



Policy for Early Years

The Purpose of the Early Years Policy

The Early Years policy in this school reflects the value and importance of early years education, both during and beyond the foundation stage. It is a framework which provides guidance on practice, and outlines procedures for planning, teaching and learning, monitoring and evaluating the curriculum. The policy contributes towards raising educational standards within the school and ensures that the needs of the youngest children are met within the context of whole school policies, curriculum planning, agreed teaching approaches and organisational structures. The Early Years curriculum is developed in accordance with DfE Early Years Foundation Stage which provides a statutory framework for provision from September 2008 and identifies provision for 0 to 5's as a statutory key stage which precedes Key Stage 1 where children continue their early years.

Early Years in this setting: The term foundation stage refers to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year, therefore the terms 'early years'/ foundation stage in this context refer to children in the reception class.

The policy reflects the main aims of the school which are: to motivate everyone to reach their individual goals through support, perseverance and expectations of high achievement.

At Lapworth CE Primary School we undertake to:

- Raise levels of attainment for all pupils, enabling them to achieve their personal best.
- Develop confident, disciplined and enquiring learners, able to make informed choices.
- Foster a love of learning.
- Foster self-esteem and personal responsibility, linked to respect for the needs and feelings of others.
- Promote healthy lifestyles and personal well-being, through a broad and consistent education linked to personal, health, social and financial awareness.
- Facilitate considerate and positive relationships between all members of the school community.
- Ensure equal opportunities in relation to gender, race, class, disability, special needs and belief.
- Provide a Christian environment where children's spiritual and moral development is fostered in an atmosphere of respect for God.
- Value and respect all cultures.
- Provide a safe and happy work place.
- Promote a thoughtful attitude towards the immediate and wider environment.

Introduction

As an Early Years Department we endorse the aims, principles and commitments of the EYFS. This Early Years Policy addresses all aspects of the needs of young children and ensures that:

- early years education is valued, seen as the foundation for education and the beginning of a continuum of learning throughout the primary phase.
- the curriculum experiences of children are appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- the identification of and provision for special educational needs of children are included.
- the importance of 'play', 'first hand' experiences and an active curriculum are recognised in planning learning opportunities for young children.
- there is shared understanding of the emotional needs of young children, how they learn and develop skills, knowledge and understanding.
- policies and schemes of work include teaching and learning from 3-5.

- the needs of the children are considered carefully in matters of organisation, management and administration.
- children experience a smooth transition from home, pre-school or nursery, into the reception class.
- statutory curricular obligations laid down by DfE and the requirements of Foundation Stage Profile are followed.

Key Aims and Principles of the Early Years Policy

The staff at Lapworth C of E School believe that the following aims and principles underpin their practice and reflect a shared vision of how children develop and learn, of the activities and experiences which help children make progress, and the type of stimulating environment which promotes opportunities for learning.

The aims of the Early Years Curriculum are:

- for children to develop a secure relationship in particular with their key person and other staff in the setting to enable them to become strong and independent.
- to provide a stimulating environment which children feel secure in, enabling them to learn to the best of their ability.
- to value equally all areas of learning and development and to see them as inter-connected.
- to enable pupils to express preferences, communicate needs, make choices, make decisions and choose options that other people act on and respect.
- to develop positive attitudes and dispositions for learning.

Staffing

All staff involved in the education of young children need to be able to develop good relationships with the children in their care so that they can feel secure, respected and thus able both to make mistakes and cope with minor failures as well as building confidently on their successes.

Early Years provision, organisation and the learning environment:

Early Years provision at Lapworth C of E School is organised into a one form entry reception class with a maximum of 24 pupils aged 4-5. The classroom is set up to offer continuous provision to the children both indoors and outdoors. The provision includes a writing area, a creative area, a number area, a book corner, a listening centre, a computer area, a malleable area, an investigation area, an outdoor games area, and a construction area

The children also have access to other equipment and facilities throughout the school, including the library, hall, ICT suite and playground and field.

Reception children are admitted into Lapworth C of E School from the September after their fourth birthday. After a week of home visits, children attend part-time for the first week and then from their second week attend full time. Younger children are given the option of remaining part time from the third week if staff and parents decide that this is best for the child.

The staff in reception class all have specialist training, knowledge and expertise in working with young children and work in partnership with KS 1 staff and other professionals e.g. Educational Psychologists, speech and language specialists to provide a multi - disciplinary team.

Parents are encouraged to visit the classroom, see what the children are doing, take part in activities and be actively involved in their child's learning. Our staff aim to create a welcoming, happy and relaxed environment which enables parents to feel confident in their role as a partner in their children's education.

Teaching and learning in the early years curriculum is carefully planned and structured to meet individual needs.

Staff organise a range of experiences and opportunities based on 'real' events, which give children chance to make decisions and choices, work individually or in groups and explore the learning environment.

Activities may be adult directed and child initiated with an emphasis on following the needs and interests of the children in order to ensure learning is real, relevant and purposeful.

We offer a play based curriculum inside and outside the classroom which is carefully organised and planned for.

Induction/Parental Involvement

In the first week of the Autumn term, prior to children starting in reception, parents are encouraged to have a home-visit to begin or develop relationships between staff, parents and the child. This is also an early opportunity for parents to raise any queries or share information with the staff. During the summer term in particular there are shared weekly activities with reception and Lapworth pre-school children. The class teacher also visits those children who will be starting in reception and attend other nurseries and settings.

In July a transfer profile is completed by pre-school settings for each child and shared with parents. This information is then passed on to Lapworth School. This information helps us to learn more about each child prior to them starting school. The school holds an induction morning where children spend the morning in the classroom getting to know their new environment and staff and parents also have the opportunity for an informal meeting with the Headteacher. During this meeting parents are asked to complete the contact details form. Prior to the induction morning there is an evening talk for parents led by the class teacher. At this meeting there is also the opportunity for parents to meet the Chair of Governors and the Class 1 teaching assistant.

Staff at Lapworth School believe that this programme of home visits and meetings enables parents to share valuable information which helps achieve a smooth transition from home to school and allows parents to ask any questions they may have about their child starting school. Home visits take place during week 1 of the Autumn term. Staff recognise that effective partnership with parents has a positive impact on children's development and learning, and therefore aim to provide opportunities for parents to keep staff informed about their child's development or any concerns they may have.

Reception children for the first week of their school life will come straight into the classroom on arrival at school. From their second week they will line up as a class on the playground with the rest of the school community, supervised by two members of teaching staff.

For the majority of the autumn term Reception class children will be involved in one weekly assembly which is based on SEAL (social and emotional aspects of learning) which we link to follow up classroom activities. During the spring and summer term children will gradually attend more weekly assemblies in preparation for attending daily assembly in year one. There is also a celebration assembly which reception children will attend from September. Parents and other family members are invited to each celebration assembly.

Reception children have a morning and afternoon playtime and play on the playground with the rest of the school. Morning playtime is from 10:40 to 10:55 and afternoon play is 14:25-14:45 both sessions are supervised by two members of staff.

Lunchtime for reception children is with the rest of the school from 12:00 to 12:55. Children have their lunch in the hall at 12:00 followed by playtime which is supervised by the lunchtime supervisors.

Children with SEN are given support that is needed and advised by Lapworth School working in partnership with appropriate agencies as necessary.

The Reception class teacher will inform parents weekly, in writing, of the main areas of focus across all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This enables parents to support their child with learning opportunities at home. The letter goes into a home/school book which parents are encouraged to write in with any queries or questions. Parents are also encouraged to come in before or after school to discuss with the teacher with any worries or queries they may have. When educational visits are planned, the class teacher will also inform parents by letter.

The Headteacher writes a weekly newsletter which is emailed to parents (paper copies are provided for those parents who do not have e-mail access). This is also put up on the school notice board and school's intranet. This letter includes things such as after school activities, school events, invitations for parents to participate in key school events.

Lapworth School holds two parents' evenings during the year when parents come into school to participate in a ten minute discussion with the class teacher and look at their child's work in books and folders. Parents are also invited to look at children's work and photographs of children displayed around school. During the summer term, parents are invited in for an open afternoon when they can again look around school.

In reception parents are invited to come into school more frequently than just parent's evenings. Parents are welcome to look around the classroom and see what their child has been doing in Class 1. Parents may also be invited in to see Class 1 children perform for example a story or sing some songs.

Early Years Curriculum

Observation, assessment, planning, recording and reporting

Observation, assessment, planning, recording and reporting are recognised as essential parts of an effective curriculum.

The Early Years Curriculum is based on the DfE Early Years Foundation Stage, and is planned to lead smoothly into the National Curriculum at KS 1 in a way which is relevant and meaningful for all children. The foundation stage curriculum stresses the importance of the child's personal, emotional and social development, emphasises early literacy, numeracy, and lays the foundation for the future learning of all children.

Children in the early years learn in a variety of ways: by watching others, talking, asking questions, listening, exploring and investigating. The EYFS includes a section on the importance of play in helping children to learn and develop:

'Well-planned play, both indoors and outdoors, is a key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge,'

and it recognises the crucial role of staff in planning real experiences to enable children to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding.

DfE guidance also underlines the role of play in the foundation stage - play helps children explore ideas, role and relationships. It clearly states that effective planning for play requires staff to:

- ◆ plan & resource a challenging environment
- ◆ support children's learning through planned play activity
- ◆ support & extend children's spontaneous play
- ◆ support & extend children's language and their communication in play

Appropriately planned and structured play supports and develops children's need to socialise, express ideas, thoughts and feelings, experiment, observe and try things out.

The foundation curriculum is organised into six areas of learning and development all of which are interdependent and of equal importance;

- Personal, social and emotional development;
- Communication, language and literacy;

- Problem, solving, reasoning and numeracy;
- Knowledge and understanding of the world;
- Physical development;
- Creative development;

However, we recognise that children's learning is holistic and that children neither recognise nor benefit from being confined within subject boundaries. We aim to provide a coherent curriculum that provides a clear focus for learning and draws together relevant activities which contribute to the development of the whole child. Thus children are able to use and extend what they know, can do and understand within a realistic context.

At Lapworth Church of England School we are working towards children achieving most aspects of the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. **Development Matters** help staff identify children's developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes as they make progress towards the early learning goals, throughout the foundation stage. The **Early Learning Goals** establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage, but are not intended to be a curriculum in themselves.

The Early Learning Goals are in line with the objectives for both the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies, and therefore reception teachers may choose to cover the elements of the strategies across the day, rather than in a single unit of time, until the end of reception year.

The curriculum in reception at Lapworth C of E School is organised into a topic focus for each half term. Each area of learning is taught where possible with links to the topic. Each half term a medium term plan is produced which covers the six areas of learning and objectives taken from the EYFS curriculum. An outline is also produced of the planned weekly focus, which is adapted as the term progresses depending on the children's interest and understanding.

The wider curriculum at Lapworth C of E School consists of

- Educational visits and visitors
- Outdoor play provision
- Links with Lapworth Pre-school which are currently being developed.

Through increased links with Lapworth pre-school, children at the pre-school and in reception will focus on the same topics each half term. This will enable resources to be shared, activities and educational visits to be planned together and will prevent repetition of topics in reception covered at pre-school.

Themes covered by foundation stage children through the areas of learning are planned with regard to the whole school curriculum map and those covered by children in KS 1 and include:

- ◆ interesting, enjoyable, challenging and relevant learning experiences, both inside and out, within the six areas of learning and development.
- ◆ learning experiences that take account of the life experiences of the children, the characteristics of the community and the concerns of children's families.
- ◆ learning which uses a multi-sensory approach
- ◆ learning opportunities which enable children to make connections between areas of learning and transfer and consolidate their learning across the curriculum.

The Early Years Curriculum is planned as units of work or topics which provide a framework for planning and determine what is taught and when it happens. They are based on the stages highlighted by Development Matters provided in the EYFS and the staff's knowledge and understanding of how children develop and learn. They recognise that young children follow recognised patterns of development but that there is considerable variation between individuals. These units of work give aims, learning objectives, learning outcomes, activities, specific

vocabulary, teaching methods, assessment opportunities and the resources necessary for the activity.

Long term, medium term and daily planning is discussed and organised by the teacher and involves regular communication with the teaching assistant and other appropriate staff at Lapworth pre-school as well as involving reception children and their parents as much as possible.

Weekly and daily plans include what children are to be taught in specific sessions, how staff are organised and how activities can be differentiated to meet the needs of individual children. Evaluation of activities, observations and staff listening to, and talking with children, are key strategies for gaining information on each child's progress and development.

Each week a weekly adult led whole class plan is produced for Communication, Language and Literacy, PSRN and phonics. The CD, KUW and PD objectives taught each week are taken from the medium term plan and are often taught to children in smaller groups and through continuous provision in the classroom. Children have two weekly P.E sessions. R.E is taught using the LCP R.E Scheme for the Foundation Stage (which is used throughout the school) as well as focusing on other cultural events that occur during the year. PSED focused activities use the SEAL scheme of work for the foundation stage as well as covering other issues as required for the class. Each child will individually read with a teacher or teaching assistant twice a week and from the spring term participate in guided group reading. Children work in ability groups for the small group PSRN and CLL activities which they do each week.

A Foundation Stage Profile is completed by the end of the reception year for each child. This is updated from the beginning of September when initial observations and assessments of each child are recorded into each child's Foundation Stage Profile alongside the Early Years Transfer profile which is completed by each child's pre-school provider.

A portfolio of observations, things to celebrate and pieces of work demonstrating the child's ability across the six areas of learning are added to throughout the year and is shared with parents and at the end of the year then used to help discussions with the next class teacher.

Recording pupil progress takes place in a variety of ways - skills assessment, observation, focused activities, questioning and discussion. These observations/records inform future planning and enable staff to meet individual children's needs. They are also the basis for reporting to parents.

Reporting to parents takes place through informal discussions, face to face contact and at Parents Evenings which take place in the Autumn and Spring terms and an open afternoon in the summer term, where parents are invited into school to discuss their child's achievements, interests and experiences, and also annually through a written report which is given to parents at the same time as reports are sent home throughout the school.

Regular monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum takes place within the Reception class. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are undertaken by the senior management team.

Liaison with other agencies

When it is necessary to seek advice from other professionals the school SENCO will find the relevant professional and contact them to arrange a visit to school to make an observation or assessment of a child.

Staff Development

Staff in the Reception Class attend CPD throughout the year as appropriate to their professional development wants and needs. Where appropriate, training is conducted in school for the benefit of all staff.

The identification of training needs for teaching and non-teaching staff will take place through Performance Management.

Reviewing the Early Years policy.

The head teacher, staff and governors will review this policy on an annual basis to ensure it is implemented appropriately and to take account of changing circumstances.

| Review Date | Signature | Position |
|-------------|-----------|---|
| | | Head Governors' representative EY co-ordinator |

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Signed:

Date: