



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

<b>Responsible Committee</b>	<b>School Improvement Workgroup</b>
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<b>Signed on behalf of the Governing Body</b>	
<b>Print name</b>	



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2025

Guidelines for Teaching and Learning in the Foundation Stage

The Foundation Stage is an important stage of development for children, giving them the building blocks for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of the children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

As outlined in the EYFS: ***'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.'***

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy: Admissions Guidelines, Health and Safety Policy, Equal Objectives and Plan; Behaviour Policy; Child protection and Safeguarding, Assessment and Curriculum.

### Aims

- To provide a secure environment where all children have the right to feel safe and happy.
- To provide a stimulating and engaging environment where learning is enjoyable and purposeful in developing child's skills.
- To encourage the children to develop positive relationships with their peers and adults.
- To provide a well-balanced curriculum for each child to develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually.
- To observe the children's interests to implement our future planning.
- To encourage all children to become independent learners.
- To provide equal opportunities for all children to develop to their full potential and to encourage children to be respectful and appreciative of others.
- To establish and maintain a partnership with parents to support the education of their children.

### The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework

Teaching in the EYFS is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory document, 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'. This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through four themes:

- Every child is a unique child, constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;

The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes.

- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers;
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

### **Features of effective practice**

At Chamberbury Primary School, we follow the development matters non-statutory guidance which details the seven features of effective practice:

#### *1. The best for every child*

- All children deserve to have an equal chance of success.
- High-quality early education is good for all children. It is especially important for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- When they start school, children from disadvantaged backgrounds are, on average, 4 months behind their peers. We need to do more to narrow that gap.
- Children who have lived through difficult experiences can begin to grow stronger when they experience high quality early education and care.
- High-quality early education and care is inclusive. Children's special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. All children promptly receive any extra help they need, so they can progress well in their learning.

#### *2. High-quality care*

- The child's experience must always be central to the thinking of every practitioner.
- Babies, toddlers and young children thrive when they are loved and well cared for.
- High-quality care is consistent. Every practitioner needs to enjoy spending time with young children.
- Effective practitioners are responsive to children and babies. They notice when a baby looks towards them and gurgles and respond with pleasure.
- Practitioners understand that toddlers are learning to be independent, so they will sometimes get frustrated.
- Practitioners know that starting school, and all the other transitions in the early years, are big steps for small children.

#### *3. The curriculum: what we want children to learn*

- The curriculum is a top-level plan of everything the early years setting wants the children to learn.
- Planning to help every child to develop their language is vital.
- The curriculum needs to be ambitious. Careful sequencing will help children to build their learning over time.
- Young children's learning is often driven by their interests. Plans need to be flexible.
- Babies and young children do not develop in a fixed way. Their development is like a spider's web with many strands, not a straight line.

Depth in early learning is much more important than covering lots of things in a superficial way.

#### *4. Pedagogy: helping children to learn*

- Children are powerful learners. Every child can make progress in their learning, with the right help.
- Effective pedagogy is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other, and through guided learning and direct teaching.
- Practitioners carefully organise enabling environments for high-quality play. Sometimes, they make time and space available for children to invent their own play. Sometimes, they join in to sensitively support and extend children's learning.
- Children in the early years also learn through group work, when practitioners guide their learning.
- Older children need more of this guided learning.
- A well-planned learning environment, indoors and outside, is an important aspect of pedagogy.

#### *5. Assessment: checking what children have learnt*

- Assessment is about noticing what children can do and what they know. It is not about lots of data and evidence.
- Effective assessment requires practitioners to understand child development. Practitioners also need to be clear about what they want children to know and be able to do.
- Accurate assessment can highlight whether a child has a special educational need and needs extra help.
- Before assessing children, it's a good idea to think about whether the assessments will be useful.
- Assessment should not take practitioners away from the children for long periods of time.

#### *6. Self-regulation and executive function*

- Executive function includes the child's ability to: – hold information in mind – focus their attention – think flexibly – inhibit impulsive behaviour.
- These abilities contribute to the child's growing ability to self-regulate: – concentrate their thinking – plan what to do next – monitor what they are doing and adapt – regulate strong feelings – be patient for what they want – bounce back when things get difficult.
- Language development is central to self-regulation: children use language to guide their actions and plans. Pretend play gives many opportunities for children to focus their thinking, persist and plan ahead.

#### *7. Partnership with parents*

- It is important for parents and early years settings to have a strong and respectful partnership. This sets the scene for children to thrive in the early years.

- This includes listening regularly to parents and giving parents clear information about their children’s progress.
- The help that parents give their children at home has a very significant impact on their learning.
- Some children get much less support for their learning at home than others. By knowing and understanding all the children and their families, settings can offer extra help to those who need it most.
- It is important to encourage all parents to chat, play and read with their children. We believe that the development of children’s spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development and that children’s personal, social and emotional development is crucial for children to lead healthy happy lives and is fundamental to their cognitive development.

## **Our Curriculum**

### **Vision**

At Chambersbury Primary School we want children in Early Years to be happy, confident, independent individuals, with a love for learning. We provide a challenging, fun and safe environment to enable each child to reach their potential. We create exciting and engaging opportunities for children to learn through play both inside and outside the classroom. The relationships we build are essential and we ensure that we work together closely with parents/carers to ensure the very best start for each child as they become part of our ‘Chambersbury Family’. We believe that high quality adult interactions and modelling learning are the key to developing curious young minds. We are laying the foundations to strive for all children at our school to become “change-makers” and “assets” in the community, society and world they live in.

### **Intent**

Our Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum has been designed focusing on the needs and wishes of our children and community. We surveyed Governors, Staff and Parents of our school to find out what was important for the children in Chambersbury. We found the key themes were:

- Happiness and enjoyment
- Learning through children’s interests
- Providing extra-curricular and first-hand experiences
- Becoming socially and emotionally secure
- Importance of outdoor learning
- Physical activities to develop a healthy body.
- Breaking down stereotypes

We have built a curriculum that provided they key experiences and learning that children need to continue to be a life-long learners.

## **Implementation**

Our curriculum follows the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2021 and we use the Development Matters Statements and Early Learning Goals to assess the children's achievements.

The transition process at Chambersbury is carefully planned. We take into account children's individual needs, interests and work together with both previous settings and parents/carers to ensure a smooth transition to school.

We work closely to develop children's next steps and strive to challenge children to become independent and resilient learners. The Characteristics of Effective Learning are modelled and promoted by the adults to help children with how to learn effectively.

All EYFS practitioners work together to provide an engaging, hands-on and fun activities to promote learning in all of the key areas of learning.

### **-Communication and Language Development**

Children's communication and language development unpins all other areas of learning. We work to develop children's vocabulary in a language rich environment. The use of high quality text and songs are important tools to unlock effective communication and language. We provide lots of opportunities for purposeful talk and promote two way conversations and interactions. We use Wellcomm, Elkan and work with outside agencies such as SALT to help children to develop effective communication skills.

### **- Personal Social and Emotional Development**

Happiness and wellbeing is key for our children. We provide a warm, friendly environment to ensure that children feel happy relaxed and are able to form strong relationships with others. We provide opportunities for children to express themselves effectively and teach them to be able to self-regulate their own feelings through Zones of Regulation. We work together with children in their independent play as well as modelling different social situations and co-operative play to help children understand how to get along with others. We celebrate differences and promote understanding of different cultures, beliefs, abilities and families. We will work to break down stereotypes and encourage a 'can do' attitude.

### **-Physical Development**

We teach the importance of healthy bodies and healthy minds. There are opportunities for children to develop their fine and gross motor skills on a daily basis through PE, outdoor learning, clubs, dough gym and busy fingers activities. We promote independence with children's self-care skills and the importance of a healthy diet.

### **- Literacy**

We promote a life-long love of books and reading through quality texts. We learn through a range of books that teach children about the world around them and give them real life experiences related to these books and stories. We ensure children have the opportunity to become story tellers by providing ways to explore books through drama, retelling stories and talking about books, settings and different characters. We have daily phonics sessions help children to develop the keys skills they need to gain letter and sound correspondence and gain the foundations of reading and writing. We ensure that children have a range of opportunities to explore mark making and writing to help them, providing purposeful writing opportunities linked to the topics we are learning as well as the children's interests.

### **-Mathematics**

We provide children with the foundations they need to succeed in mathematics. We teach the children to have a deep understand of number to 10 through a range of engaging and hands on experiences to understand numbers and counting. We develop children's spatial and reasoning skill with a focus on noticing patterns and shape, space and measures.

### **-Understanding the World**

We want children to have an understanding of the world around them and their part in it. We have carefully planned a range of different real-life experiences and trips to help children understand the world around them including nature, different environments, processes and changes. We give them opportunities through books and stories to explore and compare the past and present as well as learning about how other people live in different cultures and countries. We build on children's knowledge of the world around them, by extending vocabulary and questioning. We live in a world where technology is constantly developing and want to engage children in this by giving them opportunities to use a range of technology.

### **-Expressive Art and Design**

We want to ignite children's imagination and creativity. We teach children a range of skills that can be used to design, make and be creative in their own ways. They are taught to use a range of different media and materials and how to apply these. Music is a key part of our day to day and helps to children to learn across all of the areas of learning. Through art and design we teach the children about different cultures and people, as well as self-expression.

*'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities.'*

Time is carefully managed to ensure there is a balance between children having the time and space to engage in their own child-initiated learning and activities which are planned and led by adults. During child-initiated learning, the early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children to take their learning forward, believing that play is an effective vehicle through which children can

acquire, practise, rehearse knowledge and skills. Our carefully planned learning environment provides open-ended provocation and resources to allow children to practise, rehearse and develop the skills they have been taught and to pursue their own interests.

### **Impact**

By the time children leave the Foundation Stage at Chambersbury Primary School they will be ready for the next stage in their learning. They will be able to communicate effectively and express themselves in a range of ways, having a positive attitude to learning. They will have built those key foundation blocks across the areas of development that will ensure that they continue to build on, moving forward as life-long learners.

### **Observation and Assessment**

At Chambersbury Primary School we follow The Development Matters, Non-statutory curriculum guidance early years foundation stage September 2023. It states:

- Assessment is about noticing what children can do and what they know. It is not about lots of data and evidence.
- Effective assessment requires practitioners to understand child development. Practitioners also need to be clear about what they want children to know and be able to do.
- Accurate assessment can highlight whether a child has a special educational need and needs extra help.
- Before assessing children, it's a good idea to think about whether the assessments will be useful.
- Assessment should not take practitioners away from the children for long periods of time.' The Statutory Framework states that 'practitioners are not required to prove this through collection of any physical evidence'.

Our EYFS team will work with parents and previous settings to ensure a smooth transition into school. We work with settings to encourage the completion of the Hertfordshire Unique child transition level of need tool and transition records. These are used to identify vulnerable children and barriers to learning. Upon entry to Reception, staff will complete the **Statutory National Baseline Assessment (RBA)** within the first 6 weeks of starting school. The first weeks of school are spent getting to know the children and ensuring that they feel happy and secure. Prior to starting school, we will gather and collate evidence of development and learning from a range of sources passed up from previous settings, direct observation and liaison with parents. Information gathered from previous settings will be used where practitioners are confident this triangulates what has been observed in class. Children are assessed in number recognition and letter sound recognition and early phonic skills. This information is used to inform planning.

Assessment on Entry to our setting:

EXS – a child is considered to be developing at the expected stage if they are working consistently and in a range of different contexts within the 3-4-year-old age band using a 'best fit' judgement.

WTS – a child is considered to be working towards age expectations if they are demonstrating typical behaviours within the 3-4-year-old age band

PRE – a child is considered to be working pre year group curriculum.

The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' informal observations of children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child-initiated play. It is vital that practitioners spend quality time interacting and extending the children's experiences and learning rather than making written notes and observations. Practitioners use their knowledge of the children to support their individual learning needs.

As practitioners, we use our knowledge of the children and child development to quickly identify opportunities to provide support and challenge. At the end of the academic year we submit the statutory assessment against the Early Learning Goals. The parents and guardians are given the opportunity to meet termly with the Foundation Stage Team. We provide a written summary in relation to the children's Early Learning Goals and the Characteristics of Effective Learning to parents and guardians at the end of the academic year. The Early Years team meet to discuss children's progress and plan future learning.

### **Key Person**

The key person approach is aimed at enabling and supporting close attachments between children and practitioners. Attachment provides a sense of security so that children can become confident, independent and capable young learners.

### **Safety**

The children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum, which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety and wellbeing. We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of fruit and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident. We adhere to the statutory welfare requirements as detailed in the Early Years Foundation stage documentation.

### **Independence**

We aim for all our children to be self-sufficient and independent learners. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their own belongings including their coats and personal hygiene. Our curriculum is designed to promote independence and responsibility. Children learn to select the resources and equipment they need, use them safely and tidy away after themselves.

### **Inclusion**

We value all our children as individuals at Chambersbury Primary School, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

### **Parents as Partners and the Wider context**

We strive to create and maintain positive partnerships with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning and well-being. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education. Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

### **The Induction Process**

Parents of new Reception Year children are invited to a meeting during the summer term to support with the transition process and complete the Hertfordshire Unique Child Transition Level of Need Tool.

During this meeting, parents are informed about the child's first year at Chambersbury Primary School and the transition process. They are given the opportunity to visit the classroom and ask questions of staff, parents and governors. In addition to this, during the Summer Term, prior to starting school in the following September, the following visits are conducted:

- Foundation stage staff will visit pre-school providers and settings from which September's intake will be taken;
- Each child attends a stay and play session as well as the transition morning (without parents/carers) to familiarise themselves with the setting;
- Additional transition/induction arrangements are made for children identified as having a higher level of need.
- We offer home visits in September where the foundation staff will visit their child in their home environment.

### **Transitions**

We liaise with parents and the previous settings/provider to ensure a smooth transition into our school. We encourage the previous settings and parents to share the children's assessment records and learning journeys with us as part of our baseline assessment procedures. In the final term, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.