



OAKLEY INFANT SCHOOL EARLY YEARS POLICY

Thrive, strive and achieve together
Article 28- all children have a right to an education

AIMS

The Early Years aims to provide quality and consistency so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind. Clear planning gives children a secure foundation for future learning. A safe, stimulating learning environment encourages children to develop their independence and confidence. Working in partnership with parents and carers to meet the needs of individual children and to help them meet their full potential is highly valued.

PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN EARLY YEARS

The EYFS is based upon four guiding principles:

A Unique Child

- Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive relationships

- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

Enabling Environments

- 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 a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

Learning and Development

- Children learn and develop at different rates.

Characteristics of effective teaching and learning that are applied in the Early Years are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'; (*the 'will'*)
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; (*the 'thrill'*)
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things. (*the 'skill'*)

CULTURAL CAPITAL

- We value the diversity of individuals within our school. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued.
- We give children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of the children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING IN EARLY YEARS

At Oakley Infant School as part of Early Years practice we

- provide a balanced curriculum based on EYFS across the seven areas of learning using teaching, modelling, exploration and play as a vehicle for learning.
- promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice and provide early intervention and support for those who require additional support.
- work in partnership with parents.
- plan a wide range of challenging learning experiences, informed by observation and assessment.
- plan and provide opportunities for children to engage in adult initiated and child-initiated learning.
- have a key person approach to develop close relationships with individual children (and parents) as appropriate.
- provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The Early Years curriculum accommodates children learning at different rates and in different ways and naturally supports and extends children with differing needs and abilities. Where needed we will put in place more specific support or interventions to ensure that children make progress. We ensure that parents are kept informed and can support us with this targeted intervention by completing teacher directed tasks at home.

PLANNING FOR EARLY YEARS

The Early Years team produce long term and medium term plans using the EYFS based around a series of topics. These plans then inform short-term weekly planning, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses and interests.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with times for a phonics session using 'Bug Club Phonics'; differentiated as necessary across the cohort daily.

A balance between children having time to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults exists and each area of learning and development is implemented in this way as outlined by the EYFS.

A stimulating environment encourages children to reinforce their learning experiences indoors and outside.

Children have daily opportunities for structured and free flow play both in the classroom and in the outdoor area. This time is supported by the adults, who act as facilitators to the child's learning.

Activities are planned that encourage children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management.

STRATEGIES FOR RECORDING PROGRESS AND REPORTING

Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process and adults will use this to inform future planning. Some observations are recorded using Seesaw. Parents are also encouraged to add their own observations to their child's profile that has been created on Seesaw. These ongoing observations and teachers' knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement are used to inform the assessment against the EYFS Profile at the end of the reception year.

Staff interact with parents immediately before the children begin school in September and then more formally through parent consultation evenings. Team members liaise more informally with parents concerning the children's individual needs or concerns on a regular basis.

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. The RBA assesses a child in early mathematics, literacy, communication and language. The purpose of the RBA is to form the starting point for cohort-level school progress measures. Data from the RBA is compared to key stage 2 outcomes 7 years later to form the overall progress measure for a school. The data, including numerical scores, is not shared with external bodies, including schools, teachers, pupils or parents/carers. Teachers receive a series of narrative statements informing them of how the child performed on the day. There is no expected standard and children cannot pass or fail.

During the final term in Year R, parents are provided with a written report based on the child's progress against the EYFS profile and for each characteristic of effective teaching and learning. Parents are offered the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the class teacher.

HEALTH AND SAFETY in Early Years:

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. A safe and secure environment is created and a curriculum provided which teaches and encourages children to be safe, make choices and assess risks. There are clear policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

The good health of the children is promoted in numerous ways:

- The provision of nutritious lunches by HC3S under the Universal Free School Meal. All children are encouraged to take advantage of this
- Parents who choose a packed lunch for their child are encouraged to provide healthy, balanced food, through information provided at a parents' induction meeting
- The provision of nutritious food through participation in the School Fruit and Vegetable scheme
- The provision of milk (Free for under five year olds.)
- All children have access to their water bottle and are encouraged to drink regularly throughout the day
- Individual children who give cause for concern relating to their diet, sleeping, behaviour or toileting are referred to the school nurse

The school has procedures for when children become ill or have an accident.

TRANSITION:

The importance of transition in helping the children to settle into school is recognised and carefully planned for. We recognise the role that a positive transition and links with other settings plays in ensuring that children are ready for school.

Pre school settings are visited to liaise with colleagues on specific learning, physical or emotional needs of children likely to be starting school. These are followed by visits by members of the Early Years team to get to know the individual children and for the children to be familiar with the adults. If it is not possible to visit a setting we make contact via telephone to ensure that we have as much information as possible before the children join Oakley Infant School in September.

During the early part of the summer term the children and parents are invited to a meeting to introduce the Pre-school library. The purpose is for children to become familiar with the school setting through coming into school regularly to borrow books.

Children attend introductory sessions in their class to develop familiarity with the setting and staff. They are also invited to attend story sessions led by team members. Prior to the first visit, parents are invited to an evening meeting led by the Headteacher and supported by Early Years staff and other members of the school community where they learn about preparing their child for school.

We organise individual or additional transition meetings with parents and other agencies if the need arises.

In September, just before starting school, teachers and teaching assistants invite the children to attend school alongside their parent / carer for settling in sessions.

A curriculum information meeting is held during the autumn term to inform parents about the Early Years Curriculum and ways to support their child's learning.

During the final term in Year R, the class teacher and Year 1 teacher liaise to discuss individual children, their needs and analyse the assessment data to inform planning.

Approved by Curriculum Committee
Review date

Aut 2021
Aut 2024