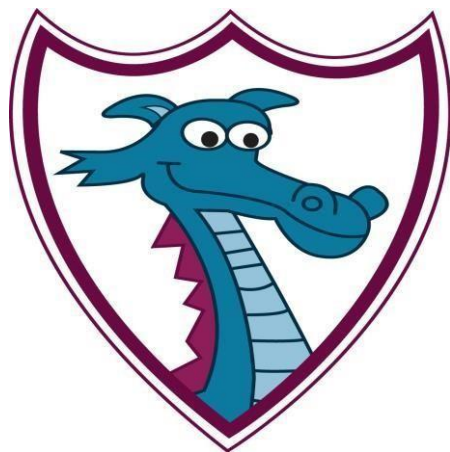


CORSHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Foundation Stage Policy



Reviewed: May 2025

Policy Ratified by the LGC: May 2025

Next Review Date: May 2028

Corsham Primary School

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

RATIONALE

Every child deserves the best possible start in life which will allow 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. Good parenting and high-quality early learning, enable the Foundation Stage children to make the most of their abilities and talents.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years' providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the right foundation for good future progress through school and life. (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage Department for Education 2024).

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Corsham Primary we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development, however we also believe early childhood is valid in itself, as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. The final year of the EYFS is referred to as Foundation Stage 2 (FS2) or Reception.

All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of the practitioners working in FS2 to take on the task of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that Parents/Carers, support staff, the FS2 teachers and Teaching Assistants work effectively together to support children's learning and development.

AIMS

At Corsham Primary School we aim to:

- Provide a safe, caring, challenging and stimulating environment which allows children to participate in a range of activities that takes account of their interests and achievements and their developing physical, intellectual, emotional and social abilities;
- Encourage children to become strong and independent learners who are able to think and talk about their learning and to develop their self-control and independence as learners and problem solvers; assess and record children's progress and target their future learning needs;
- Provide a bright, visually stimulating, auditory and physical environment, which supports the different learning styles of children;
- Be partners in learning with Parents and Carers;
- Prepare Foundation Stage 2 children for the new challenges of Key Stage One.

MEETING THE AIMS

We will:

- Provide opportunities for supporting the Personal, Social and Emotional Development of children so that they are confident and secure enough to achieve and make adequate progress. This includes learning about emotions as well as developing skills to manage and take responsibility for their own behaviour;
- Facilitate full access to a range of activities, which are planned to be challenging but achievable, to enable children to develop a positive disposition to learn;
- Provide opportunities for children to develop clear oracy skills and to think and problem solve. Through this, children will gain confidence in themselves as learners, develop the problem-solving habit and feel capable of rising to self-chosen challenges;
- Use a range of teaching strategies that will meet the needs of each individual and their learning styles;
- Provide an indoor and outdoor environment that is stimulating and that is conducive to quality learning through display of children's achievements, learning and resources;
- Forge effective relationships with parents, carers and all adults in the setting to ensure the promotion of positive relationships and the sharing of information about children on all levels;
- Provide many opportunities for Foundation Stage children to familiarise themselves with the new environment and arrangements in their Reception class, through a series of orientation visits.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Curriculum

The curriculum is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The EYFS is a framework from the DFE which sets standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. We plan an exciting, enhanced and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

All seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected, three prime areas and four specific areas. The prime areas cover the knowledge and skills which are the foundations for children's school readiness and future progress, and which are applied and reinforced by the specific areas. Where they have close links with National Curriculum areas, particularly English and Maths, they form an appropriate baseline for the National Curriculum.

Prime Areas

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

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

Successful personal, social and emotional development is critical for very young children in all aspects of their lives. It is also a pre-requisite for their success in all other areas of learning. It is crucial that at Corsham Primary we provide the experiences and support which enable children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Communication and Language (C & L)

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical Development (PD)

At this stage, young children grow rapidly. They develop confidence and control of the way they move and the way they handle tools and equipment. They need to be active and to move about in order to develop many of these fundamental skills. Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Alongside developing children's gross motor skills, we need to develop their fine motor skills. We do this through carefully planned fine motor activities which prepare them for writing and manipulating tools. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Specific Areas

Children are also supported through four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Literacy

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, subitising, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and identify and continue numerical patterns. Understanding will also be developed through practical activities, stories, songs, games and imaginative play, so that children enjoy using and experimenting with numbers, including numbers to 20 and beyond

Understanding the World (UW)

In this area of learning children are developing the skills, knowledge and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for later work becoming scientists, historians, geographers and engineers.

Expressive Arts and Design

Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology. Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another and so extend their understanding.

Through enquiry learning, carefully selected resources and a wide range of activities are provided for all areas of learning. Children are encouraged to see the all areas as interconnected and as equally important. We encourage the children to become involved in their own learning and development. Our planning for each topic area is done in collaboration with the children; we find out what they already know about the topic and then encourage them to think about what they would like to know. This helps them to take ownership of their learning and also of the learning environment.

Children learn at different speeds and in a variety of different ways so a wide range of teaching strategies are employed within the classroom to ensure that all children make progress. We aim to create a balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities within the classroom to help build children's confidence, self-esteem and independence.

PLAY

Play underpins the delivery of all the EYFS. Well planned play, both indoors and outdoors is one of the key ways in which children learn. It is the process through which children can explore, investigate, recreate and come to understand their world. It is not just imaginative play and role play but includes spontaneous, self-initiated lines of inquiry and exploration. Play is a vital component of children's lives. It is an important way skills are developed and practised. Play is essential for physical, intellectual, linguistic, emotional, behavioural and social development.

Principals of High Quality Play

- Play is an intrinsic part of children's learning and development
- Play has many possible but not prescriptive outcomes
- Play challenges children and offers them the chance to learn in breadth and depth
- Play draws on what children already know and can do and enables them to master what is new
- Play enables children to apply existing knowledge and to practice their skills
- Play encourages children to communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems
- Play offers children opportunities to explore feelings and relationships, ideas, and materials, connections and consequences
- Play empowers children to make choices, to solve problems and to be independent in their learning
- Play encourages children to feel challenged, to take risks and to become resilient as learners
- Play will be supported and extended but not interfered with by adults
- Play presents no barriers to children because of their language, cultures, abilities or gender
- Play helps children learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules
- Play allows children to explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world

Role of the adult

- To observe child-initiated play to understand and provide for their interests and needs
- To plan and resource a challenging indoor and outdoor environment
- To support children's learning through planned play activities
- To extend and support children's spontaneous/self-initiated play
- To extend and develop children's language and communication in their play
- To challenge the children's thoughts and ideas

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.

At school the key person is the Early Years class teacher. Their role is to meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, talking to the parents and working in partnership with them. They will of course work in close partnership with the class teaching assistant.

A key person is:

- A named member of staff who has more contact than others with the child
- Someone to build relationships with the child and parents
- Someone who helps the child become familiar with the provision
- Someone who meets children's individual needs and care needs
- Someone who responds sensitively to children's feelings, ideas and behaviour
- The person who acts as a point of contact with parents

ORGANISATION

Children join Corsham Primary in line with the Wiltshire policy on admission to school i.e. Children whose fifth birthday lies on or between 1st September and 31st August may attend school full time or part-time from September 1st. (Part time is defined as 8.50 – 12.00 Monday to Friday each week). By law children must attend full time education from the term following their fifth birthday. All children attend part-time for the first two weeks that they start school as part of our induction process.

Approximately one term before a child is due to start school the Foundation Stage teachers liaise with the local nurseries and preschools to make contact with their new pupils and to discuss any future needs with staff. Children are invited to visit us for a play afternoon and a singing/story session.

A term before the child is due to start school, parents and carers are contacted by letter to inform them of the induction process and opportunities for their child to visit the school and be part of their new class. In addition, parents are invited to an evening meeting in school to find out about the curriculum and other school issues and procedures.

During the summer term induction visits, children have an opportunity to become familiar with their new learning environment, and can orientate themselves within the setting. These visits also provide an opportunity for parents to raise any issues that they may have about their child starting school and for their child to meet their teacher.

All parents are asked to fill in a school information form, the 'Parents Questionnaire', which provides the school with important details about their child.

In the autumn term, parents are invited to meet for a 15 minute consultation with their child's teacher to discuss important information and their child's progress as they settle into school.

The Pound Hill Foundation Stage is organised primarily as two separate classes, Apples and Pears. The Broadwood Foundation stage children are in one FS2 unit, Strawberries. The unit has one full time Teacher, one part time Teacher and two Teaching Assistants. Planning and assessments for all children in the Foundation Stage are undertaken by the whole team in collaboration, through the use of school planning sheets and interactions with the children, informed by Developmental Matters and the Early Learning Goals.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE LEARNING

In planning and guiding children's activities, we will reflect on the different ways that children learn and plan for the children to demonstrate these. The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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

Children with effective learning characteristics:

- are willing to have a go

- are involved and concentrating
- have their own ideas
- choose ways to do things
- find new ways of doing things
- enjoy achieving what they set out to do

ASSESSMENT

Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners understanding children's interests and what they know and can do, and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge. If necessary children are supported by the Inclusion Team.

Within the first 6 weeks of children starting school the children are assessed on the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

Children are assessed in each aspect of Developmental Matters and Early Learning Goals three times a year and assessment opportunities are planned for through planning. These assessments are recorded on Insights three times a year.

At the end of the Foundation Stage year the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents/carers and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for Year One. Each child's level of development will be assessed against the early learning goals. Teachers will record whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('[emerging]').

The results of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile will be shared with the Local Authority and parents/carers.

RESOURCES

The Foundation Stage 2 settings are resourced in order for all children to access all areas of the EYFS and are clearly organised and labelled to encourage independence. The outdoor sheds are equipped with an extensive range of outdoor toys and accessories which encourage co-operation, personal/social and physical development, and children have further opportunities to access an outdoor curriculum through the development of our designated outdoor play areas, which can be used independently or with adult supervision/intervention as appropriate. Such areas are intended as an extension of the indoor classroom environment and promote full, quality provision of the Early Learning goals.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- The information gathered from the Baseline assessment will continue to inform the planning process as appropriate;
- The system of observation based assessment will inform the ongoing completion of the Foundation Stage Profile;
- Outdoor play areas will be fully utilised as an extension of the Foundation Stage 2 class settings, to allow the delivery of a broad and balanced Foundation Stage Curriculum;
- There are close links between the Foundation Stage 2 team and local pre-schools and nurseries. By working together on planning, record keeping and transfer of information; continuity and progression within the whole Foundation Stage will be developed;
- The Transition arrangements for children's movement into Year One will ensure that children join their new classes as happy, confident learners. Its effectiveness will be carefully monitored. For further information, please consult the Corsham Primary Foundation Stage Transition Procedure.

Equal Opportunities

When writing and reviewing this policy staff have completed an Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment in order to ensure it complies with equality obligations outlined in anti-discrimination legislation. We believe the policy positively reflects the aims and ambitions identified in Corsham Primary's Single Equality Scheme.

UNICEF

Corsham Primary is a UNICEF *Rights Respecting School* which promotes the Convention of the Rights of the Child. This policy underpins Article 29 of the convention:

Aims of Education: Education shall aim at developing the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the fullest extent. Education shall prepare the child for an active adult life in a free society and shall foster in the child respect for his or her parents, for his or hers cultural identity, language and values and for the cultural background and values of others.

Please refer to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.