



EYFS Policy

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1. Introduction

At Flax Bourton we strongly believe that Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their schooling. It is a holistic education that encompasses all learning and development. This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Flax Bourton Primary School. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of practitioners working in the EYFS setting, including both teaching and non-teaching adults. In the policy the term ‘setting’ refers to the Early Years educational provision at Flax Bourton Primary School. EYFS is available to children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old. These children are in the final year of the EYFS. In the policy the term ‘practitioner’ refers to the members of staff working with children within the setting.

2. Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four principles, these are the foundation of our provision:

1. A unique child – Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
2. Positive relationships – Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
3. Enabling environments – 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 carers.
4. Learning and developing – Children develop and learn in different ways. The statutory framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

In the EYFS setting at Flax Bourton C of E Primary School we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential. We ensure that the ***Seven key features of effective practice*** in the ‘Development

Matters' guidance is the basis of all we do. We aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special by providing the ***best for every child***
- Work in close ***partnership with parents*** to enable children to transition into school and flourish throughout the year.
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates - physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally.
- ***Providing high quality care*** in a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued by the practitioners looking after them.
- Creating a ***clearly planned curriculum of what we want the children to know***.
- ***Assessing*** children in their play ***to check what they have learnt*** and to support planning next steps.
- Having a ***pedagogy that enables children to learn***.
- Fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community.
- Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways.
- Encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes.
- Developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously.
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions which may differ to their own.
- Understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development.
- Providing learning experiences in play which reflect children's personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn.
- Providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.
- Providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, inside and outside.
- Develop ***executive function and self-regulation skills*** to enable children to plan, focus attention, remember instructions, and juggle multiple tasks successfully.
- To prepare the children for 'school readiness' and the transition into KS1 and the National Curriculum.

3. The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

Teaching in the EYFS setting at Flax Bourton C of E Primary School is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory document '2021 Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.' This document brings together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through the **'Characteristics of effective learning'** which are:

1. Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
2. Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
3. Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

We actively promote the effective learning characteristics, as we strongly feel that these enable our children to become effective learners.

Our curriculum covers all 7 areas listed in the Foundation Stage Profile:

1. Communication and Language
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
4. Literacy

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5. Mathematics
6. Understanding of the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

These 'Areas of Learning and Development' address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all Areas of Learning and Development are all closely interlinked. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum which allows children to make lots of links between what they are learning. All Areas of Learning and Development are given equal weighting and value.

4. Active Learning through Play

At Flax Bourton C of E Primary School, we recognise that young children learn best when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical and 'hands on' as possible. We also strive to challenge our higher attaining pupils who are already showing signs of 'school readiness.' We recognise the importance of having a balance of child initiated and adult led learning. Play is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. It is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

In the EYFS setting at Flax Bourton C of E Primary School practitioners provide both structured and unstructured play and learning opportunities inside and outside of the classroom. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experiences which will support children to discover, explore, question, investigate, develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity, and help to make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. Play and structured activities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding. In providing these active learning opportunities we believe that we are promoting opportunities for children to develop their 'characteristics of an effective learner.'

5. Enabling Environment

At Flax Bourton C of E Primary School, we believe that a rich and varied environment supports children's learning and development. We strive to create an environment which gives children confidence to explore in a secure and safe, yet challenging space. All resources are clearly labelled with pictures, words and numbers to enable children to be independent in selecting their own resources. We display children's learning in the classroom and throughout the school as we believe this showcases their successes and enables them to take pride in their achievements. Our role play area and book corner are changed regularly to link with our learning and the children's interests. Our outdoor area is available to the children all year round and as wet weather clothing is part of our EYFS uniform the children can access this space and the amazing school grounds at all times of the year.

6. Assessment and Record Keeping

The class teacher completes statutory National Baseline test with every child during their first 6 weeks in school.

Ongoing assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of the EYFS setting at Flax Bourton Primary School. A record of each child's progress in all areas of their learning is recorded on our assessment data tracking system – Insight.

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The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' observations of children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child-initiated play. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally). Practitioners strive to carry out planned observations of individuals and groups of children regularly. They also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children's learning. Observations are discussed as a team and significant ones are recorded through photographs, videos & text using 'Tapestry,' an online learning journal. Parents are encouraged to upload observations from home and to also comment on observations made by practitioners. All practitioners are involved in observing children. Practitioners use observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children's attainment, needs, interests, and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps in their learning journey. These next steps are often shared with parents.

Other methods of assessing children in the EYFS setting include engaging alongside children in their play, annotation of children's written work and through talking with children about their play or task. Tapestry and Learning Diaries are a record of children's learning journey over the academic year in all Areas of Learning and Development of the EYFS Profile. Samples of children's work are gathered, along with photographic evidence and observations. There is continuous monitoring and assessment of each child's development using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. This is used to track individual progress in January and June (in line with LSP data requirements) Practitioners also meet with the SLT team 3 times a year for detailed Pupil Progress Meetings.

Practitioners spend all of Term One (September / October) observing and establishing a 'baseline' of what the children already know and can do, along with detailed records from Pre-School settings. These form the baseline and identify next steps in learning. The assessments are carried out using the 'Development Matters' guidance document during the children's first six weeks upon entering the setting. Transfer documents from previous settings also contribute to the baseline assessment. At the end of the year the profile provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements.

7. Planning

Our unique EYFS curriculum, which was written specifically for our setting provides a long-term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year. Medium term planning (topic webs) are created by the class teacher and they take into account the individual children's learning and developmental needs. All Areas of Learning and Development are planned for and available to access within the setting. The learning opportunities provided include a range of adult focused and child-initiated activities indoors and outdoors. Educational visits within the local community, further afield and visitors are also planned in to support children's learning and experiences. We use various schemes for some areas of learning: White Rose for Maths, Unlocking Letters and Sound for Phonics, Jigsaw for PSHE, Charanga for Music, Discovery RE and Understanding Christianity for RE.

8. Parents as Partners

At Flax Bourton C of E Primary School, we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents as highlighted by the EYFS framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. So, practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents. We value the role of parents as their child's primary educator. Through Tapestry, informal chats at the beginning and end of the day, home visits, All About Me books, practitioners enable parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics,

interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through Tapestry, termly Curriculum Webs, regular letters, e-mails, reading records and informal chats at the beginning and end of the day. We also provide suggestions through Tapestry, discussions and meetings on how parents can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been covered in the setting. Whole school newsletters are also sent home on a regular basis. Parents are invited to attend parents' evenings during the course of the academic year. The first of these takes place during the autumn term to allow practitioners and parents time to discuss how their child has settled into the school setting. Another parents' evening takes place during the spring term where practitioners will feedback on children's learning and development progress. Other opportunities for practitioners to share children's learning, development and well-being with parents include: Learning Diaries, End of year reports and Celebration assemblies where children's achievements are recognised.

Parents are also invited to get involved with school life. There are opportunities for them to help with activities such as educational visits and reading, as well as offering their particular skills (e.g. cooking, art, music) to support children's learning. Parents may be invited into the setting on other occasions such as open afternoons where children show them their work and special events such as Easter and Christmas. The setting has a friendly, open-door ethos and practitioners are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day. Parents are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have.

9. Admissions and Induction

Flax Bourton C of E Primary School provides full-time Early Years education for children in the Reception Year. This is for children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old.

In the summer term parents are invited into school to meet the setting practitioners and Head Teacher. At this meeting information regarding the induction process is shared. During this meeting they are introduced to other members of the school community (office staff, FBSA, school meals, school nurse.) There is also time for an informal chat and parent's questions. School information packs are distributed to parents at this meeting, detailing school routines and expectations. 'All About Me' induction packs are also given to parents as another way to support practitioner's knowledge and understanding of each individual child.

Before the children start in the setting, all are offered a series of visits during the summer term. The purpose of these initial visits is for the children to meet their new practitioners and start to become familiar with the setting environment. They are also invited to a picnic providing an opportunity for all families to join together.

Practitioners, with parental permission, will also go to visit the children in their current pre-school / nursery setting. The aim of these visits is to support practitioners in developing their knowledge and understanding of each child in order to make the transition period to Flax Bourton C of E Primary School as smooth as possible.

In September practitioners also visit children in their homes, we receive a huge amount of positive feedback on this experience and it is another opportunity for practitioners to get to know 'the whole child.'

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When starting school in September children attend on a short part time basis (usually 2 weeks) before attending the setting full-time, although parents can opt for their child to attend part time should they see fit. If a child is already 5 in this period of time, then parents have the choice to request full time schooling.

Parents are invited to an information evening early in September where practitioners share information about the EYFS at Flax Bourton C of E Primary School. During this meeting information is shared about: how the school day runs, how we observe, reporting to parents, how parents can help, Tapestry, Learning Diaries, and curriculum webs. This meeting is also an opportunity for parents to ask further questions now that their child has settled into school.

Every effort is made to make children feel safe, secure and happy. There is a relaxed and open ethos in the setting. Established routines, a calm atmosphere and encouraging talk are some of the strategies practitioners use to maintain children's positive feelings about school.

10. Equal Opportunities

All practitioners at Flax Bourton C of E Primary School have a responsibility to maintain positive attitudes to diversity and difference, ensuring that inclusive practice is delivered in the EYFS setting. All children, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture or religion, and social circumstances, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development within the EYFS setting at Flax Bourton Primary School. *See Single Equalities Scheme for more information.*

11. Special Educational Needs

See Special Educational Needs Policy.

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