

Oakham Church of England Primary and The Parks School

EYFS Policy



Date	October 2019
Approved by Executive Headteacher	Stephen Cox
Approved by Chair of Governors	Stewart Needham
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Introduction and Aims:

Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their schooling. At Oakham C of E Primary and The Parks School we aim to:

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning;
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences;
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development;
- To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere;
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

In doing so, we nurture 'The Characteristics of Effective Learning', allowing the children to develop these essential skills in engaging with other people and their environment, playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically . The skills underpin learning and development across all areas and support a child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

Curriculum

Within our Foundation Stage at Oakham C of E and The Parks School, we follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document. This clearly defines what we teach. The following policy details the specifics of our setting.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected, but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (DfE 2014: 1.3). They support children's learning in all other areas and are known as the prime areas of learning.

The prime areas are:

- **Communication and Language** – Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking
- **Physical Development** – Moving and Handling and Self Care
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – Making relationships, Managing Feelings and Behaviour and Self-Confidence and Self-Awareness

The specific areas of learning grow out of the Prime Areas and help children to develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. The specific areas are:

- **Literacy** – Reading and Writing
- **Mathematics** – Numbers and Space, Shape and Measures
- **Understanding the World** – People and Communities, The World and Technology
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – Exploring and using media and materials and Being Imaginative

The EYFS also includes the ‘Characteristics of Effective Learning’ and Foundation Stage teachers plan activities with these specifically in mind. They highlight the importance of a child’s attitude towards their learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics are:

- **Playing and Exploring** – the way that children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’
- **Active Learning** – how children concentrate and whether they keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and if they enjoy achievements
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** – whether children have and develop their own ideas and if they make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Teaching strategies

‘Busy Learning’ - Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms and in Foundation Stage we call this ‘Busy Learning’. This is where children initiate their own learning within the environment. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children’s interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. Through Busy Learning, they have opportunities to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and develop at their own level and pace. Busy Learning gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in Busy Learning through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between Busy Learning and adult led activities is very important to us. We work very hard to ensure that all of the children’s learning experiences are as playful as possible so we feel that we have done a great job when the children tell us that they have been learning through play all day!

Adults within children’s play - We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children initiating their own learning, all of the child initiated activities within the classroom have been carefully planned from detailed assessments of the children’s next steps to ensure that progress is always being made even when children are initiating their own learning and no adult is present. When an adult is present and can join in with a child’s play, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult’s response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult’s role is to continually model,

demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible.

Direct teaching – There are times throughout the day when more formal 'direct teaching' sessions take place. These activities are led by the teacher or one of the other members of the Early Years team and will have a particular focus depending on the next steps of the children. These sessions are fast paced and lively with a clear focus and will involve all of the children being engaged and focussed in the learning. They may take place anywhere within the classroom, the outdoor area, the quiet area outside the classroom or occasionally elsewhere in the school depending on the focus. The children also participate in a daily phonics session, suitable for their age and stage. Children are taught the sounds that letters making through Read, Write, Inc which support their reading and writing. All direct taught sessions are carefully planned and tailored for each child using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. Planning is changed and tailored regularly and in response to the result of taught sessions, ensuring all teaching and learning is relevant and challenging for each child.

Assessment and observations

Assessment is an essential and important part of the Early Years for children's learning and development. This involves practitioners observing children in a variety of circumstances to gain an understanding of each child's level of understanding. This happens live throughout any taught session as well as during Busy Learning when children are embedding and extending any previous learning. These observations and assessments will then be used to shape and alter any future learning. All member of staff with the Foundation Stage are involved within the assessment cycle and feedback their assessments of the children to the class teachers daily. Weekly meetings take place to discuss the progress of the children and their next steps and how the learning can be reshaped to follow the children's interests and help them to progress in their learning.

We use Tapestry to assess and log the observations of our children. Staff are able to use this tool effectively within the learning environment to add to the children's learning journeys, logging their progress against the EYFS and making notes in the children's learning as they do so.

At the end of Foundation Stage the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the child's end of year report.

Partnership with parents and carers (Oakham CE Primary)

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. We meet and greet our parents every morning and encourage them to come in to the classroom each morning with their children. As well as this, we have a 'reading morning' every Friday where parents can come in to the classroom and read with their

children as well as being able to chat to the teachers and other staff about how their children are getting on. We have two parent's evenings within the academic year as well as other opportunities such as a Mummy's Pamper Day, Daddy's Pamper Day, Class Worship, church visits and other school trips for parents to come and join the children and adults in school. We involve our parents in our children's school week by asking them to help the children to decide what they would like to do for Enrichment each week and by giving each child a scrap book so that the children can share any home learning in school.

All parents have access to their child's learning journey through Tapestry and can logon and comment on what their child has been learning in school and the progress they are making. We love to share children's achievements and encourage parents to comment on their child's learning through Tapestry.

Partnership with parents and carers (The Parks School)

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. The child's key worker meets and greets parents every morning in the cloakroom and they are happy to briefly talk about any issues or worries. If you feel more time is needed then we respectfully ask that you make an appointment to come in after school where it can be discussed in more detail. We involve parents in the children's school week through the home school communication book, stay and play sessions and through an invite to a photostory 3 times a year. We have two pupil reviews (usually at the end of Term 2 and Term 4) where parents have an opportunity to come into school and discuss their child's learning and progress.

All parents have access to their child's learning journey through Tapestry and can logon and comment on what their child has been learning in school and the progress they are making. We love to share children's achievements and encourage parents to comment on their child's learning through Tapestry.

Health & Safety and Safeguarding

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.

We are a healthy school and our children receive free fruit from a Government scheme as well as having free milk every day whilst they are still 4. Once our children turn 5, we give parents the opportunity to pay for their child to have milk, termly. We are happy for children to bring their own snack in from home but parents must ensure that they are providing either fruit or vegetables for snack time for the children to eat alongside the Government fruit/vegetables. We encourage all parents to supply a water bottle for the children and we fill these with fresh water each day. Children also have access to a water cooler and we teach children to use this independently to meet their own needs.

We encourage all children to start school being fully toilet trained but will support any children struggling with this. We acknowledge that young children often have some toileting mishaps (i.e. wet or soil themselves) and will change anyone who needs help. We ask all

parents to provide spare underwear and clothes for their children in case of accidents in their book bags but we do have some spare items in case these have not been provided. We ask parents to help keep our stocks of clothes high by returning anything their child has borrowed. All school items have the school name written clearly in the label.

We encourage the children to explore and take risks and inevitably they will get bumps and scraps. However, we take all accidents seriously and record all accidents in our own accident book. We will always send a note home if a child bangs their head and call home if a serious bump occurs. All members of EYFS staff are Paediatric First aid trained.