

Church Lench C.E First School

Early Years Policy

Responsibility, Compassion, Hope, Perseverance, Thankfulness

Our Early Years Foundation Stage policy describes the framework upon which the practice and philosophy of the Early Years at Church Lench C.E First School is based. This policy works in conjunction with the whole school policies of Church Lench CE First School.

Our Philosophy

At the heart of the Early Years Foundation Stage at Church Lench C.E First School are our children. We value each individual and their personalised learning journey. We recognise that to enable our learners to thrive and enjoy their learning we must begin with each child's unique starting point, and then inspire, challenge and support their learning laying firm foundations for all future learning to build upon. Our core Christian values of Responsibility, Compassion, Hope, Perseverance and Thankfulness are carefully interwoven into all curriculum areas and our behaviour policy to ensure children understand their importance in everyday life.

At Church Lench CE First School we have high expectations. We value play and first-hand experience and design our creative curriculum around the needs and interests of our young learners to ensure that learning and teaching are purposeful, meaningful and memorable. We recognise our role in enabling our learners to develop emotionally, socially, physically, creatively, and intellectually and strive to provide a nurturing and exciting environment for learning which builds confidence, independence and curiosity.

Our Aims and Principles

We believe that the development of the whole child is crucial and that our provision underpins future attitudes towards learning. At Church Lench CE First School we strive to:

- Provide a happy, caring, safe and secure environment for learning, which meets the individual needs and interests of the children.
- Ensure that all children feel valued and respected
- Develop warm and secure relationships between children and adults.
- Provide a high-quality curriculum in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage document
- Support children in becoming aware of moral and social values and responsibilities.

- Encourage active learning through first hand experiences both in indoor and outdoor play, and through both verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Encourage children to become self-motivated, confident and independent learners with a positive attitude to learning and self-discipline.
- Value the cultural diversity within our school, community and the wider world.
- Foster positive home school links and share a common sense of purpose with parents.

Our Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

High quality learning and teaching within Church Lench C.E First School ensures that:

- Our children are at the centre of decisions about the curriculum.
- The curriculum reflects the way that young children learn, through purposeful and well-planned play and first-hand experiences.
- We take account of children's previous learning and experiences and ensure that next steps in learning build upon these.
- The curriculum is planned to ensure continuity and progression in the development of key skills.
- The environment, both indoors and outdoors, is well planned and well-resourced to promote independence.
- Children's learning is 'topic based' and enables them to make links throughout all areas of learning.
- Practitioners work in partnership with parents and colleagues.
- All practitioners have high expectations of all children.
- Practitioners understand how children learn and the developmental stages of growth and learning.
- Children enjoy learning.

Our creative curriculum is supported by the statutory and non-statutory guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage. (Department for Education and Skills). Our Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum supports Learning and Development within 7 main curriculum areas;

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Communication and Language
3. Physical Development
4. Literacy
5. Mathematics
6. Understanding the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

Planning for Learning and Teaching also reflects characteristics of effective learning which are essential for children's development. These are:

- 1) Playing and Exploring – Engagement
- 2) Active Learning – Motivation
- 3) Creating and Thinking Critically – Thinking

Assessment

We believe that assessment is a key element in the success of a child's learning journey and this is a crucial part of the planning and learning cycle. Staff use Early Years Outcomes both formatively and summatively to identify what children know and can do and what needs to be done next in order to move their learning forward. Staff use observations of children's learning to support the judgements they make. Observations are carried out in both planned and spontaneous contexts. Our assessment tool 'Tapestry' is shared with parents online to establish strong communication links between home and school.

Assessing against the Early Learning Goals

In Reception it is a statutory requirement to assess each child against the Early Learning Goals (from The Early Years Outcomes document) at the end of the Reception Year. Children are assessed at the end of the Reception Year as to being –Not Expected (working towards the Early Learning Goal) or Expected (have achieved the Early Learning Goal).

Continuous assessments are carried out to monitor children's learning and progress and these are formalised and discussed with the Head Teacher each term. Observations and learning journeys are used continuously to support the assessment process using Tapestry and are shared with parents.

We value the contribution of Parents and Carers in the assessment process. Staff are readily available at the beginning and end of each school day for questions and discussions. Parents are invited to share and comment on their child's learning journeys and upload their own observations from home. The class teacher shares children's current learning through half termly topic letters and work on the website class page. Parents also have termly consultations to review their child's learning and progress. A written report explaining the characteristics of learning along with the learning journey on a disc is sent out to all parents and at the end of the Reception year.

Organisation

Reception

At Church Lench CE First school we can allocate 15 children in the Reception year and this is a mixed age class with Year 1. The total of children in this class will depend on the number of children who apply for a place. The class has 2 teachers who share the weekly hours and two or more part time teaching assistants depending on the needs of the cohort. Class 1 is housed within the main school building, with a separate indoor classroom and an outdoor classroom. Class 1 has its own children's toilet facilities.

The style of learning and teaching and organisation of the curriculum changes in line with the development needs and interests of the current cohort and in line with recent educational developments. Staff plan for focus learning and child-initiated opportunities and organise free flow provision daily.

The Class One team plans weekly and work alongside the rest of the school in its curriculum; meeting all staff for long term planning

The Learning Environment

The Early Years Foundation Stage learning environment at Church Lench C.E First School is designed around the developing needs of the children. The free flow arrangements enable children to make choices in the context for their learning and the environment is adapted so to enable staff to respond to developing interests and themes. Areas for learning within the classroom are demarcated to support children in making choices. Many resources are freely accessible and clearly labeled to enable children to develop independence skills.

The Indoor Environment can include:

A writing area, computers and interactive whiteboard, creative/craft area, construction area, small world tuff trays, a reading corner, fine motor area and a role play area.

The Outdoor Environment can include

Sand/ water trays, outdoor painting, a play centre, class vegetable and flower beds, mud kitchen, a 'help yourself' gross motor area, construction, raised decking stage, small world play and a reading shed. The outdoor area is comprised of both hard areas (slabbing and decking) and flower beds.

Transitions

Establishing smooth and successful transitions into and out of the Early Years Foundation Stage is fundamental at our school. Successful transitions are facilitated by;

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- Induction Meetings – parents / carers and school staff.
- Providing induction information booklets to Reception parents and carers.
- Stay and Play sessions for pre- school children and their staff – families and children becoming familiar with the Reception setting during the summer prior to starting in Reception.
- Liaison with outside agencies and previous settings.
- A part time induction into Reception at the beginning of each year.
- Staff working upon Nursery and Early Years outcomes/ planning.
- Taster sessions with forthcoming year group, children and staff, new setting etc.

Role of the EYFS teacher

- To oversee and support the delivery of Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and to ensure progression and development.
- To monitor planning and quality of delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.
- To keep abreast of developments within Early Years and carry out INSET when required.
- To analyse assessment data to inform learning and teaching within the Early Years
- Identify key areas for development – implement annual action plans, reviewing and evaluating progress and developments.
- To perform baseline assessments at the beginning of the school year.
- To keep governors informed of developments.
- To arrange monitoring visits with the EYFS governor.

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H Pratley EYFS leader
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