

# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



## Perton Primary Academy

Effective from 1st September 2012

Reviewed – September 2015, Sept 16, Sept 18, Sept 19



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

*"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."* DfE Statutory Framework for EYFS 2017"

### **Aim:**

At Perton Primary Academy, in Acorns Nursery and in Reception we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all of our children, giving them a strong foundation for their future learning.

We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent learners.

We value the individual child and work alongside parents and carers to meet children's individual needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

### **Principles:**

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- 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/or carers.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

### **Practice: We...**

- Provide a balanced Early Years curriculum, following 'Development Matters', which covers the seven areas of development, using play as the vehicle for learning.
- Follow the "Planning in the moment" pedagogy in Acorns Nursery, with Reception following a graduated approach, balanced with adult-led teaching inputs, to ensure full curriculum coverage.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Provide early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context.
- Work in partnership with LST, Local Support Team, where an 'Early Help Assessment' is agreed with parents.

- Plan challenging and enjoyable learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in a range of activities that are based upon their needs and/or interests.
- Have a **key-carer approach** to develop close relationships with individual children.
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out.

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

At Perton Primary Academy we support children in using the following three essential characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These are;

- **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

**Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things. (DfE Statutory Framework for EYFS 2017)

### **Foundation Stage Curriculum**

*"Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development."* (DfE Statutory Framework for EYFS 2017)

We offer an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seventeen areas of learning to enable children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals. All the seventeen areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

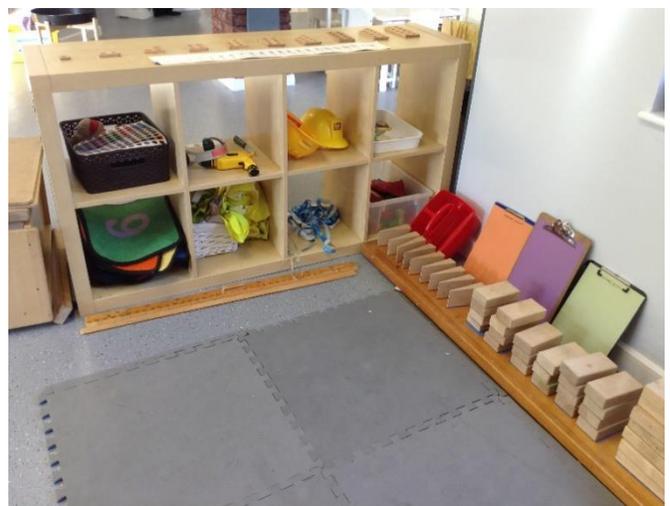
Three **Prime** areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Teaching and learning in EYFS is also based upon four **Specific** areas. Through these, the three Prime areas are further strengthened and applied.

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

# An Enabling indoor Environment





The environment supports children to be fully engaged in purposeful play of their own choice and interest. As with the outdoor area, the indoor area allows for learning in all areas of development, however, the two areas do not mirror each other. We encourage calm and quiet learning indoors where children can pursue activities using small equipment and resources.

In the EYFS, the children have maximum opportunity to choose where to go and what to do. They initiate their own learning and adults join them and support them in their pursuits. In order to support genuine choice there is a **workshop style environment** set up in Nursery and Reception. The resources are available and accessible to the children at all times but nothing is set out. The areas are clear, stocked and tidy at the start of the day; tables and floor space are free of equipment but the resources are available next to these areas. This allows **the children to be in control of their learning**. They are able to select the area in which to play, the resources to use in that area and what to do with them. We talk about and review the activities together. We aim to have appropriate areas with high quality open-ended resources.

We regularly review the learning environment using Mini-ECERS Audits, to see if all areas have appropriate resources and allow optimum access so that changes can be made as necessary.

We combine the creative area and the 'writing area' so that children can combine designing, making and writing, as well as providing mark-making equipment in all areas. Children experience

Mathematics in almost all areas of the indoor classroom and we ensure that there is equipment (including Numicon) to facilitate this. As the children select and access resources themselves, they know where they are from and where to put them back when they have finished with them or at the end of session.

We review our provision in terms of '**levels of involvement**'. If an area or a resource is not engaging children in purposeful play then we remove it or change it. Areas that deliver the highest levels of involvement are the role-play areas, creative area, small blocks, sand, water, playdough and small world equipment including cars and dinosaurs. We always ensure that there is a 'home corner' as this is what is familiar to the children. Other role-play is set up as and when an interest emerges e.g. travel agents, vets.

The curriculum is delivered using a **play-based approach** as outlined by the EYFS. Learning experiences in each area are implemented through planned, purposeful play activities and through a combination of both adult-led and child-initiated activities.

In our setting, there is a balance between children having time and space to engage in child-initiated learning and adult inputs. During this time, early years practitioners interact and observe children to challenge them and develop their understanding through their play. Practitioners make observations of the children using **Tapestry software** to record evidence on iPads.

#### **'In the Moment' Planning.**

*"Babies and young Children ... are experiencing and learning in the here and now, not storing up their questions until tomorrow or next week. It is in that moment of curiosity, puzzlement, effort or interest – the 'teachable moment' – that the skilful adult makes a difference."*

(National Strategies Learning Playing and Interacting.)

Our practitioners continually plan 'In the Moment'. Each time they interact with a child they are observing, assessing, planning for and responding to that individual child to move the learning on in that moment. The written account of these interactions becomes a 'Learning Journey'. This approach leads to deep level learning and wonderful surprises occur daily.

We work in this way because high-level involvement occurs in child-initiated activity. When children show high levels of involvement, that is when their progress and development is occurring - when the brain is at its most active. We believe that high-level involvement occurs most when children are able to pursue their own interests in an enabling environment supported by skilful staff.

As a team, we assess children's progress using the Development Matters framework and within this promote the Characteristics of Effective Learning. The '**Rhythm of the Day**') maps out the structure of the day's activities. (See Management Folders for details). Children are offered opportunities relating to seasonal events, special days or religious festivals. Through these open-ended 'provision enhancements', we encourage children to access an activity or an area which allows flexibility for children's interests to be included and valued as part of the learning throughout the year.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in Nursery will initially focus on the three Prime areas, as they form the basis for successful learning in the other four Specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop to learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years at Perton Primary Academy.

**Daily phonics sessions** are planned using the 'Read, Write, Inc' systematic and synthetic approach. Children are taught in differentiated groups and assessed at the end of each stage. Reading books correspond to the children's phonics stages.

**Speech and Language:** In Nursery, children are screened termly using the WellComm Speech and Language toolkit to assess their receptive and expressive language. Throughout EYFS, interventions are delivered for their specific stage of development in small groups.

**Makaton:** Staff are trained to use signs and symbols to help children communicate and to support their language development.

**Relax Kids:** Mindfulness exercises are used to support children in managing their feelings and emotions and to promote their well-being.

**Religious Education :** RE is offered through various themes and stories about Special People, and Celebrations throughout the year.

### **Observation and Assessment**

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's development and learning. We record our observations on iPads using Tapestry EYFS software. All EYFS staff make observations of children, as do any cover staff. Observations of children's significant Learning moments are recorded and collated which create children's Online individual Learning Journeys.

Work samples that children complete during child-initiated time (e.g. creative work or a piece of writing) are also included in Learning Journeys. In both settings, children are selected as the 'focus children' for the following week. These children are given a form to take home for parents to complete – asking about current interests of the child, any special events in the family and any questions the parents may have. The focus children then have planned observations for the week. Any gaps in their learning and development will be highlighted. These gaps are informed using Tapestry, discussed with EYFS staff and Next Steps planned. Significant observations of other children continue throughout the week.

In the final term of Nursery and Reception, we provide parents with an Annual Report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and on the Characteristics of learning.

### **Safety and welfare**

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We educate children on safe boundaries and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to

help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children (See Safeguarding Policy).

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them." (*DfE Statutory Framework for EYFS 2017*)

At Perton Primary Academy we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years -Revised.

There are clear procedures for assessing risk (see Health & Safety Policy and whole school risk assessment procedures) for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In addition to this, we follow the following guidance for the EYFS:

- The practitioners will ensure daily risk assessments of the premises indoor and out, outings and other activities are conducted to identify any hazards or risks and that actions are taken to minimise risks.
- Any accidents or incidents will be recorded and monitored to identify further steps to be taken.
- Children are encouraged to manage their own risks in activities and to identify what might happen, and what can be done to reduce the hazard/risk.

Frequency of risk assessments may alter in specific circumstances:

- When there is a change of equipment/resources or to the premises
- To meet the particular needs of a child
- If an incident has occurred

In line with the EYFS statutory framework, at Perton Primary we ensure that there are systems in place for obtaining information about a child's needs and for ensuring that medication procedures are kept up to date. Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge eg Epi-Pen.

Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer. A written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and informs the child's parents and/or carers on the same day. There are also procedures for Asthma treatment, Allergies and supporting children with Medical Needs.

- Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- Children's' dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required.
- Each classroom has a snack and sink area that provides healthy snacks and drinks.
- The Medical room is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept.

- A Health and Safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A Fire and Emergency Evacuation procedure and policy.
- Safeguarding Policy.

**The Use of Cameras and Mobile Phones – See Policy**

### **Inclusion/Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)**

All children and their families are valued at Perton Primary Academy. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provision available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the school's SENCO is called upon for further information and advice. In addition, advice may be sought from Speech and Language, the Early Years SENCO (as part of SENISS) or an Educational Psychologist.

For children requiring additional support, an Individual Teaching Plan (ITP) will be written in consultation with Parents and other professionals. The ITP will contain specific targets to support the child's learning and additional need/s. This would also place the child on the SEN Register.

Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the Academy:-

- SEND policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Accessibility Policy
- Single Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

**Parents as Partners and the wider context:**

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways:

- Informal day-to-day communications with parents during greeting and dismissal.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and again during the first term of the child's Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child particularly in relation to reading and phonics.
- WOWMoji notes sent home frequently for parents to share achievements at home which reinforce our values.
- Home reading journals are used as a communicating tool between parents and staff and are checked twice a week.
- Star of the Week achievements take place daily in Reception to celebrate children's success.
- 'Marvellous Me' online reward system.
- Every parent is invited to take part in 'Stay and Play' whereby the parent joins the class for 'Stay and Play' sessions seeing their child in the school environment
- Learning Journeys are also published and shared electronically.
- During parents evening and Stay and Play, parents are invited to share learning journeys to contribute to the teachers observations and assessments creating a full of picture of the child

Working with other services and outside agents 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.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting eg school nurse, PCSOs.

## **Transitions**

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and childminders.

### **Getting to know the new Reception children:**

During the Summer term, children in Nursery attend integrated sessions with Reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners.

Transition will be successful if..

- Practitioners know each child, including their interests and needs
- Practitioners have formed a relationship with each family
- Children know the practitioners
- Children are familiar and happy with their new school environment, its routines and expectations
- Children have met and made friends with some of the other children who will be in their class.

**Readiness for Key Stage 1:** In the final term in Reception, 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. By the end of Reception the children will experience a gradual move to whole class teaching and learning. This helps the Year 1 teachers to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children in their next stage in learning. They will also have several opportunities to visit their new teacher in their new classroom, to help alleviate any anxiety which may arise when transition is imminent.

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