Coundon Primary School

Together Everyone Achieves More

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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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"

The Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework 2021

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Coundon Primary, most children join us in the Nursery in the September of the school year in which they are four. Some children join us at the start of the Spring and Summer term after they have turned three. We offer a system by which children attend mornings or afternoons for 3 hours, 5 days a week. We also have a link to the school wrap around facility for those parents who wish their children to access all day care. The children then go on to their Reception year for five full days per week.

Our vision at Coundon Primary School is to provide our children with the skills to be confident, successful and independent life-long learners ready for the modern world.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At Coundon Primary, 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 praise and encouragement, stickers and rewards 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 ability. All children and their families are valued within our school.

At Coundon Primary, we believe that all 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 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 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 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, social, emotional and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)

<u>Welfare</u>

"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"

EYFS Statutory framework 2021

At Coundon Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. We understand we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.

- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so,
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe, suitable, and safe for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all of these requirements.

Positive Relationships

At Coundon Primary School, we recognise that children learn to be strong, independent and from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with all of 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;

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.
- The Nursery and Foundation staff arrange to visit all children in their home or day care setting prior to them starting Nursery or school;
- The children have the opportunity to spend time in the setting and meet their Key Person both in Nursery and Reception through 'play and stay' sessions, 'story times' and Move up day';
- Inviting all parents to an induction evening during the term before their child starts Nursery or Reception;
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Nursery and Reception classes.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's Key Person if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents in the autumn and spring term at which the Key Person and the parent discuss the child's progress. Parents also receive the opportunity to attend an open evening in the Summer Term to share their children's work and achievements. Parents are given a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year and given the opportunity to meet with their child's Key Person to discuss this;

- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Assemblies, concerts, sports day, WOW days etc.;
- Encourage parents to share work that their child has produced at home to be added to their Learning journal.
- An overview of the upcoming weeks activities are added to the Year groups blog each week.
- Photos/ videos of activities in school are shared with parents via the year group blog Friday focus.

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 Coundon Primary, each child has a Key Person who builds relationships with both them and their parents/carers and wider family (Grandparents, Aunts and Uncles etc.). In Nursery, each member of the Team is a Key person to a group of children in both the morning and afternoon. In Reception, the class teacher is the child's Key person and is supported by a member of support staff.

Enabling Environments

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

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Planning within the EYFS is based around a creative curriculum, which is formed around the children's needs and interests, and various cultural, religious and celebratory events, in half termly (Medium Term) plans. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning; with the teacher and key workers meeting to plan in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. Leaders have created a bespoke Early Years Curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give children, particularly the most disadvantaged, the knowledge and self belief and cultural capital they need to succeed in life in line with the changes set out September 2021

The Key outcomes for our EYFS Curriculum, alongside the Early Learning Goals are:

- I am an independent and curious learner who will take risks
- I am physically active
- I can communicate effectively and work collaboratively with confidence and respect
- I can use my imagination

At Coundon Primary, we make ongoing 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 getting to know each child and involves all members of the Nursery and Reception teams. These observations are used to inform planning, lead discussions and make a judgement of where each child is working. There is no longer a requirement for practitioners to record observations and any observations need to be purposeful and informative so that staff can spend their time working with the children. At Coundon, we continue to record 'wow' moments in children's individual achievement squares in each classroom. This work is then added to a Learning journal.

In our school, we use Target Tracker Assessment tracker and our own progression framework to record judgements. Each child's level of development is recorded and used to identify children's next steps. Children are also assessed using the Wellcomm screening tool to identify those children with communication needs and referrals to speech and language or intervention sessions are planned accordingly. At the end of the children's Nursery and Reception years, we provide a summary to parents, reporting the progress against our progression frameworks and the ELG's for each of the areas of learning. In accordance with the EYFS statutory framework 2021, children will be identified as on track or not on track and interventions planned with a view to closing any gaps. We also provide them with their child's Learning Journal, which will have a snapshot of evidence in the way of annotated photographs, observations, children's work and parent's contributions.

The Learning Environment

The Nursery and Reception units are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet and rest. The units are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS unit have their own enclosed outdoor area, which can be open or closed for Nursery and Reception to work together or separately. 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 the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We want the children at Coundon Primary School to be physically active and have static and moveable equipment that is used to develop a range of physical skills. In the 2021/22 term a new outdoor areas was developed for the Reception children. This area was planned to encourage the children to develop strength and co-ordination and to encourage them to be physically active. 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 Coundon Primary School, 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.

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 the 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:

- A 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 and support staff 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 EYFS;
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on, 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:

The statutory framework for the EYFS sets out three characteristics of effective teaching and learning, and at Coundon Primary we continuously reflect upon these different ways that children learn to ensure our planning and range of activities promote these learning styles:

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."

EYFS Principles into Practice

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 and the difference between right and wrong. 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 can 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."

EYFS Principles into Practice

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.

Creating and Thinking Critically.

"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."

EYFS Principles into Practice

Children are given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open-ended questions. Children are able to access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning. They are encouraged to talk about their creations and to make adaptations and evaluate their designs.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of 3 Prime areas of learning and development:

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

And 4 Specific areas of learning and development:

- Literacy
- Maths
- 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 and child-initiated activities. In each area, we have devised progression documents that are linked to Development matters. This framework leads to the Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow

the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This Governor will discuss EYFS practice with the EYFS manager and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. The Head Teacher and school leaders will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Safer Eating

In line with the latest government safer eating guidance, Coundon Primary School promotes safe eating practices throughout the EYFS to minimise the risk of choking. During snack time, children are seated facing a paediatric first aider, ensuring they can be closely supervised while eating. Fruit is provided whole where appropriate, and when food requires cutting, it is prepared in safe, age-appropriate shapes rather than small round chunks that could obstruct a child's airway. These procedures are shared with all EYFS staff and are consistently followed to ensure a safe and vigilant eating environment. During lunchtime, a member of staff is present who is a paediatric first aider and children are sat at tables while staff monitor.

Safer Sleeping

Coundon Primary School follows current safer sleeping guidance to ensure the wellbeing of any child who falls asleep during the school day. Every EYFS classroom and the nurture space is equipped with a designated sleep mat, providing a safe and comfortable place for children to rest. Whenever a child falls asleep, a sleep log is completed recording the child's name, the date, the time they fell asleep, and the time they wake. Staff also record welfare checks every ten minutes throughout the child's sleep to ensure they remain safe and comfortable, with all checks documented accordingly.

Use of Technology

In accordance with updated government guidance on the use of technology in the Early Years, Coundon Primary School has significantly reduced opportunities for passive screen use. Interactive whiteboards remain switched off unless they are being used as a purposeful teaching tool. Children engage with screens only as part of active, adult-led learning experiences, such as music and movement sessions, shared stories and texts, or structured teaching within our phonics and mathematics programmes where children are encouraged to participate actively. Desktop computers are available for short, supervised sessions using curriculum-focused educational games, and iPads are used only occasionally under the direct guidance of staff to teach specific skills. Where audio is required for activities such as Dough Disco, interactive whiteboards may be switched on to access music; however, screen use is kept to the minimum necessary to support learning