

EXCALIBUR PRIMARY SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

The Early Years Foundation Stage Policy in respect of Excalibur Primary School has been discussed and adopted by the Governing Body

Chair of Governors/Committee: Sarah Sproston

Head Teacher: Juliet Jones

Ratified at the meeting of Full Governing Body on: 1st March 2021

To be reviewed March 2024

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Excalibur Primary School, in line with Cheshire East policy, children join the Reception class in the September of the academic year that they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

“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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up” (Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, 2017)

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child - developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive relationships - supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling environments - where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Learning and developing - An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates

A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEN)

All children and their families are valued at Excalibur Primary School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and 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 Special Educational Needs (SEND) Coordinator is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school’s Inclusion policy for SEN.

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.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We will educate children on boundaries, rules and limits 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 Whole School 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."

At Excalibur Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017. We understand that we are required to:

- ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children;
- promote good health;
- manage behaviour;
- maintain records, policies and procedures.

Positive Relationships

At Excalibur Primary School we to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents and Carers as Partners

We recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents and carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents and carers about their child before their child starts in our school;

- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transfer sessions;
- inviting all parents and carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and a further meeting during the first half term of the child's Reception year;
- holding additional curriculum meetings for parents and carers for example how we reach reading and phonics.
- encouraging parents and carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents and carers twice a year at which progress is discussed. Parents and carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year and are invited into school to discuss it further if they wish to;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents and carers.
- providing parents with an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by completing "wow" moments which inform planning and provision;
- written contact through home school diary and online through the use of Seesaw.

Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interest. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences.

Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas." The prime areas are

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

The specific areas are

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

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and carers and information from pre-school settings, children's development levels are assessed.

At Excalibur Primary School:

"Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an ongoing judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1." (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2017)

Planning and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At Excalibur Primary School we support children in using the three 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; and
 - **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.
- (Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2017)

Religious Education is also taught in the reception class.

Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. Staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Health and Safety

At Excalibur Primary School, there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school risk assessment policy) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment.

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2017, at Excalibur Primary School we undertake:

- a whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication 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;
- 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." (Statutory framework for EYFS 2017);
- fresh drinking water is available at all times;
- children's' dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required;
- a first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept (see accident and injury policy). The EYFS teaching assistant is paediatric first aid trained;
- 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;
- cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff own personal use. Staff mobile phones are only to be the designated area (staff room) and a school mobile is to be used on trips/visits.

Transition from Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. This indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.