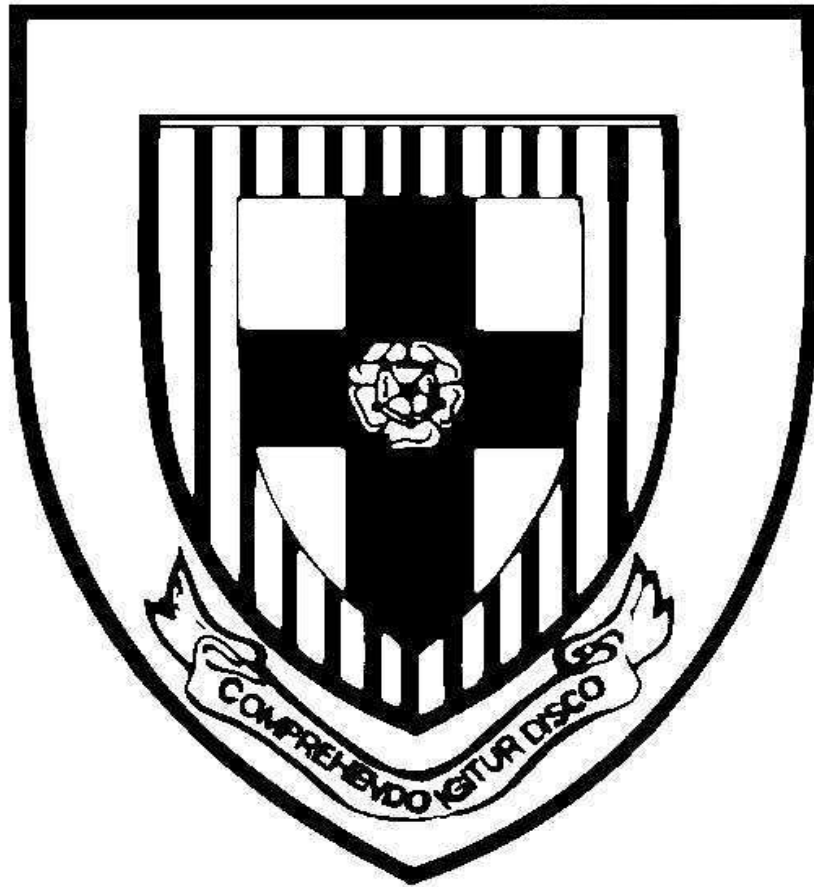


Oak Cottage Primary School



# EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION POLICY

July 2022

## **Oak Cottage Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

### **Aims**

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the breadth 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
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

As part of our practice, at Oak Cottage Primary, we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS curriculum, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment both indoors and outside

### **Structure of the EYFS**

Oak Cottage has an onsite nursery for children aged 3-4 years. We provide part time morning sessions 9am-12noon. For afternoon care, we have an onsite wrap around childcare provider called Orchids. The additional 15 hours of childcare vouchers can be used to cover some of this cost. If there is a low birth year and there is space available, we also take rising threes.

Once a child is of school age, they enter the Reception class for full days, 8.50 till 3.30. We are a one form entry, meaning there is one class of 30 for both Nursery and Reception.

### **Entitlement**

Our early years settings follow the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

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

## **Communication and Language**

This aspect of learning involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations. This covers all aspects of language development and provides the foundation for literacy skills.

Children's developing competence in speaking and listening is focused on. We aim to extend and enrich the children's vocabulary through story time, rhymes, role-play and group discussions. Children are encouraged to share their own experiences through speaking and acting out events in imaginative play and talking about their own ideas. They are encouraged to take part in class activities such as working with puppets, participating in music sessions and saying rhymes and singing songs together. Communication and Language links directly into the English National Curriculum.

## **Physical Development**

This aspect of learning involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children are given opportunities to move to music, use equipment, develop and practice their fine and gross motor skills. They develop an increasing understanding of how their body works. This is done in both indoor and outdoors and by working with a wide range of resources. There is an intervention programme called smart moves to support children with gross motor skills.

Physical Development leads into the National Curriculum for Physical Education.

## **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

This aspect of learning involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups and to have confidence in their own abilities. The school fosters and develops relationships between home, school and places of worship in order to make links stronger for the good of the community as a whole. Children are encouraged to learn to work, share, take turns and co-operate with others. They are encouraged to be independent and make choices for themselves. Children are enabled to become confident and develop a positive self image. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy

choices in relation to food. PSE development feeds into all subjects of the national curriculum.

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

### **Literacy**

This aspect of learning involves providing children with phonic skills to enable children to read and write independently. We have a variety of resources for the children to use to help them develop early literacy skills. Children are encouraged to use the mark-making areas indoors and outdoors independently but they also take part in teacher-led activities. These activities include whole class shared reading, phonics sessions and small group guided reading and writing. The pre-writing work encourages correct pencil control, left/right orientation and cursive letter formation. Children have the opportunity to develop their writing skills in accordance with their age, ability and competence.

We encourage children to treat books and other resources with respect and they are given many opportunities to listen to stories told by the staff, with each weeks learning starting with a new text. Literacy links directly to the English National Curriculum.

### **Mathematics**

This aspect of learning involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems and to describe shapes, space and measures. We aim for children to achieve mathematical understanding and a firm foundation for numeracy through practical activities and using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas. Pre-number work is covered through nursery rhymes, stories and hands on number activities. Children are given the opportunity to learn about number, numerical patterns, shape, space, position, pattern and measurement. Towards the end of the Foundation stage children start learning to tell the time and are given opportunities to learn about money and simple calculations. Mathematics links directly into the Maths National Curriculum.

### **Understanding the World**

This aspect of learning involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, festivals, places, history and the environment. All children are given opportunities to solve problems, investigate and make decisions and experiment.

They will learn about living things, their environment, the world around them and the people who are important in their lives and those of other people. They are also encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of others and to

respect other cultures and beliefs. Understanding the World leads into the National Curriculum for History, Geography, R.E and science.

### **Expressive Arts and Design**

This aspect of learning involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role play and design and technology.

Children are given opportunities to make paintings, drawings, collages, models and use percussion musical instruments. Children also learn new songs and rhymes and enjoy singing them with each other. Colour recognition is taught, naming colours, mixing paints, sorting and matching. Through various times during the year children are given the opportunity to participate in school productions and assemblies.

Expressive arts and design leads into the National Curriculum for Art, Physical Education, Music and Design and Technology.

### **Foundation Stage curriculum planning**

#### **Intent**

Our EYFS lead worked with Solihull LA to create the Solihull LTP curriculum framework for all Solihull schools to use. This is a blend of the Birth to 5 and Development Matters. Staff then use the Solihull framework objectives per area of learning, to create MTP. Each half term, each area of learning is matched to our topics, a weekly text and our curriculum intent.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development. As a team, we write long term and medium term plans using the EYFS based on a series of topics, each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans are reviewed by the Headteacher, the SLT and subject leaders. These plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our informal observations, which remain flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses. Staff also take into account 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.

#### **Implementation**

We ensure quality first teaching across all areas of the curriculum within stimulating learning environments, both indoors and outdoors. There is a well-planned and organised continuous provision which allow the children to learn through play with a carefully planned balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning opportunities. We promote a love of learning through real life experiences and opportunities to build on prior learning. We have strong parental partnerships which empower parents to support their child's learning at home. Oak Cottage has systematic approaches to teaching reading to

ensure all children learn to read with high quality phonics teaching via twinkl, starting as soon as children begin nursery.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in Nursery will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS. There is a daily phonics session and maths blast. The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, Early Years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out.

We have organised the curriculum into six half termly topics, which are on a 2 year cycle of rotation.

| Term     | Year 1 of cycle - Topics and themes       | Year 2 of Cycle - Topics and themes       |
|----------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Autumn 1 | <b>Myself</b>                             | <b>Ourselves</b>                          |
| Autumn 2 | <b>Pirates</b>                            | <b>Animals</b>                            |
| Spring 1 | <b>Farm</b>                               | <b>Clothes</b>                            |
| Spring 2 | <b>Superheroes/Princesses and Knights</b> | <b>Superheroes/Princesses and Knights</b> |
| Summer 1 | <b>Out and About - places</b>             | <b>Nursery Rhymes</b>                     |
| Summer 2 | <b>Out and about – minibeasts</b>         | <b>Traditional Stories</b>                |

### **Impact**

Within our setting, you will see:

High levels of engagement and motivation demonstrated from children, which supports them to become lifelong learners.

Confident and capable readers who demonstrate a love of reading

Evidence of strong links with parents.

Children demonstrating the characteristics of effective learning and are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

Children feeling happy and safe and enjoying coming to school.

All children accessing a balanced and challenging curriculum regardless of their background, needs or abilities.

Children making strong progress from their starting points and are offered a broad curriculum which meets each child's unique needs.

Children supported by adults that are well trained and passionate about providing the best education for every child.

The percentage of children achieving the GLD within the EYFSP being above the local and national average.

## Teaching and Learning

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply equally to teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage 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 achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- 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 space, facilities and equipment, both indoor and outdoor
- the identification, of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents and carers as targets, informal conversations or at parents evenings.
- the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- the regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Assessment for learning

At Oak Cottage, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are within the play partnering role and are not formally written down, so that all the practitioners time is used to further develop learning. These are used to shape future planning and staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

When a child is **aged between 3 and 4**, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 7 areas of learning. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

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
- 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. Parents are asked to contribute to their children's profile in a number of ways, either commenting on their children's progress against their targets, with, fortnightly 'wower' stars, in their reading records or by email.

Our wrap around childcare provider, Orchids, also contribute to these assessments in conjunction with the Nursery teacher.

Teachers and wrap around care work alongside one another and with the Early Years Foundation Stage Phase leader, other subject leaders within the school, with other local cluster schools and the Local Authority, to ensure a consistent and moderated approach to assessment.

At the end of the final term in both Nursery and Reception, EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority. There are 17 summary scales in Reception and 7 in Nursery. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the next term ahead.

## **Inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

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 when planning for their learning. In the Early Years Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. 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 (such as speech therapy) as necessary.

In this way and through appropriate differentiation, we try to meet the needs of all of our pupils. Individual education plans are written and updated three times throughout the year, with support from the SENCO.

## **Resources**

The classrooms are organised into seven bases, to match the seven areas of learning. This layout is designed to encourage children to make choices and develop independence by having equipment and materials readily available and well organised. The classroom layout also gives children the space they need for their activities while encouraging them to initiate their own learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage also has a designated outside area. The use of the outdoor play area is planned for, as part of the medium term planning in the same way as other subjects.

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

The Early Years staff undertake a yearly resource audit and submit any resource requirements to the early years leader. Then resources are provided to fulfil the school improvement plan targets as well as covering day-to-day requirements. Each classroom has its own bank of resources for each area of learning. There are shared resources in the wooden shed and plastic bunkers to be used in the outdoor learning area.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings/inviting members of the community into our setting.

## **Working with parents**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child and foster strong working partnerships with them. 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 teacher has a home visit with each child's family prior to their starting Nursery
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- Welcome to Nursery meeting prior to the children starting school and a Welcome to Reception meeting during the first two weeks of school.
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress
- offering the opportunity for parents and carers to contribute to their children's EYFS profile.
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns, with our open-door policy. There is a formal meeting for parents in the Autumn and Spring terms at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- having flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parents to become secure, and by allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances.
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents; for example curriculum days, trips, drop ins, open day and stay and play sessions.
- offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents.
- There is regular communication with home through the website, emails, reports, informal conversations, parents evenings and through curriculum letters.

### **Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill or may have an accident. We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years for example by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things

- The importance of brushing your teeth – each child gets their own toothbrush and toothpaste to take home

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

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

The Early Years Foundation Stage Leader is also the KS1 Leader and part of the Senior Leadership team. She will :

- Ensure the consistency of teaching, learning and all routines across the Foundation Stage
- Alongside teachers, teaching assistants and wrap around care, moderate assessments made on the Early years foundation stage profile
- Carry out formal and informal monitoring, for example lesson observations, work scrutinies, environment checks
- Maintain resources
- Ensure statutory requirements are met

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Jane Newman – Early years leader every three years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Policy Last Updated: July 2022