a key person approach to develop close relationships with individual children
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out

The EYFS curriculum

Our curriculum is based on the 'Early Years Outcomes' guidance. We assess the children on entry and build on the progress made in their previous setting. The curriculum is broken down into seven areas of learning. All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three **prime** areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

- Communication and language
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical development

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive art and design

Learning Environment

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which encourages children to explore, investigate and learn through firsthand experience. We aim to make a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence. Activities are planned for inside and outside; children have the freedom to move between the inside and outside classrooms. The learning environment is divided into a variety of learning areas. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and take some responsibility for their own lines of enquiry and investigation. We aim to include every child in the activities in our environment regardless of physical disability and can provide ramps and ceiling hoists and slings to help with this.

Planning

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and implement these in our practice. Actions arising from progress data reviews are incorporated into the medium term planning. These plans inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remain flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS. 'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'. We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults.

Continuous provision enhancements are based on children's next steps in their learning. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further. Children participate in whole group and small group activities and in reception there are set times for daily phonics and maths sessions, shared and guided reading and writing.

Observation and Assessment

Information from previous settings, the parents and observations of the children, are used to inform baseline assessments which are undertaken during the first few weeks of the autumn term. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

We regularly input summative assessments onto a data tracking system. We record each child's level of development to be beginning, developing or embedded within the Early Years Outcomes age-bands. The class teachers moderate these judgements thoroughly to ensure validity.

We use the *Tapestry Online Learning Journal* app to record our observations of children. All adults involved with the children are encouraged to contribute to the online journal including parents and carers. Parents have instant access to observations of their children and have the opportunity to reply or make comments about their children's learning. Every observation is linked to the EYFS areas of learning this enables staff to keep track of the children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

Parents meet with their child's key worker every term to discuss their child's progress and the next steps in their child's learning.

In the Summer term, the nursery parents receive a report on their child's progress within the Characteristics of Effective Learning. These reports are also shared with the reception staff.

In reception, parents receive a report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the Characteristics of Learning. We record each child's level of development against the 17 early Learning goals as Emerging, Expected or Exceeding. The parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the Reception teachers in preparation for Year 1.

Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Please see our separate policies and procedures on Health and Safety, Safeguarding & Child Protection, Medical, Outdoor and Off Site Activities (EVC policy).

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals at Colindale Primary School, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies. See our separate policies on Equality of Opportunity, EAL and SEND.

Parents as Partners and the Wider context

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways. A class newsletter is sent to parents on a regular basis, this informs parents of the topics covered in class and how they can become involved in school activities. Parents are also encouraged to upload photos and videos to their child's online learning journal to enable the class teachers to gain a full picture of each child's interests and learning progress. During their child's focus week, parents are encouraged to complete an *All About Me at Home and Out and About* booklet in which they write about their child's interests and any noticeable observations of their child's progress. Each week in reception, a Home Learning folder is sent home, this informs parents of how they can help with their child's learning at home.

Parents and Carers of children with EHCPs are invited to termly meetings with school staff and therapists to discuss their child's needs and to set targets.

We hold termly 'Family Matters Workshops' where parents can find out about communicating effectively with their children, healthy living and well-being. In nursery, parents are invited to 'Stay and Play' sessions where they can join in with class activities. In reception, parents are invited to 'Open Lessons' where they can observe a lesson being taught and join in with the follow on activities.

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and childminders. Children attend introductory sessions to both the nursery and reception classes to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. Our AHT/Inclusion and EYFS staff liaise or meet with outside agencies who may be involved with a child and family, for example, speech therapists, paediatricians and therapists.

In the final term nursery and reception staff meet to discuss the children's development and next steps. Reception and year 1 staff also meet to discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.