



# EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

May 2018

## 1. Introduction

Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their schooling. It is a holistic education that encompasses all learning and development.

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Nanledra Primary School.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all the staff working in the EYFS setting.

Children enter school in September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old. These children are in the final year of the EYFS. In the National Curriculum this is referred to as the Reception Year, or YR.

In the policy the term 'practitioner' refers to the members of staff working with children within the school. Our classroom setting is led by a class teacher and full time HLTA. Throughout the week additional teaching assistants enable access to provision for children with a Statement of Need.

## **2. Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

In the EYFS class at Nancledra Primary School we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential.

**We aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:**

- recognising that all children are unique and special.
- understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates - physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally.
- providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued by the practitioners looking after them.
- fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community.
- teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways.
- Encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes.
- developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously.
- supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions different from their own.
- understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development.
- providing learning experiences in play which reflect children's personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn.
- providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.
- providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, inside and outside.

### **3. The Early Years Foundation Stage framework**

Teaching in the EYFS class at Nancledra Primary School is delivered in accordance with the Government's statutory document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (March 2012). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through four themes: 'A Unique Child', 'Positive Relationships', 'Enabling Environments' and 'Children Learn in Different Ways and at Different Rates.'

The curriculum is centred on 3 prime areas of learning:

1. Communication and Language.
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Providers must also support activities through four specific areas which strengthen the prime areas. These are:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding of the World
4. Expressive Arts and Design

These 7 Areas of Learning and Development address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all Areas of Learning and Development are all closely interlinked. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum which allows children to make lots of links between what they are learning. All Areas of Learning and Development are given equal weighting and value.

We believe that the EYFS framework allows a natural progression into the National Curriculum at the beginning of Year 1.

## **4. Active Learning through Play**

At Nancledra Primary School we recognise that young children learn best when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and, for this reason, our EYFS setting has an ethos of learning through play.

Play is an essential and rich part of their learning process supporting the children in all areas of development. It is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

In the EYFS class at Nancledra Primary School practitioners provide both structured and unstructured play opportunities inside and outside. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experiences which will support children to discover, explore, investigate, develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity, and help to make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. Play opportunities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding. In providing these active learning opportunities through play we understand the central position of play within the EYFS framework. This is essentially a play based curriculum and pedagogy as the provision of play opportunities underpins its delivery within our setting.

## **5. Assessment and Record Keeping**

Ongoing assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of the EYFS class at Nancledra Primary School. Regular, planned and focused assessments are made of children's learning and individual needs. A record of each child's progress in all areas of their learning is kept by retaining and filing their assessment data.

The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' observations of children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child initiated play. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally). Practitioners make time to carry out planned observations of individuals and groups of children regularly. They also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children's learning. Observations are recorded in different formats (e.g. narrative style, post-it speech bubbles, sticky labels, whole class grids, photographs). All practitioners are involved in observing children.

Practitioners use observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children's abilities, needs, interests, play schemas and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress.

Other methods of assessment include engaging alongside children in their play, annotation of children's written work, talking with children about their task or play and in Learning Journeys.

Learning Journeys record children's progress over the academic year in all Areas of Learning and Development of the EYFS framework. Samples of children's work are gathered, along with photographic evidence and observations. The children are given frequent opportunities to look through their Learning Journals to reflect on their learning experiences.

There is continuous monitoring and assessment of each child's development by the class teacher using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (2012). This is updated at least once each term to track individual progress. At the end of the year it provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements. Baseline assessment is carried out using the EYFS Profile during the children's first six weeks upon entering the setting. Judgments made on children's development in the Profile are based on practitioners' evidence of children's behaviour observed independently and consistently in their self-initiated activities across all Areas of Learning and Development and alongside transition records from Pre-School settings and information from parents.

## **6. Planning**

The EYFS framework provides a long term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year.

Medium term planning which can be a two week or half term plan, takes into account the individual children's learning and developmental needs.

Daily planning takes place to ensure learning is reinforced or extended at the point of need.

All Areas of Learning and Development are planned for and available to access within the setting. This is recorded on the Continuous Provision planner the aims of which are to enable the children to continue their learning. The learning opportunities provided include a range of adult focused and child initiated activities indoors and outdoors.

Educational visits within the local community and visitors to school are also planned to support children's learning within the classroom.

## **7. Parents as Partners**

At Nancledra Primary School we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the EYFS framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. So, practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents.

We value the role of parents as children's primary educators. Through questionnaires and informal chats at the beginning and end of the day, practitioners encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through regular letters, an information board in the classroom, displays of children's learning, reading records and informal chatting at the beginning and end of the day. Suggestions of how parents can support their children's learning at home are shared; consolidating and building on what has been covered in the setting. Whole school newsletters are also sent home on a weekly basis.

Parents are invited to attend parents' evenings during the course of the academic year. The first of these takes place during the Autumn term to allow the class teacher and parents to discuss how the children have settled into the school. Another parent's evening takes place during the Spring term where the class teacher will feed back on children's learning and development progress.

Other opportunities for us to share children's learning, development and well-being with parents include Learning Journeys and end of year reports

Parents are also invited to get involved with school life. There are opportunities for them to help with activities such as educational visits and reading, as well as offering their particular skills (e.g. cooking, art, music) to support children's learning.

The school has a friendly, open-door ethos and practitioners are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day. Parents are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have.

## **8. Admissions and Induction**

Nancledra Primary School provides full-time Early Years education for children in the Reception Year. This is for children who enter school in September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old.

During the Summer term before they start school, all children are offered a series of transition visits. The purpose of these visits is for the children to meet their new practitioners and start to become familiar with the school environment. To enable children and their parents from different Pre-School settings to meet each other, we also offer a Forest School programme. This is led by a teacher and our class HLTA at Trengwainton Gardens. In addition, the class teacher meets with Pre-School practitioners to develop her

knowledge and understanding of each child in order to make the transition period to school as smooth as possible.

In the Summer term parents are invited into school to meet the Head teacher and the class teacher. At this meeting information regarding the induction process and what goes on in the setting is shared. There is also time for informal chat and parents' questions. School information packs are distributed to parents at this meeting, detailing school routines and expectations

From September children attend school full-time, though parents can opt for their child to attend part-time. This decision is made before the end of Summer term in consultation with the Head teacher.

Every effort is made to make children feel safe, secure and happy. Established routines, a calm atmosphere and encouraging talk are some of the strategies practitioners use to maintain children's positive feelings about school.

*See Admissions Policy for more information.*

## **9. Equal Opportunities**

All staff at Nancledra Primary School have a responsibility to maintain positive attitudes to diversity and difference, ensuring that inclusive practice is delivered in the EYFS setting. All children, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture or religion, and social circumstances, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development within the EYFS class at Nancledra Primary School.

*See Equal Opportunities Policy for more information.*

## **10. Special Educational Needs**

*See Special Educational Needs Policy.*

**Approved by governors on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

**This policy will be reviewed in 2020**