

## Northchapel Community Primary School

### Early Years Policy

<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Spring 2025</b>
<b>Reviewed By</b>	<b>Sharon Hill</b>
<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Deborah Coggin</b>
<b>Due for next review</b>	<b>Spring 2026</b>

#### 1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children 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 and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

#### 2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

#### 3. Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is followed by Little Oaks pre-school (2-4 years) and Caterpillar Class (Reception). We use Tapestry Online Learning Journals to observe children and track their progress for all children aged 2-5 years.

#### 4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2024 statutory framework of the EYFS.

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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 prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

### 4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, activities and experiences are implemented through '**in the moment planning**' which enables practitioners to capture the interest of a child or children in the present moment.

Young children have a natural desire to learn, explore and question and at Northchapel we offer an environment that enables child-initiated play in order to capture the moment of engagement. Careful observation by practitioners is carried out and opportunities when a child shows interest in an activity which can be built upon are seized, normally called '**teachable moments**'. Observations are carried out on individuals and groups, recording interactions and outcomes for children. Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

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.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

### 4.2 Teaching

Children in pre-school and reception class are in a free flow environment with access to both indoor and outdoor learning.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

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.

## 5. Assessment

At Northchapel Primary School, 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 used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

When a child is aged between 2 and 3, practitioners review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

At the start of reception year, the teacher will carry out the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). It is a short assessment that is taken in the first six weeks of the term.

At the end of the EYFS, pupils are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs), indicating whether they are:

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

The reception teacher uses the ELGs to complete an EYFS profile for each child, making a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development and their readiness for Year 1. Their judgement reflects ongoing observations, discussions with parents/carers and their own professional judgement based on their knowledge of the child.

## 6. Working with parents

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

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development, with termly reviews and meetings. The progress check at 2 years and ELG review at the end of reception year, helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Children's learning journeys are shared with parents/carers through the Tapestry online learning journal and at termly meetings with parents. Parents/carers are also encouraged to share their child experiences from home by recording their own observations on Tapestry.

In pre-school each child is assigned a key person, and in reception this is the class teacher, who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person will build a positive relationship with the child and family and also support parents/carers in guiding their child's development at home. If the key person has any concerns about a child's development then they will refer to the pre-school or school SENDCo who will help families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

## 7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school safeguarding policy.