



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy
Leader: Jo Jarvis
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“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.

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 broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life. “

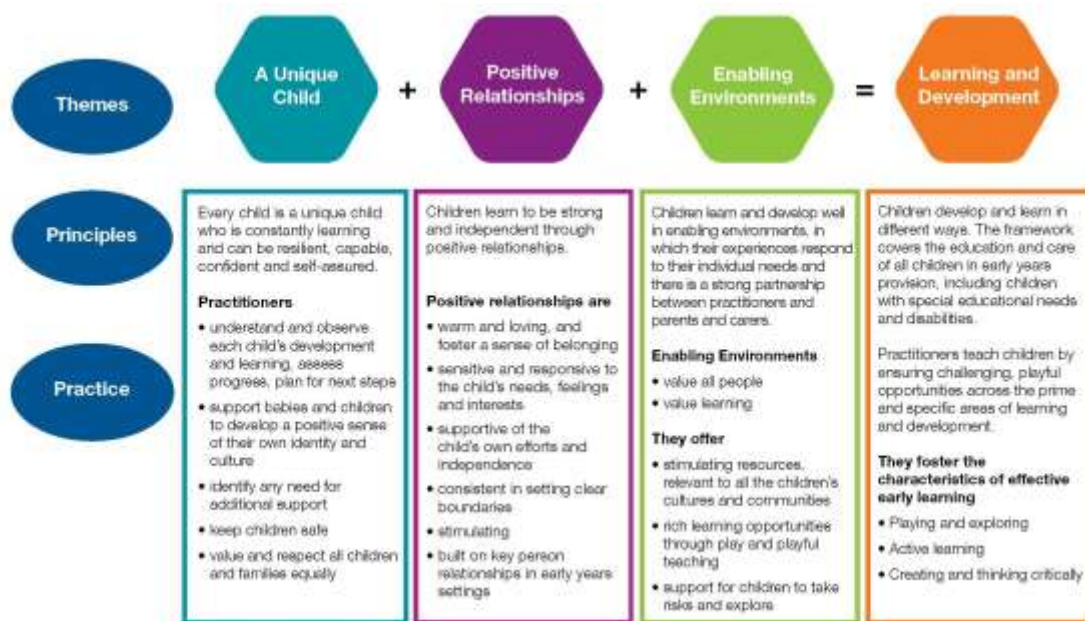
Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage April 2017

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (April 2017) and the Early Years Outcomes document (DfE September 2013). The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year.

EYFS at Epsom Primary and Nursery School

As large primary school with a designated provision for 2 year olds, a maintained nursery, 2 reception classes and children centre on site we offer a wide range of provisions that operate under the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (April 2017). The details of our offer are contained within our booklet ‘Epsom Primary and Nursery School EYFS offer’. This is available on the school website.

There are four overarching principles identified in the EYFS which underpin all that we do.



A Unique Child

At EPS 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, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use both individual and collective praise and encouragement, celebrating and sharing success with other classes and year groups, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences and interests when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

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.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We believe 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 Child Protection, Anti Bullying Policies and SEND policies)

Welfare

"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 EPS we understand that we are legally required to comply with the welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017. We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Staffing

We adhere to the adult child ratios and qualification requirements specified in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage September 2017 throughout all of the EYFS provision.

Positive Relationships

At EPS we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- Inviting parents to an information evening in the summer term before their child starts. At this meeting we share information about how children learn and how much we value and welcome parental contributions to enable us to really know their child.

- Inviting children to play and learn sessions before they start to give them an opportunity with their parents to attend Reception, Nursery or First Steps and meet their teachers and other families. We encourage parents to share information about their child at these sessions.
- Inviting all parents to the Headteacher's Vision Evening so they know what the school vision is and the priorities for the year and how they can help achieve these.
- Offering all families in EYFS a home visit when they start at EPS.
- Inviting all Reception, Nursery and First Steps parents to a 'meet the teachers' meeting within the first month of their children starting school.
- Encouraging all parents to spend a short amount of time every morning settling their child with an activity before leaving for the day. This is also a good opportunity for us to model effective activities for the children to be doing.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our nursery and reception classes and allowing free access to the children's Learning Journeys.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns via an open door policy, including all parents having the class email address.
- Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: cultural diversity weeks, class and celebration assemblies, Sports Day, bake and taste sessions etc.
- Sharing our termly and weekly teaching and learning focuses with parents and carers via class notice boards, weekly learning updates and curriculum overviews sent by email.
- Encouraging parents to share comments relating to the children's achievements in school and sharing information about achievements outside of school to add to their child's Learning Journey.
- Having home school communication books for every child in First Steps, Nursery or Reception so that parents and staff can share 'wow' moments and share information.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the Reception teachers act as 'Key Person' to all children in their class, supported by the Nursery Nurses and Teaching Assistants. Within the Nursery and First Steps all members of staff have key children. The Key Person list is displayed in the nursery and communicated with parents once their child has started nursery.

Enabling Environments

At EPS we recognise that the learning environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS follows half termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning; however the teacher alters these Medium Term Plans in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This will be indicated on weekly/daily planning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. Photos, observations and recorded work are recorded in children's individual 'Learning Journey' books and through an online Learning Journey (Tapestry). They also contain information provided by parents. EYFS teachers also maintain other relevant records to demonstrate children's achievements e.g. written observations, reading records and focus teaching assessment sheets.

In First Steps, Nursery and Reception at EPS we record judgements for the 7 areas of learning against the ages and stages using Pupil Asset to track attainment and progress. At the end of Reception each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals found within the 7 areas of learning.

In First Steps children are tracked across all seven areas of learning in EYFS. We complete written 2 year old progress reviews within their first term and before they turn 3. The key person for the child meets with the parent to discuss the review.

Within the final term of the First Steps, Nursery and Reception year, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the Areas of Learning and Characteristics of Effective Learning. We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teachers.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active or be quiet. The classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

The EYFS classes have their own enclosed outdoor areas. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At EPS we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

Prime Areas:

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

Specific Areas:

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

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led, adult framed and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2.

Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout the EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining or in conjunction with attending our school.

Playing and Exploring

“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.”

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

“Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.”

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

The Senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.