EYFS Policy

Approved by Trustees: February 22

Extended to: September 2025

Proposed Review Date/Annual Update: Written November 2021 To be reviewed September 2025

Policy Reviewer: EYFS Team

Kirkheaton Primary School –Early Years Policy

Kirkheaton Primary School is a partnership of children, staff, parents and governors, working together.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. Our Early Years Foundation Stage accommodates children from the age of 3 to 5 years. In our school we have a nursery and two full-time reception classes. The children entering our nursery are offered a place following their third birthday. Our reception offers 60 places; this is in the form of two, thirty place classes. To ensure best practice and continuity our foundation stage classes work closely together and share planning, activities and parts of the outdoor learning environment. All staff also have regular opportunities to work with all of the classes in our EYFS.

Aims

At Kirkheaton Primary School, we aim to give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life, in which they can establish solid foundations on which to develop into independent, confident and resilient lifelong learners.

We will encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere; to support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing; to help each other to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and by developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

Our high expectations will enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally and to achieve their full potential. We will offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited availability for development through a wide range of new and exciting first-hand experiences that will give children the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test their skills, knowledge and understanding alongside existing experiences. We will ensure that children are kept healthy and safe and that they achieve the knowledge and skills they need to start school.

The Curriculum

The nursery and reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the 2014 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document. This clearly defines what we teach. The following policy details the specifics of our setting.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by **feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.**

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

Enabling Environments

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests and **stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.**

Learning and Development

Our Foundation Stage has one nursery classroom and a large reception unit with a shared provision area. We have a large outdoor area. All of our learning environments are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. The seven areas of learning are defined so that children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

<u>Areas of Learning</u>

The EYFS is made up of three prime areas of learning:

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

There are four specific areas of learning:

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

At Kirkheaton Primary School all areas are delivered through a well-planned play based approach with a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. Throughout the foundation stage our long, medium and short term plans ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area at the appropriate developmental level. We follow a half -termly topic based approach which allows flexibility to ensure that both children's needs and interests are **taken into account.**

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the foundation stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. In doing so we can provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning and to help them make sense of the world. Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own pace and level. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child initiated play through extending play, skills and language.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective learning and the nursery and reception teachers plan activities with these in mind. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think **critically about the world around them. The three characteristics 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.**

Inclusion

Our whole school ethos, as well as that of the foundation stage, embraces inclusion. We recognise and respect the abilities and strengths of our children at all levels of development and the wealth of knowledge and experience that they bring from their differing backgrounds and cultures.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's ra**nge of life experiences when planning for their learning and we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of individual children, so that children are able to reach their full potential.**

We monitor children's progress very closely. Where a specific need is suspected we **will liaise with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo), who works within our foundation stage unit. We always take a pro-active not re-active approach.**

Early Years Pupil Premium

All extra funding we receive for our less advantaged pupils in the EYFS will be used to support areas in which we identify that will best benefit the child. We will track children's progress and will ensure that they are making goo**d progress.**

Assessment

Throughout nursery and reception children's knowledge, understanding, skills and **achievements are assessed and tracked using the developmental stages set out in the** document 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage'

Our assessment depends on us getting to know the children very well and to this end we gather information from a range of sources; observations of the children's play, in **adult led activities, through discussions with parents and carers and through talking to the children. We keep written and photographic evidence to help us build up a** picture of the strengths and achievements and to help us to plan for children's next **steps in learning. Every child in nursery has an online learning journal in which we recor**d our observations and keep samples of the children's work.

The EYFS leader carefully tracks and monitors progress for all individuals and groups of pupils.

We hold regular internal and external moderations.

Transition

At Kirkheaton Primary School we recognise that starting school and moving up classes has the potential to be a stressful time for both parents and children. To this end we have established a strong procedure for transitions to ensure that our children and parents are as confident and secure as they can be when facing the challenges of each year group.

We hold two information evenings for parents new to the school and new to the reception year. We also hold a transition to Year1 information evening.

The parents in reception are invited to an information evening early in the Autumn Term to find out about the expectations, routines and curriculum.

We offer home visits and visits to settings for all children new to our school.

We hold regular transition events through the year, including themed days, stay for lunch days for nursery children and story time in new classes.

We will ensure that transition is carefully planned for each and every individual's **needs.**

Partnership with Parents

We believe that parents and carers are a child's f**irst educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what their child does at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child and feel comfortable in our setting. We operate an open door policy and welcome parents to discuss anything regarding their child.**

We offer parents regular stay to play sessions, themed days, assemblies and workshops as well as secret reader opportunities.

Parents are encouraged to join in with their child's education from the very start of **their school journey. We encourage parents to add observations and comments on our online learning journals and to share achievements through Tapestry or Wow cards.**

Formal parents meetings are offered twice a year and the children also receive a written report.

Parents are always welcomed to discuss their children informally at the end of the school session or day.

Health, safety and safeguarding

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 follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2014) and we adhere to the school's **safeguarding policy.**

We are a healthy school and our children under 5 receive free milk and all children have access to fresh water and free fruit. Reception children who stay for lunch are eligible for a free school meal or can choose to bring in a healthy packed lunch.

Each foundation stage classroom has access to toileting facilities and we teach the children the importance of hygiene, hand washing techniques and throughout the year we plan cooking activities to give children experiences of a range of healthy food.

Policy written November 2021

To be reviewed September 2024