



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Updated March 2023

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age 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, Department for Education,
2021***

The importance of the EYFS

At Eden Primary, we value the importance of the EYFS and the importance of this year in creating solid foundations for children's future learning and ensuring they develop the necessary skills for embarking on their school life at Eden and beyond.

In the Reception, we help every child to become a competent learner, encouraging them to be curious, resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We encourage children to participate in choice and decision making to help develop independence and self-confidence.

The importance of the Reggio Emilia Approach in Eden Primary.

At Eden Primary we have adopted a Reggio Emilia Approach to teaching and learning in the EYFS because we believe that this is the best way to secure the outcomes of the EYFS for the children in our care.

The core values of this approach are:

- Children are capable of constructing their own learning.
- Children form an understanding of themselves and their place in the world through their interactions with others.
- Children are communicators.
- The environment is the third teacher.
- The adult is a mentor and guide.
- An emphasis on documenting children's thoughts.
- The Hundred Languages of Children (children have different learning styles and these are supported so everyone is able to engage with learning in a way they are comfortable with).

Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

At Eden Primary our goal is to ensure that the aims and principles in the EYFS guidance are met for every child. Eden Primary will also take into account new initiatives and changes implemented nationally which will guide and affect our programme. The principles which guide work in the EYFS at Eden Primary are based upon four themes:

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

A Unique Child:

At Eden we recognize that every child learns in a different way and we are inspired by the 100 Languages of Children and the Reggio Emilia Approach.

- *All children develop in different ways and development is not a linear or automatic process. It depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments that encourage their engagement and recognise their strengths. All children have agency and curiosity to learn, and will interact with other people and the world around them in different ways. Understanding these different ways of knowing about the world is central to understanding who children are and how best to support their development.*

<https://birthto5matters.org.uk/principles-of-the-eyfs/>

- *Each child is unique, and while we can be guided by an understanding of some general patterns of development from pre-birth into early childhood, progression is uneven and unfolds differently for each individual child. The complex differences for each child mean the pathways toward maturity should be seen more as dancing around a ballroom than climbing a ladder. A child's growth, development and learning are interrelated in complex ways from the moment of conception all the way through infancy to early childhood and beyond.*

<https://birthto5matters.org.uk/child-development/>

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities.

Teaching within the EYFS is planned in compliance with the school's Equal Opportunities and Inclusion policies. It ensures that all children access the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum regardless of gender, race, language, religion, class, lifestyles, cultural background or disability.

Children that are identified by EYFS staff as having additional needs are identified for intervention and support as early as possible and are supported accordingly. These children are then discussed at school inclusion meetings with the Inclusion Leader and appropriate

outside agencies are contacted where necessary. Parents are kept fully informed and are partners in this process. Support is given through developing an inclusive classroom where their needs can be met and by careful planning and differentiation where needed.

Enabling Environments

The Learning Environment.

At Eden Primary school we recognise the importance the learning environment has in supporting and extending children's learning and development. In the EYFS the environment is described in terms of three aspects: The emotional environment, the outdoor environment, the indoor environment. These three aspects of the environment together make up the environment for play and learning in the EYFS.

The EYFS at Eden Primary is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely in a safe space. The Reception class has both an indoor and outdoor learning environment and offers exciting, vibrant and stimulating learning opportunities for the children that strongly represent the children themselves: their interests, celebrations and cultures. This has a positive effect on the children's learning and development. Within these learning environments, children have the opportunities to be active, be quiet and rest and outdoor areas offer the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, take risks, develop their language skills and be physically active.

The indoor and outdoor learning environments are set up to incorporate the seven areas of learning, with activities providing opportunities for development over several of the learning areas at one time. Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning exciting and challenging activities/experiences to further extend the children's learning.

Planning, Observation and Assessment

The EYFS planning is designed to enable each child to get close to, reach, or exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. In the EYFS, on-going formative assessment of children's learning is used to ensure that future planning is informed by and is a reflection of children's interests and identified needs. A topic/theme gives opportunities for children to deepen their knowledge and access stimulating and exciting learning opportunities through careful planning and strong cross curricular links. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation and all EYFS staff are responsible for the collection of these. Incidental and planned observations are collected and are used to inform the EYFS Profile at the end of every half term. These observations are collated in each child's Learning Journal which provides a record of the child's achievements over the course of the year.

At the end of the year, the EYFS Profile scores are collected and EYFS staff moderate children's progress ensuring that contributions are taken from a range of perspectives.

Positive Relationships

Staff Relationships

The EYFS consists of one Reception class. The EYFS staff meet regularly to discuss children, practice, teaching and learning and any other concerns/issues. Continuity and coherence is ensured through the sharing of information. In addition to this, EYFS and Year 1 staff meet regularly to ensure continuity and cohesion between the learning in these classes.

Child – Practitioner Relationships

In Reception, practitioners work extremely hard to develop caring, nurturing, trusting and respectful relationships with the children through positive and rich interactions and taking time to listen. Staff model positive relationships to the children in an emotionally responsive and literate environment, supporting the children in their personal, social and emotional development and in forming their own positive relationships. They respect children's ideas and view them as capable individuals with valuable contributions to make.

Parents as Partners

At Eden Primary, we recognise that parents are children's first educators and we value the contribution that they make. We therefore work hard to develop these relationships and open lines of communication which enable staff and families to work together to achieve the best possible outcomes for children.

Home visits operate prior to a new child starting in Reception. These home visits are used as a starting point for EYFS practitioners to start building relationships and partnerships with both the child and parent/s or guardian and to develop links between home and school. Parents are reminded that Eden Primary operates an open door policy so that parents/guardians are able to spend time in the setting at any time and staff encourage parents/guardians to talk to staff regarding any concerns/issues.

Once a child has started at Eden Primary in Reception, an informal meeting takes place, between the teacher and parents, every term to celebrate the child's achievements. The child's Learning Journal is presented to the parent/guardian and the child's progress in all areas is discussed.

Reception parents/guardians receive a summative report detailing their child's achievements, attainment, progress and next steps at the end of the Spring term.

Learning and Development:

Areas of Learning and Development

In the EYFS, staff provide safe, rich, challenging, stimulating and exciting opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development. in the indoor and outdoor learning environments.

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning and development. The three prime areas of:

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

And the four specific areas of:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

At Eden Primary, all areas of learning and development are valued equally and depend on each other. The three prime areas which are particularly crucial for building a child's capacity to learn are strengthened through the four specific areas. The Reception team ensures strong cross curricular links and all areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. The indoor and outdoor learning environments are also valued as equally important. Within these environments, staff provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum with elements from each area of learning and development woven into the provision.

Teaching and Learning

The Reception class team support children's learning through their play and in adult led, focussed learning opportunities. They ask questions and clarify children's expressions which in turn enhances children's ability to think critically and ask questions themselves. They try to do this in a way that does not interfere with or overpower children's play. Staff ensure that play presents no barriers to children's learning irrelevant of language, cultures, ability or gender. The EYFS staff are trained to understand how children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. Staff understand that children have individual preferences for different learning styles and observe child initiated play to be able to provide for their individual interests and needs. Effective learning and teaching is supported through:

- Strong parent partnerships that help our children to feel secure in Reception and develop a sense of wellbeing and achievement
- Understanding that the staff have excellent knowledge of how children learn and develop and how this must be reflected in their teaching.

- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the 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.
- Encouraging children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management.
- The support for learning in appropriate and accessible spaces, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors, including the effective use of ICT.
- The identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents.

Play and Exploration

Play is an intrinsic part of children's learning and development and has many possible but no prescriptive outcomes. Therefore, well planned play, both indoors and outdoors is one of the key ways in which children learn. Play is a vital component of children's lives and is essential for physical, intellectual, linguistic, emotional, behavioural and social development. Play draws on what children already know and can do and enables them to apply existing knowledge and practise their skills whilst also offering challenges to help children master new ones.

Play is the process through which our children explore and develop learning experiences, exploring, investigating, recreating and developing an understanding of the world around them. It is in their play that children learn at their highest level. It offers children opportunities to explore feelings and relationships, ideas, connections and consequences.

During play, children have the opportunity to practise skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually. Children communicate with others around them as they investigate and solve problems. 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. Children become empowered to make choices and to be independent in their learning.