



Carlton Academy Trust Early Years and Foundation Stage Policy

Ratified by Trust Board: (date)

Sept 2020

Signed on behalf of Trust Board:

R Butterfield

Signed by Chief Executive Officer:

A Kneeshaw

Next Review:

Sept 2021

Policy Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children in EYFS (Reception and Nursery) access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents/ carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Structure and Environment

We strive to provide our children with an engaging learning environment that inspires curiosity, open ended situations, first hand experiences and a language rich development.

We have on Reception class consisting of 30 children. This is a high-quality learning environment which also includes a large outdoor provision environment.

Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS. This comprises seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, three '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 prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

At Thorpe, we deliver the 2017 statutory framework through the use of a planned themed based curriculum which enables the children to develop all of the crucial skills, knowledge and vocabulary that they need to be effective learners. The planning encompasses a range of topics, which are designed with the children's interests in mind, providing lots of opportunities for them to develop their skills, experience and knowledge across a range of themes. By placing the Characteristics of Effective Learning at the heart of all we do, we support the children to develop their creative and critical thinking skills.

We ensure that all areas of learning are taught in a practical, playful and inclusive way which provides an appropriate level of challenge for all individuals. Children also have many opportunities to lead their own learning which is reflected in the daily timetable. By following their interests and addressing gaps in their learning, rather than carrying out focus group activities children at Thorpe receive a personalised learning approach.

This ensures that all early learning goals are deliberately planned for and opportunities are offered within direct teaching and purposeful provision. In addition, it ensures that learning over time is sequenced effectively and there is progression from Reception and then Year 1.

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. Alongside our themed based curriculum, staff also provide inclusive teaching and differentiate challenges and activities in order to ensure that all children can achieve. Staff's knowledge of children's individual needs, interests, and preferred ways of working are used to deliver high quality teaching and learning.

During the week there are discrete daily phonics, mathematics and literacy sessions. We also enhance the provision weekly to support the children's learning. We plan using all areas, including outdoors and the wider community. Staff also consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

The impact of our approach, which mirrors the four guiding principles from the statutory framework, ensures that pupils are given the opportunity to learn different ways within an enabling environment.

Delayed language skills inform under-performance later in life, yet many primary school children have unidentified speech and language difficulties.

Many of our children start school with language skills that are slightly below the level expected on entry to reception and some children are 12+ months below their peers. With the support of outside agencies and the school Inclusion Leader, small group and one to one interventions using programmes and resources such as Ginger Bear and the Black Sheep Press enable these children to receive appropriate speech and language support in order to help accelerate their progress.

Assessment

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes, with staff observing pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and preferred ways of working. These observations are then used to inform future planning. Practitioners also consider information shared by parents/carers, which are then recorded within the child's Early Essence learning journey. This is used to build evidence to demonstrate the children's learning and progress over time. We also collect high quality information and evidence of children's work that inform future practice, enabling a personalised learning approach that reflect children's attributes and interests. Some evidence of learning will also be recorded within the pupil's books independent writing books and both will be used as the basis of moderation.

Each week 4 focus children are chosen and each child will be a focus child approximately 3 times per year. Focus children will each have 2 personalised next steps for that week. These are created by adults the week before, either from previous summative assessment, incidental observations from the previous weeks or our own knowledge of the children. Parents are informed in writing the week prior to their child being a focus child and are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey by adding home learning observations.

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

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Exceeding expected levels or,
- Not yet reaching expected levels/emerging

Assessments are informed by ongoing evaluations of work and discussions with parents/carers. Judgements are shared with parents/carers.

Working with Parents/Carers

Children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between school and parents/carers. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents/carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. Parents and carers are also encouraged to add observations from home using Early Essence, which staff may use as part of assessments where appropriate. We also provide remote learning resources, providing lessons and activities in an easily accessible format. For those parents and children who do not have access to remote learning, paper based learning is provided.

Staff support parents/carers in guiding their child's development at home. They also help families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate. We hold parents consultation evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms and provide a written progress report in the Summer term. We also actively encourage the '50 Things to do before you are 5' programme and often set them as projects for children to complete at home.

Transition

A parents meeting is held in June where transition procedures are explained and welcome/information packs are given out. In the Summer term the Reception team completes Nursery visits. They then complete home visits for each new child joining in September. They are then invited to a 'Stay and Play session during the summer term and several at the start of the Autumn term. They then stay for school lunch before they start full time.