Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

FRINGFORD C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Statutory framework for the Early years foundation stage – September 2021.

3. Structure of the EYFS

Robin class admits children in the final year of EYFS, known as Reception Year (YR). The children are aged 4-5 years. Although we do not have an attached nursery, we foster very close links with our pre-school setting, Shelswell & Fringford Pre-School, who share our site. Many children join us directly from the pre-school and we encourage visits and joint activities throughout the year preceding admission to mainstream school. We admit a maximum of 15 children in September and offer full-time schooling, with a breakfast club and after-school provision available.

Robin class is led by two teachers, Vanessa Benjamin-Smith and Kath Ward, each working part of the week. Support is provided by 2 teaching assistants, Julie Yarnold (Monday – Thursday) and Emma Millward (Fridays). Vanessa Benjamin-Smith is also the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for the whole school.

4. Curriculum

Robins class follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 statutory framework.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Planning

The class teacher plans activities and experiences for children that enable them to "develop their personalities, talents and abilities irrespective of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities or gender." (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)

We believe that children are ready, able and eager to learn, alongside and in collaboration with others. We also recognise that development is not automatic but is dependent on children having opportunities to flourish in enabling environments with the support of expert adults who know them well and understand their distinctive backgrounds and learning styles.

We embrace the themes and principles of the EYFS. We believe that:

- Each child is unique. They are constantly learning and can be capable, resilient and confident.
- Children learn to be strong through engaging in positive, supportive relationships with others.
- The enabling environment is one that is flexible and responsive to each child. Teachers, parents and carers have a respectful and supportive relationship.
- Children learn in different ways. Education and care are inter-dependent. We nurture the whole child, intellectually, morally, spiritually and physically.

With this in mind, we embed 'In the moment planning', so that children are able to contribute fully to, and take ownership of, the learning environment.

All planning takes into account the need to promote 'Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL). This refers to the way in which children engage with other people and the environment and encompasses 'engagement' – how children find out and explore, 'motivation' – how children concentrate and persevere, and 'thinking' – how they make links and demonstrate creativity.

Teaching

We know that high quality play, in which children are deeply engaged, is crucial to well-being and in turn, this enhances learning and development. We aim for every interaction to be effective so that we maximise the 'teachable moments'. (Learning, Playing and Interacting, DCSF, 2009).

In our environment, adults observe children closely, constantly assessing and monitoring progression and planning for next steps. We are always scaffolding learning by questioning, modelling, demonstrating, assisting, wondering, facilitating, mediating and monitoring. We play alongside children and share their learning so that they can engage in authentic dialogue and discussion. We encourage children to take the lead and choose their activities. We provide the time and space for them to make decisions, resolve conflicts, solve problems and bounce back after difficulties. We are constantly on the lookout for misunderstandings and confusion so that we can intervene if learning difficulties arise. If it seems that children are experiencing more than usual difficulties, we act quickly to seek advice and find ways to minimize barriers.

We know that young children do not compartmentalise their learning into specific areas but we also aim to ensure that children participate in challenging, meaningful activities that promote learning ***across the entire curriculum.*** *This means that there are times when adults lead activities and these times do gradually increase throughout the school year. This ensures that children develop the required skills in literacy and maths and also helps the children manage transition to a more formal learning environment in year 1.*

5. Assessment

Continuous assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. In Robins class, the first few weeks of the academic year and the first week of each new term will always be spent making observations so that we establish the starting points for every child. Especially after holidays, children can forget things and need a little time to settle back into the school routine. We welcome input from parents and carers so that we build up the fullest picture of each child.

At the beginning of the school year, we carry out the formal NFER baseline assessment. We also make more 'natural' observations by setting up play activities that enable adults to establish a fuller, more holistic picture of each child. We might record observations through brief notes and photos, through video recording and focus child commentaries but we ensure that adults are not distracted from supporting children by the need to compile folders of evidence. We monitor progress continuously using the non-statutory Development Matters guidance (2021). A summary of our observations is compiled each term and shared at teacher-parent/carer consultation meetings.

At the end of the year, we complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels (‘emerging’)

The results of the profile are shared with parents and carers and next steps are highlighted for the transition to year 1.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and carers.

Parents and carers are kept up to date with their child’s progress and development through constant dialogue. We operate an ‘open door’ practice and warmly welcome input from all adults involved with the child. Parents can communicate with the class teacher directly on arrival and at the end of the day and termly consultation meetings are held either virtually or in person.

Google classroom and/or Tapestry will be used to provide remote learning activities and advice where necessary, in the case of any school closures.

The class teachers are the ‘key person’ for all children. The class teachers should also be the first point of contact for anybody who has concerns about a child’s learning needs as they can then coordinate additional support or access specialist advice.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school safeguarding policy. The class teacher, Vanessa Benjamin-Smith, is also the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and undergoes regular training.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the EYFS lead annually.

This policy will be approved by the Head Teacher annually.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

SIGNATURE: Vanessa Benjamin-Smith (class teacher/EYFS lead/DDSL)

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SIGNATURE: Franco Pastore (Head)

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SIGNATURE: Meryl Daniell (Chair of Governors)

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SEPTEMBER 2023

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy