

River Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and 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 2021)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At River Primary School Primary School, children join the Foundation class in the year that they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners.

“When we give every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow.”
(Development Matters, July 2021)

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and developing

This policy explains how our practice is underpinned by these four themes.

A Unique Child

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, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning and self –identity in their community.

Inclusion

Children learn and develop more from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives. If children are at risk of falling behind the majority, the best time to help them to catch up and keep up is in the early years. Every child can make progress, if they are given the right support.”
(Development Matters, July 2021)

All children and their families are valued at River Primary School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the schools Inclusion Leader is called upon for further information and advice.

Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school’s SEN and Inclusion Policy.

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 and styles in both the inside and outdoor environments, based on children's learning needs.
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate, engage, extend and support children 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.
- listening to the children's voice and children's contributions
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school feel and are safe. We aim to support children in understanding 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 and psychological well-being of all children. We know that children learn best when they are healthy and safe, when their individual needs are met and when they have the chance to build positive relationships with the adults around them and their peers.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

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

- promote the welfare and safeguarding of all 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 and suitable 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.

Positive Relationships

At River Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We foster 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:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school during summer transition opportunities.

- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their peers, new teacher and EYFS team before starting school during the summer term
- Support children through the transition from pre-school to Reception with the children attending part time. This is also to support staff and parents in getting to know each other as well as the children.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher or write in the home contact book if there are any concerns.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: stay and play sessions, sports days etc
- Providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by adding to their learning journey or sending evidence through to the class email
- Inviting parents to attend 'workshop' sessions at least 3 times a year.
- A mid-year report, in addition to an end of year written report related to attainment and progress within the EYFS
- Inviting parents to attend formal whole school parent's consultations.

All staff in the EYFS develop and sustain good relationships with all the children, interacting positively and taking time to listen. At River, the class teacher is the key person to all children, supported by the teaching assistants and EYFS band teacher.

We have good links with the local preschool providers through, for example, exchange of records, invitations to events, and opportunities for CPD.

Enabling Environments

We create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. The children have access to indoor and outdoor environments that are set up in with continuous provision and specific resources and activities that are planned for linked to their needs, interests and the topic being covered.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interests. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences and help them build their learning over time. These observations of new learning are recorded in the children's individual learning journeys.

Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff in Busy Time. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

Learning and Development

We follow the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework 2021 and use the principles of the Cornerstones curriculum as outlined in our Curriculum Policy.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development.

The specific areas are

- Literacy
- Mathematics

- Understanding of the world and
- Expressive arts and design

At River, we use the SSP of 'Monster Phonics' to support our teaching of daily phonics and ongoing assessments. Further details are outlined in the River Primary School Phonics Policy.

At River Primary, each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Our outdoor provision mirrors the opportunities available to the children in inside offering a mix of adult-led and child-initiated learning:

“Play is used as an essential part children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Practitioners need to decide what they want children in their setting to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. Practitioners must stimulate children’s interests, responding to each child’s emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning. As children grow older and move into the reception year, there should be a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning. This will help prepare children for Year 1.”

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021)

Planning and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At River we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning as outlined in the Early Years Framework 2021. These 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; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Assessment

At River, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes, Target Tracker is used to track progress over time. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, teachers will administer the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Children are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child. The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Health and Safety

At River Primary School there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school risk assessment policy) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment.

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2021, at River we have these measures in place:

- The whole school Medical Care Policy ensures that there are systems in place to make sure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's medical needs are kept up to date. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer." A written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and informs the child's parents and/or carers on the same day." (Statutory framework for EYFS 2021)
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- Children's' dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required. This information is shared with the onsite kitchen staff.
- Each classroom has a snack and sink area that can provide healthy snacks and drinks.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept.
- The fire and emergency evacuation procedure
- The safeguarding policy states how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. School cameras must not be used for staff personal use. Personal cameras or other personal devices must not be used to take or store images of children.

Transition

From Pre-school settings

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express.
- The children are invited to two separate visits to their reception class on whole school transition mornings.
- Members of staff from River make visits to feeder settings. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.
- Children at River preschool and Abbey preschool (main feeder settings) will have visits with their key workers into school where they get an opportunity to engage with the current reception children and aspects of daily routines.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records, discussions with parents and carers.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').

Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the initial planning of activities in Year 1.

Review

This policy will be reviewed in line with the school's schedule for policy reviews.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
[Chair of Learning and Development Team]