

Corbridge CoE First School:
Early Years Policy



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Corbridge CoE First School, children join nursery the September after their third birthday and move to reception in the September following their fourth birthday.

The EYFS is based upon four themes:

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

It is envisaged that if the first 3 are successful, they will all contribute to the last.

A Unique Child

At Corbridge CoE First School, 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. Within our EYFS, we believe children are at the centre of their learning therefore, we uphold a strong child centred philosophy.

Positive Relationships

At Corbridge CoE First School we recognise that children learn to be strong and develop independence through forming secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. All staff develop positive relationships with children, interacting positively and taking time to listen. This is in line with the whole school relational policy.

Enabling Environments

At Corbridge CoE First School we value the key role that the environment plays in supporting children's development. We recognise that children learn well in environments that cater to their individual needs and fully challenge all levels of development.

Learning and Development

Areas of Learning

The EYFS curriculum is made up of seven areas of learning which are split into two main categories: Prime Areas and Specific Areas. The prime areas underpin all aspects of the EYFS curriculum. The prime areas are: Personal, Social and Emotional development, Physical Development and Communication and Language.

The Prime Areas of Learning

The prime areas of learning are particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. Communication and language underpins all areas of learning within our EYFS curriculum. Our school offers a language rich environment with provision based on high quality texts to develop children's language and vocabulary. Physical development (PD) is supported through carefully planned provisions enabling children to progress in their fine and gross motor skills. Personal, social and emotional development (PSED) supports children to think about and understand their own feelings, building and forming relationships with others and learning how to develop independence.

The Specific Areas of Learning

The 4 Specific Areas of learning are Literacy, Maths, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design. These specific areas of learning provide a context for development and reflect cultural knowledge and accumulated understanding. They are dependent on learning in the Prime areas. To support literacy development we use the carefully chosen core texts to embed a real love of learning. Phonics is taught throughout EYFS. In nursery, children take part in daily pre-phonics activities. In reception, children embark on their RWI journey to support core word reading skills. In maths, we follow the White Rose approach to embedding core skills. Our continuous provision demonstrates a strong emphasis upon supporting the children's understanding of the world along with enabling them to express themselves imaginatively and creatively, using art and design. New learning and topics are adapted to reflect the needs of the children and their interests.

Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL)

Recognising the importance of how a child learns is equally vital to their early education. The EYFS Statutory Framework clearly states that these characteristics of effective learning include: Playing and Exploring, Active Learning and Creating and Thinking Critically.

Playing and Exploring (engagement)

At Corbridge CofE First School, we ensure that play is at the heart of learning. Through play our children explore, develop and engage in learning experiences which help them make sense of the world. The children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to practise skills, develop ideas and think creatively as individuals and alongside others.

Active Learning (motivation)

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 satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and thinking critically (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 opportunities 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.

Planning and the daily routine

Activities and resources are planned well to promote all 7 areas of learning whilst fully supporting the CoEL. The indoor and outdoor environments are utilised for both adult led and child initiated learning opportunities. The daily routine allows children to engage in adult led activities in both small and large group situations while high priority is given to child initiated learning through a plan, do, review approach. Daily phonics takes place with whole class activities in Nursery and targeted group work in reception. The RWI program is embedded into the EYFS phonics curriculum. Each day, the children take part in Special Person and engage in a daily act of worship in line with whole school policies for PSHE and Collective Worship.

Plan, do, review and the learning environment

High priority is given to child initiated learning in both the indoor and outdoor environments through plan, do, review sessions. Children are given the opportunity to plan their own learning; thinking about where they will work and what resources they might need. During this child initiated session, the adult role is to play alongside children in order to challenge their thinking through the use of high quality, open-ended questioning. During review time, children assess their learning; discussing what they found out and if they would make any changes in future sessions. In reception, the children have their own planning books where they record their plans. The planning book is used to support future learning opportunities in both adult led and child initiated sessions. In nursery, verbal plans take place initially using a range of planning strategies. For example, using a telephone or talking to a puppet.

A high quality, language rich learning environment is a key feature at Corbridge CoE First School. Carefully chosen texts; fiction, non-fiction and rhyme, are displayed and available for children to access at all times in the different areas of the classroom. The learning environment is key to successful child initiated learning. It is organised to ensure children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently while allowing children to explore and learn securely and safely. Oracy is developed through high-quality interactions. Key vocabulary is well planned for all areas of learning and is displayed throughout the continuous provision. Therefore, all adults in the setting are well aware of the current key vocabulary. The learning environment is well planned and provides resources and opportunities to meet the cohort's needs and interests and offers challenge for all. All areas should be easily identified and all resources clearly labelled using a mixture of words, objects, pictures and photos.

In EYFS, the focus of the display should be celebrating children's achievements through the inclusion of their work or photographs and comments of the learning process. Displays should feature a mixture of typed and handwritten text as well as promoting pupil voice.

Outdoor learning

Early Years have their own outdoor area which offers the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. All areas of learning are catered for in the outdoor environment with a strong emphasis on the PSED, PD, C&L and UW. Children are given the opportunity to work indoors or outdoors during plan, do, review sessions. The outdoor provision is reviewed and updated in line with children's attainment, interests and environmental changes. There are planned, adult led, outdoor learning opportunities throughout the

week. This ensures that all children are utilising the outdoor environment at some point during the week. Forest school sessions take place weekly for all children within the EYFS. School provides children with waterproof suits to ensure access to the outdoor environment in all weathers. Children are encouraged to change for outdoor learning independently supporting the PD AoL. Staff dress appropriately for the weather conditions.

Assessment (Please refer also to EYFS assessment and marking policy)

Throughout the child's time in EYFS, on-going assessments take place in relation to progress in the 7 areas of learning. This begins with a carefully planned baseline within the first 6 weeks of the child entering the nursery setting. In reception the baseline is closed after week 3. Children complete the RBA within the first 3 weeks alongside planned observations and interactions.

We measure children's progress against their starting points of the baseline with the vast majority of evidence drawn from practitioner's knowledge of the child. The statutory framework 2021 states ***'assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork.'***

Each child's journey is recorded through a mix of annotated photographs, videos and outcomes of work which are shared with parents via Tapestry. Parents are equally involved in the process through uploading their own observations onto tapestry. Termly meetings with other settings involved with the child take place ensuring a holistic approach to building up a profile of each child.

In EYFS we set realistic but challenging expectations that meet the needs of all children. We meet these needs through planning a wide range of opportunities that build upon and extend children's unique knowledge, experience and interests. We monitor children's progress and take action to provide challenge and support as necessary.

At the end of the reception year, judgements are made as to whether children have 'met' or are 'emerging into' the 17 Early Learning Goals of the EYFSP. The impact of the EYFS curriculum is reflected in having well rounded, happy and confident children transitioning into Year 1. During the summer term, moderation and professional dialogue takes place between the reception and year 1 staff to ensure smooth transition EYFS to NC for all. Clear and progressive long term overviews for each AoL have been designed to ensure progress while maintaining a child-centred approach to learning. The plans, designed in liaison with subject leads, outline key vocabulary, skills, knowledge and understanding. Carefully planned progress indicators ensure children are ready to engage successfully in the national curriculum. Any children who have been identified as working at an emerging level are supported through targeted interventions in line with school policy.

Parents

We recognise that parents are children's first and most important educators and we value the contributions they make. Parents are actively encouraged to support their children's progress by uploading their own observations onto Tapestry or by providing us with information about their out of school achievements. Each term parents and carers are invited into school to take part in special learning sessions with their children. This is a wonderful opportunity for parents to engage with their child in school. Staff are available to talk to parents during these sessions. Termly parental consultations are also offered to discuss children's attainment and progress and any concerns a parent may have. Interim reports are shared at consultations with a longer written report provided

at the end of each school year. The child's CoEL are reported at the end of reception alongside their attainment against the ELGs. Parents receive a link to download their learning journal at the end of reception or if they leave the setting mid-year.

EYFS behaviour and relational policy

Positive reinforcement is ongoing and embedded into EYFS practice both as a tool to build positive relationships but equally to support the behaviour policy. At Corbridge CoE First School we follow a relational approach as set out in the whole school behaviour policy. Adults act as positive role models for behaviour. The school ethos of 'be the best you can be' also supports the behaviour policy within EYFS.

Children displaying positive behaviours are immediately rewarded with verbal feedback and used as positive role models for others. Sometimes children may be rewarded with a sticker or taken to share their achievements with the head teacher or another class in school.

In the event where a child has intentionally hurt another, 'reflection time' can be given. This should take place in the area where the incident happened and should be overseen calmly by the adult who was approached or witnessed the action. After this restorative conversations take place in line with school policy.

Welfare

We are legally required to comply with the welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand and endeavour to promote the welfare of children by:

- Promoting good health, including good oral health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Managing behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensuring all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensuring that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensuring that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintaining records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of all staff working within EYFS to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This Governor has the opportunity to discuss EYFS with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body.

The Head teacher, Early Years Lead and subject co-ordinators carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

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