



## Cornerstone Church of England (VA) Primary School



*Building our Community  
with Love, Forgiveness and Hope*

### EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

<b>Reviewed by</b>	School Improvement Committee	<b>Authorised by</b>	School Improvement Committee
<b>Last Review</b>	Spring 2021	<b>Date</b>	25/02/2021
<b>Next Review</b>	Spring 2023	<b>Review Cycle</b>	Bi-annually

#### Statement of principles

This policy is rooted in our school values of **Love, Forgiveness** and **Hope**.

- We demonstrate **Love** with the care with which we plan exciting and engaging learning experiences for the children and the respect with which we involve them in their learning.
- We demonstrate **Forgiveness** in the open reflective way that all staff and pupils are involved in developing the EYFS curriculum, and the way we forgive ourselves and others for mistakes which we use as learning points for further improvement
- We demonstrate **Hope** in the creation and implementation of a curriculum which challenges, inspires and promotes success for every child. The EYFS promotes a 'Growth Mindset' approach which encourages children to learn from mistakes and feedback, and to, ultimately, grow to become more thoughtful, mature, educated, wiser and educated people

#### Aims

We aim to ensure:

- Every child has the best possible start in school and support to their full potential
- Every child's experience in the early years has a positive impact on their future life chances
- We nurture a secure, safe and happy childhood which provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up
- We keep all children safe and ensure that they thrive

#### 'EYFS'

The Early Years Foundation Stage EYFS applies from birth to five. In our school children enter in September, generally becoming full time by the third week of September, unless parents request a more gradual transition into full time schooling. We take into account the needs of individual children and their pre-school experience. We offer parents flexibility to make part time arrangements until their child is five and also acknowledge parents have the right to defer the start of the place in school,

The EYFS is currently based upon four principles:

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

### **A Unique Child**

At Cornerstone we recognise that every child is an individual who has already begun their learning journey. We recognise that children develop in individual ways at different rates. We develop our children's values, dispositions and attitudes to learning by sharing their success, providing positive and useful feedback and valuing their individuality. We share this feedback and celebrations with families through the school's secure online Tapestry platform.

### **Inclusion**

At Cornerstone we value the diversity of individuals within our school and do not discriminate because of 'differences'. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion, gender or ability. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that every child matters, and we value this within our planning, taking their interests and life experiences into account, so that we can help each child to make progress and fulfil potential.

In the EYFS we set challenging but realistic targets for all our children so that we can meet their needs. We plan for all individuals, to help those with Special Educational Needs, to extend our Higher Attaining children, for children with disabilities, for children of all social and cultural groups and for children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

It is important to us that all children are safe. We educate children on boundaries rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We allow children to make managed choices to teach them how to manage risk, but they need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We want to keep our children safe physically, emotionally and psychologically.

### **Welfare**

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. We recognise that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the statutory framework for the EYFS

Requirements for us to:

- Promote the welfare of children
- Promote their good health, preventing the spread of infection and dealing appropriately with children when they are unwell.
- Manage behaviour appropriately to the stage and development of the children
- Ensure all adults who work with children have appropriate training and are CRB checked and deemed appropriate to do so
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe
- Ensure that every child receives challenging enjoyable learning experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe and efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children

## **Positive relationships**

At Cornerstone Primary School we recognise that children learn to be confident, resilient, reflective and independent, in part, from enjoying secure relationships. We aim to develop 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;
- Through sharing achievements, feedback and engaging in conversation through the school's secure online Tapestry platform.
- the children having the opportunity to spend sessions in the school during the half term before starting school;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting in the May before their child starts school;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns, and book a Home Visit at the start of the academic year.

There is a formal meeting for parents in the Autumn term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress and complete the RDS (*Record of Development Summary*) together. Parents receive an interim report in the Spring and an end of year report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the Foundation Stage.

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 our school the EYFS teachers or the Learning Support Staff act as a 'Key Person' to children in EYFS.

Staff in the Foundation Unit meet with the larger feeder pre-school settings to share good practice and discuss current issues. Where children attend other settings in a day, we aim to ensure continuity and coherence by sharing information about the children when we make our pre-school contact.

## **Enabling Environments**

At Cornerstone Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We meet the needs of all children by following this planning list which follows the KAPE principle; know, (the child) assess, (what they can do, need to do next) plan, (to meet individual needs) engage (the child by interesting, motivating and involving them).

## **The Learning Environment**

The Foundation classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and reflect. The environment is set up in learning zones, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

The classroom has its own free flow outdoor area and access to a larger playground. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active, making larger movements than could happen inside. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

## **Learning and Development**

At Cornerstone Primary School we recognise that 'play is essential' and children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles and preferences. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often linked.

As a whole school we are working together with all stakeholders to '**Grow an Inspirational Learning Community**' by:

- **Igniting a love of learning**
- **Encouraging and empowering partnerships**
- **Nurturing a Growth Mindset**

### Teaching and Learning Style

Our Teaching for Learning policy defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2.

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

In the EYFS emphasis has been placed on 'how' children learn rather than 'what' they learn. This has been encapsulated in the '**Characteristics of Effective learning: Will, Thrill and Skill**'. There are three areas that we are developing.

#### **Playing, exploring and engagement.**

'Finding out and exploring, playing with what they know and being willing to have a go.' This is about the *thrill* of learning

'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.'

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They have the opportunity to practice skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually. The children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

#### **Active Learning, motivation**

'Being involved and concentrating, keeping trying, enjoying achieving what they set out to do'.

This is about the *will* of 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.' 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.

#### **Creativity and Thinking Critically**

'Having their own ideas, making links, choosing ways to do things'

This is about the **skill** of learning.

“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 understanding and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given opportunity 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 or making comments which move the learning on. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

### **Areas of Learning and Development**

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

The prime areas are:

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

The specific areas are:

- **Maths**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Literacy**
- **Creative Development**

From birth to three children concentrate on the prime areas. As they grow in confidence and ability within these areas the balance shifts to a more equal focus.

In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the Foundation stage teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor has the opportunity to visit, observe and discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head teacher and Subject Leaders carry out additional monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

## Appendix 1: Successful planning in Early Years

1. The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, is used to plan for a 'broad range of essential knowledge and skills...building on children's natural curiosity and desire to explore and play'
2. We focus on the Development Matters column within the EYFS to identify objectives, usually for two age ranges; 30-50 months and 40-60 months
3. We measure the learning by assessing which children have achieved the objective planned by the teacher in teacher directed time, we use the triangular method to record how well the objective has been achieved.
4. Activities are planned which use as many of the children's ideas and interests as possible, we use our observations to record their ideas and achievements, in order to plan next steps.
5. Resources are selected to interest children we would call these **Enhanced** resources which are different from **Continuous Provision** resources which are always there.
6. Children are involved in planning what is of interest to them but it may be structured by the teacher to support/extend the learning or to work towards the next step, as identified by us, as the year R children are not yet adept at identifying next steps. We would ask them what they think they need to do, learn next and this is likely to be built into 'Reflection sessions'
7. Our **Contexts for Learning** are planned around six very broad themes that experience tell us interest year R children, but these are flexible dependant on the children.
8. Our observations inform planning through formative assessment, and help us track half termly, through summative assessment, using the EYFS profile on our online Tapestry platform.
9. Targets are shared with parents using the Record of Development Summary on Tapestry, RDS and may be shared informally with the children.
10. Children are grouped in many different ways according to their progress, understanding and needs. This varies enormously day by day depending on the Teacher Directed task and groups are very fluid.
11. Allows us to identify those children not making 'good or better progress' and to plan activities/programmes to address their needs.
12. Curriculum target setting, particularly in writing has enabled us to address the trend in school and Hampshire to make less progress in writing, by focusing on the need to get children writing confidently.
13. The EYFS identifies skills children need rather than knowledge to be imparted. It's about development mattering. Independence is key- just as children's ideas impact on planning, in turn, skills acquired, impact on what children do in continuous provision/ independent learning.
14. Objectives identified using 'development matters' are drawn from the column, 'a unique child, observing what the child can do', and exemplified further in the columns; 'positive relationships, what adults could do' and 'enabling environments, what adults could provide',
15. We refer back to our Context with the children and where the idea came from, we say "Do you remember when..." or "You showed me you can, now we will..."
16. Inputs are kept brief and children's teacher directed activities are focused and varied to avoid repetition and lack of interest. Higher Attaining children may be started on an activity early to avoid too much carpet time.
17. Learning Support Assistants have a copy of the short term planning. Their ideas are incorporated along with comments they have made during observations. Adult

- volunteers tend to be involved in regular tasks but also have access to wall mounted planning.
18. Tasks are planned for 30-50 months and 40-60 months but planning is also personalised to meet individual needs.
  19. Children with SEND have specific programmes, particularly SALT (Speech and Language Therapy) but also have 1:1 support. Children with the potential to be Higher Attainers who have met the Early Learning Goals will be provided with learning opportunities which begin to deliver the National Curriculum programmes of Study.
  20. Computing is made integral to the lessons through whiteboard use in Continuous Provision and through use of cameras, cd players, programmable toys etc. Cross curricular opportunities are imbedded in our continuous provision and through our broad contextual themes.
  21. Links between lessons are made explicit by referring back to prior experiences.
  22. Key vocabulary and questions are identified in our planning and on our continuous provision cards (yellow) displayed around the classroom.
  23. Children assess their own learning by using a range of strategies
  24. Children have opportunities to take the 'learning on' through continuous and enhanced provision. Teacher led activities are 'practised' the following week in Enhanced provision.