

CATCOTT PRIMARY



EYFS POLICY

'...where learning takes you to greater heights...'

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Early Years at Catcott Primary School

This document provides an overview of the policy, philosophy and practice in the EYFS at Catcott Primary School. It outlines our intentions in the EYFS and how we implement this within our provision. At Catcott we aim to provide a strong foundation for each child's future as a learner and as a member of the community. Our philosophy is to nurture every child's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, developing both skills and confidence as they take their first steps on their own unique journey of lifelong learning.

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential.” (EYFS Framework, 2021)

This policy aims to:

- Build on what our children already know and can do.
- Ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged.
- Offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors.
- Provide a rich and stimulating environment.
- Acknowledge the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

Legislation:

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)' (September 2021) and following supporting documents:

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

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-foundation-stage-exemplification-materials>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/644a870efaf4aa0012e12fad/2023_Reception_baseline_assessment_assessment_and_reporting_arrangements.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/development-matters--2>

In addition to this Early Years Foundation Stage policy, the following policies are also of particular importance and should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online safety policy
- SEND policy and SEND Local Offer
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- Data Protection Policy
- School Admissions Policy
- Equalities and Diversity Policy

Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to the learning and development of all children from birth to the end of the Reception Year.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just a preparation for the next stage but is vitally important.

Learning for children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the Foundation Stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined EYFS statutory framework. Our curriculum encompasses seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving.

These are called the prime areas:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social, and emotional development.

Four areas help children to strengthen and apply the prime areas. These are called the specific areas:

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

Throughout their time in the Reception Year our children partake in an ambitious curriculum which is designed in a sequential way to ensure progress towards the end of reception goals. These goals are defined as Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

Our curriculum incorporates learning through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other, high level questioning and through guided learning and direct teaching. It is also important to highlight that our plans are flexible to allow us to respond quickly to children's new interests and/or needs.

Weaving throughout the EYFS curriculum at Catcott are three Characteristics of Effective Learning:

- 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.

These elements underpin how we reflect on each child's development and adjust our practice accordingly. Supporting children in their individual learning behaviour and observing the context of children's play is essential.

Planning and Teaching

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively and be active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

We create long term plans centred around the educational programmes from the statutory framework. These are based on a series of broad themes and a range of stories each of which offers experiences in all seven areas of learning and are planned sequentially. We always remain flexible to allow for unplanned circumstances and children's responses.

Our planning is continually evaluated by all staff to ensure that children's individual developmental needs are met. Weekly timetables are mapped out each half term by the class teacher. These incorporate whole class teaching sessions alongside guided, small groups, focused interventions and independent learning time.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As the children progress through the year and as their development allows, the length of whole class teaching increases alongside more frequent adult-led group work and activities. This is to support the children with their transition into year one by gently and gradually being introduced to Key Stage One expectations. Timetables are also adapted to include curriculum enrichment opportunities including Forest school and wellie walks.

At Catcott Primary school we follow a systematic phonics programme called 'unlocking letters and sounds' (ULS) The children will have daily sessions beginning in their first full week of school.

Alongside this, they will have a daily maths lesson guided by mastering numbers and white rose. These sessions offer a very practical and hands on approach, building on each child's prior knowledge.

Literacy, and enhanced provision, is linked to a carefully selected focus book that will change frequently. The length of lessons will increase throughout the year as the children progress.

In addition to this the timetable incorporates open ended learning time, "Discovery Time", where each pupil can explore the environment through child-initiated activities and play. We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those which are planned by adults.

During children's play, the adults in class interact and use open ended questioning when appropriate to stretch and challenge them further. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and build these into our practice.

Assessment

Throughout continuous provision observation forms a fundamental aspect of the pedagogy of EYFS at Catcott Primary School. Observation and responding to children's thinking inform our planning of experiences and opportunities, how we create our environment for thinking, the strategies the adults use to extend learning (modelling, scaffolding, questioning, discussion, shared sustained thinking) and how we capitalise knowledge of children's interests to ensure high levels of engagement.

During the first term in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using a mixture of the statutory government baseline and through teacher observations. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. We record each child's next steps in their learning so the curriculum can be tailored to meet these needs. These next steps are shared with parents so that we can work alongside each other.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child providing a summary of every child's development. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Expected ELG – meeting the expected level
- Emerging ELG – not yet meeting the expected level

Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the class teachers - who use the exemplification documents, and their knowledge of the children to make a 'best fit' judgement, and report whether they have reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD) by achieving expected levels in all prime areas, plus literacy and maths. This profile data is the statutory data that is sent to the Local Authority and used to help school benchmark and identify improvements. This information is shared with the Year 1 teacher to aid transition.

Assessment for SEND pupils

The Profiles must be completed for all children, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Reasonable adjustments to the assessment process for children with SEND must be made as appropriate. School will consider seeking specialist assistance to help with this.

Parental Involvement

We recognise that families are children's first educators, and we value having a positive relationship with them in their child's education through:

- ✓ Making contact with families before their child starts school at our parent walkabouts, induction sessions, welcome packs and nursery visits.
- ✓ Inviting families and children to attend an induction meeting in the summer term.
- ✓ Inviting parents to phonic, reading and maths workshops to see how their children will begin learning and how they can support them.
- ✓ Operating an open-door policy for families with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if EYFS staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- ✓ Written contact through reading records and dojo messages.
- ✓ Sharing photos, updates and 'celebration leaves' on dojo (our online communication and home learning platform).
- ✓ Offering two, parent-teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child's progress and wellbeing is discussed.
- ✓ Sending a written report on their child's attainment, progress and attitude at the end of their time in reception.
- ✓ Asking families to sign a generic permission form for visits, food-tasting and photographs etc.
- ✓ Families are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as special events, workshops, Christmas crafts, Christmas productions and sports day etc.
- ✓ Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school as a volunteer to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers.
- ✓ Families are invited to come into the class, share and celebrate their child's learning at the end of every half term.

Children With Special Educational Needs

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that children achieve their potential.

We adapt our planning, teaching and personal care to include all children and their needs. Individual education programs are set up, aided by the SENCO and additional small group interventions are planned into the timetable when there is a need, for example: for speaking and listening, social skills, physical development.

School Entry Planning Meetings are held with parents, pre-school settings and outside agencies when necessary to enable a smooth transition into school for any children with additional needs.

Monitoring Arrangements

All adults in the Reception team have a key role in children's learning and development. Therefore, they are required to be knowledgeable and skilled in the EYFS curriculum. Any training needs for existing or new members of staff are identified and addressed as part of performance management targets.