

Ashleworth C of E Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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| Approved by: | Teaching & Learning Committee |
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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Churcham and Ashleworth C of E Primary Schools, all school children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five (compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday). Key Stage 1 begins for all our children at the beginning of year 1. The EYFS is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals (ELGs) set out what is expected of most children by the end of the EYFS. Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been to one of a range of settings that exist in our community or to our nursery onsite at Churcham School (Acorns Nursery).

Our Aims:

At both Churcham and Ashleworth C of E Primary Schools, we aim to give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life, in which they can establish solid foundations on which to develop into independent and enthusiastic learners.

We will encourage children to develop independence within a 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 by developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

Our high expectations will enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally and to achieve their full potential. We will offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited availability for development through a wide range of new and exciting first-hand experiences that will give children the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test their skills, knowledge and understanding alongside existing experiences. We will ensure that children are kept healthy and safe and that they develop a broad range of knowledge and skills. Our EYFS provision reflects all of the statutory guidance contained within the 2021 statutory framework.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Positive relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families. Regular parent meetings and 'drop in sessions' are made available to parents to ensure that there is a strong link between parents and staff in the EYFS. Both teachers and class teaching assistants work alongside the children working in the EYFS and this enables all staff to build strong relationships with YR children.

Reception children often have the opportunity to join year 1 and 2 children during the afternoons for topic work. This allows the Reception children to work collaboratively to share ideas. This grows their confidence and relationship skills with children of different ages. Furthermore, the year 1 and 2 children act as positive role-models for the children within class and the reception children often feel inspired by their work/learning behaviours modelled by these older children in the class.

Enabling environments

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Children have access to all of the early learning areas of development (inside the classroom and in the outdoor area).

Through observations, teachers closely monitor how these areas are being used by the children and make alterations/add to the areas to get the most out of the learning environment. We also use these observations to help us assess the children's interests and stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning further.

The outdoor learning environment is valued and plays an important part in the children's development. The weekly plans show when the children will have access to the outdoor area as well as encouraging them to use designated learning areas within the classroom.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS consists of **three prime** areas of learning:

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

There are **four specific areas** of learning:

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

At both Ashleworth C of E and Churcham, all areas are delivered through a well-planned play-based approach, with a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. Throughout the foundation stage, our long, medium and short-term plans ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area at the appropriate developmental level. Our long-term planning ensures coverage so that all children have opportunities to work towards and achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. We follow a half termly topic-based approach which allows flexibility to ensure that both children's needs and interests are taken into account.

Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the foundation stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. In doing so, we can provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning and to help them make sense of the world. Children have opportunities through their play 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 experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults (teachers and teaching assistants) take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and the nursery and Reception teachers plan activities with these in mind. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics are;

Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'

At Ashleworth the children have the opportunity to do Forest School for one afternoon a fortnight. Forest School sets learning in a different context for children where they can undertake a range of practical activities. The children at Churcham will now also be having Forest School learning opportunities.

Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

Teachers and teaching assistants encourage all children to persist and to overcome any difficulties.

Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Inclusion

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning and we set

realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of individual children, so that children can reach their full potential. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We aim to build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs

Early Years Pupil Premium – we will endeavour to identify our least advantaged pupils and inform parents or carers of their opportunity to apply for their child's entitlement to extra funding in school. All extra funding we receive will be used to support areas in which we identify that the child will benefit from the most.

If additional needs are identified, the class teacher will liaise with the SENDCo to set targets to support the child's progress and a 'Support Plan' or 'My Plan' for that child may be put into place to ensure a good level of progress is made. Nursery staff also inform us of any specific learning difficulties that children may have had during their time in the nursery setting and their end of nursery records are shared with the class teachers. This information is used to help inform the planning for when the children start in Class 1 and class teachers can use this information to help guide interventions that may be needed. If a child enters EYFS with an EHC plan we will work closely with all agencies involved to ensure the child's needs are met and planned for.

Assessment

The Reception children's knowledge, understanding, skills and achievements are assessed and tracked using the developmental stages set out in the document 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)'.

We gather assessment information from a range of sources, including; observations of the children in play, in adult led activities, through discussions with parents and carers and through talking to the children. At Churcham we keep 'Learning Journeys' for every child in Reception and Ashleworth use 'Tapestry' to help record the children's achievements/next steps for learning. Pictures, examples of the children's work, quotes from the children and observations made by practitioners are all collected together and placed in the 'Learning Journey'/in the 'Tapestry' record.

In September, the EYFS teachers make a baseline assessment of every child and this progress is then tracked every term (at the end of every term, the assessment grids are recorded and reported back to the Head Teacher). We also carry out the RBA national baseline assessment.

If we feel that children are not making good progress, interventions will be put into place to help ensure that the child progresses in that specific area of the EYFS curriculum. Observational evidence and samples of children's work throughout the school year will be used to assess children as meeting or not meeting the Early Learning Goals by the end of June.

Transitions

At both Churcham and Ashleworth C of E, we recognise that starting school has the potential to be a stressful time for both children and parents. At Churcham, we provide the children with 'Rising 5' sessions during the summer term. These sessions allow the children to become familiar with the environment/routines in Class 1 and the staff/children in Class 1. During this time, the children also have time to access learning activities that will help prepare them for school. At Ashleworth C of E, the pre-school children also have the opportunity to attend a number of settling in sessions during the second half of the summer term.

Before the Reception children start school, there is a meeting with all YR parents to pass on any key information, school expectations, knowledge on our curriculum and assessment and advice on how they can help their child to settle into school life. The class teacher then meets with the parents on a 1 to 1 basis where personal information about the child can be passed onto the class teacher and the parents can ask any questions/share any concerns.

At the beginning of the school year, parents are given the option to either have their children start full time from September or to just bring their children in for mornings to begin with. The class teacher and the parent discuss what is best for each individual child.

Partnership with Parents

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what their child does at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child and to feel comfortable in our setting. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to share information about their child, to ask questions and to discuss their child's learning with the teachers. They are asked to contribute towards their child's Learning Journey at least once every term. Parents can also use the Class Dojo page to send messages to teachers to share any successes at home or share any concerns they may have.

At Ashleworth 'WOW Vouchers' are given out to the parents. These slips allow the parents to communicate to the teachers something amazing that they have seen their child doing at home. These may be some writing or recognising numbers.

Parents are also encouraged to support children's learning through; listening to their child read and by writing comments in their reading records, simple homework activities and by sharing assemblies and whole class activities. Children in Reception are given sounds/words/a book to take home (according to their stage of development). In the Summer term, more formal homework is set to help the Reception children prepare for Year 1.

In the autumn term, parents can attend information workshops about reading and maths. These workshops provide parents with an insight into how we teach the basic skills in reading and maths. They also provide the parents with ideas or what they could do at home to further support their child. During these workshops a Maths pack will be sent home with the parents and these will include a range of games/activities that they can carry out with their child at home. Parents will also be invited into school for 'Tea Parties'. During these sessions, the parents will be able to take part in a range of learning activities alongside their child. They will also be able to chat informally to their child's teacher. In addition to this,

class teachers regularly post on the Class Dojo page so parents can be kept up to date with what their child is doing in class.

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 follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2014) and we adhere to the school's safeguarding policy.

Reception children have a daily snack/milk time together as a small group. During this time, the children are encouraged to try a range of fruit and vegetables to help build a positive attitude towards healthy eating.

Class 1 have access to toileting facilities, and we teach the children the importance of hygiene, hand washing techniques and throughout the year we plan cooking activities to give children experiences of a range of healthy food. The children wash their hands at regular intervals in the day and we put measures in place to ensure that we are reducing the risk of COVID-19 spreading. The children are supported with washing their hands effectively and we talk about the importance of hand washing with the children.

This policy also links to:

Teaching and Learning

Marking and Presentation

Behaviour

Anti-Bullying

Child Protection and Safeguarding

E – Safety and Acceptable Users

In all aspects of our work and day-to-day provision at Ashleworth C of E and Churcham Primary Schools, the safety and well-being of our pupils is paramount. We expect all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.