



CHRISTOPHER PICKERING PRIMARY SCHOOL

Foundation Stage Policy



Be the Best you can Be!

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“First watch your child at play, and see how he learns.”

Introduction

‘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)

Early Years is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their schooling. At Christopher Pickering we greatly value the important role that the Early Years foundation stage plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. All children begin Christopher Pickering EYFS with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of the practitioners working in FS1 and FS2 to take on the task of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents and carers, support staff and teachers work effectively together to support children’s learning and development.

Aims

In the EYFS setting at Christopher Pickering Primary School we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential.

We aim to support each child’s welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special.
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates - physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued by the practitioners looking after them.
- Fostering and nurturing children’s self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community.
- Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways.
- Encouraging children’s independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes.
- Developing children’s understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously.
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions differ to their own.
- Understanding the importance of play in children’s learning and development.
- Providing learning experiences in play which reflect children’s personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn.

- Providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.
- Providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, inside and outside.
- Working in partnership with parents and carers
- Ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.
- To develop children's skills and understanding.
- To develop children's personal, social, emotional, physical and intellectual well-being in order to develop the whole child.
- To develop positive attitudes to learning so that they enjoy learning and will want to continue with their education longer.
- To develop children's self-esteem and self-confidence to experiment, investigate, learn new things and form new relationships.
- To develop children's creative and expressive skills and observation to encourage their development as individuals with different ways of responding to experiences.
- To develop children's activities in the outdoors where they can have first-hand experiences of solving real problems in mathematics and science and learn about conservation and sustainability.

Curriculum Planning

A well planned curriculum is vital to prevent underachievement and to raise overall standards.

All curriculum planning must show that:

- it is broad, balanced and differentiated.
- it is flexible to cater for children who are at different stages of development.
- it takes into account prior learning and attainment.
- educational provision is holistic.
- the child is at the centre of all planning.
- there is a balance between structured learning through child-initiated activities and those directed by adults.
- the activities inspire and challenge children's potential for learning.
- adults are aware of using good open ended questioning.

Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity is being developed across the curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage framework

Teaching in the EYFS setting at Christopher Pickering Primary School 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:

- 'A Unique Child'
- 'Positive Relationships'
- 'Enabling Environments'
- 'Learning and Development'
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The curriculum is centred on 3 prime areas of learning:

1. Communication and Language.
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Providers must also support activities through four specific areas which strengthen the prime areas. These are:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding of the World
4. Expressive Arts and Design

These Areas of Learning and Development address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all Areas of Learning and Development are all closely interlinked. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum which allows children to make lots of links between what they are learning. All Areas of Learning and Development are given equal weighting and value.

At Christopher Pickering Primary School, we believe that Early Years education is important in its own right and should not be viewed simply as preparation for the next stage of children's education. We believe that the EYFS framework allows a natural progression into the National Curriculum at the beginning of Year 1.

Active Learning through Play

'Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development' Early Years Foundation Stage

At Christopher Pickering Primary School we recognise that young children learn best through when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and our EYFS setting has an ethos of learning through play.

We recognise the importance of children's play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding

and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

In the EYFS setting at Christopher Pickering Primary School practitioners provide both structured and unstructured play opportunities inside and outside. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experiences which will support children to discover, explore, investigate, develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity, and help to make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. Play opportunities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding. In providing these active learning opportunities through play we understand the central position of play within the EYFS framework. This is essentially a play based curriculum and pedagogy as the provision of play opportunities underpins its delivery within settings.

The learning environment is divided into a variety of different areas; role play, book area, writing area, maths area, listening centre, computers, creative, malleable, sand, water, outside, construction, small world and snack. These areas are carefully arranged and planned for to encourage both quiet and more active areas within the learning environment. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation. Group inputs have been carefully timed to allow a longer period of free flow in between.

Outdoor 'Classroom'

The development and use of the outdoors as a learning environment is very important for the development of all children. We feel that:

- children's health and fitness will benefit from exercise outside and using outdoor equipment.
- children will have firsthand experience of nature.
- problem solving will relate to experiences.
- children will have firsthand experience of conservation and sustainability.
- children will develop a love of nature and take part in outdoor activities.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Ongoing assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of the EYFS setting at Christopher Pickering Primary School. Regular, planned and focused assessments are made of children's learning and individual needs. A record of each child's progress in all areas of their learning is kept by retaining and filing their assessment data.

The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' observations of children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child initiated play, using the 2buildaprofile assessment system. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally). Practitioners make time to carry out planned observations of individuals and groups of children regularly. They also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children's learning. Observations are recorded in different formats (e.g. narrative style, post-it

notes, whole class grids, photographs). All practitioners are involved in observing children.

Practitioners use observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children's abilities, needs, interests, play schemas and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress.

Other methods of assessing children in the EYFS setting include engaging alongside children in their play, annotation of children's written work, talking with children about their task or play and in Learning Journeys. Learning Journeys record children's progress over the academic year in all Areas of Learning and Development of the EYFS framework. Samples of children's work are gathered, along with photographic evidence and observations.

There is continuous monitoring and assessment of each child's development using the new Early Years Outcomes (2013). This is updated at least once each term to track individual progress. At the end of the year it provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements. Baseline assessment is carried out using the EYFS Profile during the children's first four weeks upon entering the setting. Judgments made on children's development in the Profile are based on practitioners' evidence of children's behaviour observed independently and consistently in their self-initiated activities across all Areas of Learning and Development.

Planning

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS will be put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning. All practitioners are involved in this process.

Short term planning - we identify specific learning objectives and success criteria, activities, differentiation, deployment of adults and resources, to meet the learning needs of the children on a weekly and day to day basis. It allows for flexibility in response to individual children's needs and interests and for revision and modification, informed by on-going observational assessment. Our short term planning compliments the medium term planning showing a clear link between adult led and child initiated learning which stems from observational assessment.

Medium term planning - we address particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail for each half term. We include links between areas of learning and development and opportunities for ICT. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities and activities and experiences for each area of learning and development are identified. It is also an ongoing process which records spontaneous learning and child initiated learning in the environment. It is taken from practitioners observations of the children and enables us to plan children's 'next steps' to move their understanding and learning forward.

Characteristics of effective learning are also recorded for each individual child so that planning can compliment particular learning styles and needs.

Long Term Planning – we have created a framework which gives structure and coherence to the curriculum. Topics are planned for each of the six half terms and the early learning goals and educational programmes are distributed over the terms, to give a broad and balanced coverage.

Curriculum Teams

Christopher Pickering Foundation stage consists of F1 and F2. We have 1 teacher and 2 full time nursery nurses in FS1. FS1 has a maximum of 78 children on role which is divided into am, pm or 2.5 day sessions which are chosen by parents/carers. Each child is entitled to 15 hours nursery education a week.

FS2 has a maximum intake of 60 children. Staffing consists of 2 teachers, 1 full time nursery nurse, 1 full time teaching assistant and a teaching assistant for 1 to 1 support. In FS1 and FS2 the children have daily opportunities for structured and free flow play both indoors and outdoors. This time is supported by an adult, who acts as a facilitator to the child's learning. All members of the FS team are involved with planning, preparation and assessment. We are always aiming to improve our teaching skills, knowledge and understanding and so all practitioners are encouraged to participate in local authority courses, in service and local cluster group training. We are continually developing links with our local children's centre to support children and families in the area.

Parents as Partners

At Christopher Pickering Primary School we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the EYFS framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. Practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents. We value the role of parents as children's primary educators. Through questionnaires and informal chats at the beginning and end of the day, practitioners encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating children. We do this through:

- talking to our parents about their child before their child starts school during home/school visits
- the children have the opportunity to spend time in the unit before starting school.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting the term before their child starts school
- Sending home a half termly topic letter, informing parents/guardians of the learning/activities that will be taking place at school

- Updating the blog on the website weekly, sending home a home/school diary every week
- Operating an 'open door' policy, whereby parents/guardians can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents
- Holding 'open days' for the parent/guardian to come and spend time with their child in the unit and discuss progress their child is making
- Parents evenings in October and March
- Providing an annual written report in July
- Holding a celebration evening in July for children to show their work/classroom
- Encouraging parents/carers to share their child's 'wow' moments

Admissions

The school adheres to the local LEA admissions policy. Prior to the child entering the F1 class the staff undertake a home school visit, from this the parent and child are invited to come in and spend some time at school. All parents of F1 and F2 are then invited to a meeting at the school. This meeting gives the child an opportunity to meet his or her teacher and see the classroom that is soon to become theirs. At the meeting the structure of the school day is explained and parents given any information they may need. The parents and children receive a small booklet, which talks about the Foundation Stage.

After the visit a date will be arranged when the child will start F1 in the following term. Admission is staggered i.e. one child only per session. During this admission period the timetable is modified to enable the nursery staff to be available for individual needs.

Flexible Provision

Children can access the the early years entitlement provision from the term after their third birthday. We offer up to 15 hours of provision each week. This is offered and reviewed on a termly basis.

F2 to Y1 transition

The foundation stage and year 1 teachers have worked together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible. (see FS to KS1 policy)

Equal Opportunities

All practitioners at Christopher Pickering Primary School have a responsibility to maintain positive attitudes to diversity and difference, ensuring that inclusive practice is

delivered in the EYFS setting. All children, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture or religion, and social circumstances, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development within the EYFS setting at Christopher Pickering Primary School.
See Equal Opportunities Policy for more information.

Inclusion

The SENCO liaises with the foundation stage teachers and the children within the foundation stage are carefully monitored to ensure they make the best possible progress. Parents are regularly kept informed of their child's progress and are encouraged to support and help their child's learning.

Sensory Resource Base

The Foundation Stage hearing impaired children are fully integrated with support for registration, activate and afternoon sessions of topic activities as well as PE. They are withdrawn to the Resource Base classroom by the Teacher of the Deaf for Literacy, Language and Maths. The specialist TAs also withdraw the children on a 1:1 basis for speech and language work, including signing. This way the children get the 'best of both' and are able to form a relationship with their class teacher and friendships with their peers.

Safeguarding

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure and when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults in the setting. Daily risk assessments take place to ensure the safety of the pupils in the environment. (See intimate care policy & child protection policy)

Photography and images

When taking photographs we seek parents/carers consent for photographs to be published, for example on our website or in newspapers (see e-safety policy)
We only use the child's first name on an image displayed in the classroom and before taking pictures we ensure that the child is appropriately dressed.

Parents are aware that photographs are used for observations and work in the children's books, these photographs are only taken on school cameras and the images used for the children's assessments and learning journeys.

Staff disqualification declaration

All staff, including any supply staff have completed the declaration.

Resources

Resources are purchased when they are required. At the moment funds are being spent on developing the outdoor area.

Building & Accommodation

- All available space is being used.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Headteacher and the nominated governor.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Governing Body for further discussion and endorsement. (See Policy Evaluation)