

Churchtown Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



RESPECT FOR ALL

Churchtown is a school where we respect and value all individuals and are respectful of each other's individual needs.

LOVE OF LEARNING

At Churchtown creativity drives our love of learning. We believe that when learning is fun and purposeful, and when the voice and imagination of everyone is valued, we flourish.

FRIENDSHIP AND FAMILY

The Churchtown family provides a safe, secure & friendly environment, where we all feel like we belong. We are kind & caring and build friendly relationships.

FUN AND HAPPINESS

Churchtown is a school that nurtures positivity and happiness.

SKILLS FOR LIFE

At Churchtown we foster independence, determination and perseverance to build skills for life helping our children become confident and ambitious young people.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Churchtown is a school where we encourage everyone to grow and be confident in their own abilities. We develop through hard work and co-operation in a caring, supportive environment.

COURAGE

Churchtown is a school where we encourage everyone to show courage, grit and determination.

Our Early Years Values

- Provide a stimulating environment by planning high quality, purposeful play opportunities, which are based on children's interests making learning fun and meaningful.
- Provide a nurturing, caring environment where children feel safe, happy and valued as individuals.
- Allow children to explore, experiment and consolidate their learning through hands on opportunities in a safe environment where they are able to achieve and reach their potential.
- Enable children to become independent learners and develop the skills to co-operate, share, negotiate and work as a team.
- Develop close partnerships where parents and practitioners work together and learn from each other in order to share information and celebrate children's achievements.

Nursery and Reception at Churchtown Primary School

Churchtown Primary School is currently an Early Adopter School

"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."

Original 2012 EYFS Statutory Framework Statutory Framework for the EYFS DfE 2017

"It is vital that we get to know and value all young children. All children learn more in the period from birth to five years old than any other time in their lives. If children are at risk of falling behind the majority, the best time to help them to catch up and keep up is in the early years. Every child can make progress, if they are given the right support. When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow."

Development Matters: DfE 2020

The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children stay safe, be healthy, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and achieve economic well-being by providing:

- quality and consistency, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
- a secure foundation which creates learning and development opportunities that are planned around the interests and needs of the children, informed by regular assessments and reviews;
- partnership working between practitioners, parents and carers
- equality of opportunity ensuring that there is no discrimination and every child is included and supported'

The guiding principles which shape our practice are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships

3. Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults
4. Learning and Development

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018

1.2. This policy has due regard to statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

DfE (2017) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'

DfE (2018) 'Keeping children safe in education'

DfE (2018) 'Working together to safeguard children'

DfE (2015) 'The prevent duty'

1.3. This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following school policies:

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Assessment Policy

Behaviour Policy

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Teaching and Learning Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Administering Medication Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Recruitment Policy

Data Protection Policy

Social Media Policy

Complaints Procedures Policy

Curriculum

At Churchtown we recognise that every child is unique. We understand that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. We want our children to be independent and self-motivated learners, encouraging the children to adapt their work, think critically and take risks with their learning.

In the Early Years at Churchtown we follow the Seven Key Features of effective practice as outlined in Development Matters 2020:

1. We provide the best education for every child to ensure that everyone has the best chance of success no matter what their background or starting point.

2. We provide consistent high-quality care for all children.

3. We deliver an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum where depth of learning is more important than covering lots of things in a superficial way. Children lead the learning through their interests, therefore our planning is flexible.
4. Pedagogy: At Churchtown we use a balance of different approaches to ensure that each child makes good progress.
5. We carry out high quality assessments based on teachers deep knowledge and understanding of child development. Assessment is about noticing what children can do and what they know. It is not about lots of data and evidence.
6. We place high value on executive function and self-regulation with a particular focus on language development and oracy.
7. We work hard to develop strong and respectful partnerships with parents as the child's first educator.

Our EYFS Curriculum

- is at the heart of our approach to teaching and learning
- is distinctive, innovative and strategically planned with the individual pupils in mind
- Is currently being reviewed in the light of national developments, new thinking and research. In September 2020 Churchtown Early Years became an Early Adopter school, trialling the new Development Matters framework before statutory implementation in September 2021.
- Introduces challenging, engaging and real-life problems
- strives to encourage and develop a love of learning
- allows learning to happen through a child centred approach
- ensures resources and apparatus and the environment supports learning at every stage of development within the EYFS curriculum
- ensures all areas of learning and development are regarded with the same level of importance and are interlinked in our curriculum coverage
- includes fundamental British values to teach children a sense of self and belonging; enabling them to learn and stay true to the values that make people good human beings
- ensures that children learn to live together peacefully, with each of them playing a valuable role in the multi-cultural world in which they live
- The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are important and interconnected. There are three **prime areas**, which are particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. Children are also supported in 4 specific areas, through which the 3 prime areas are strengthened and applied

The Prime Areas of Learning and Development

Communication and Language

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language rich environment is crucial.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are supported to develop strong, warm, supportive relationships with adults. They are supported to develop a strong sense of self, have confidence in their own abilities, manage their emotions and persist and wait for what they want. Providing them with a secure platform from which they can achieve in school and in later life.

Physical Development

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Repeated and varied opportunities and activities to develop spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility along with gross motor control and fine motor precision will provide children with the foundation for a healthy body and strong social and emotional well-being.

The Specific Areas of Learning and Development

Literacy

This focuses on reading and writing. At Churchtown we have a strong focus on developing a lifelong love of reading. Children are taught phonics throughout the EYFS using RWI. In Reception the children are taught in differentiated ability groups.

Mathematics

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential for children to develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Our curriculum also includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial and reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures.

Understanding of the World

This area focuses on children's developing knowledge and understanding of their own environment, and fostering an understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world.

Expressive Arts and Design

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. The frequency, depth and repetition of their experiences are fundamental to interpreting and approaching what they hear, respond to and observe.

Early Learning Goals

The level of development a child is expected to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage is defined by the Early Learning Goals. ELG's are designed to support teachers to make holistic, best fit judgements about a child's development and their readiness for year 1. They are not to be used as a curriculum, or to limit the wide range of rich experiences that are crucial for learning and development.

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

Through regular observations, we will discover children's interests and assess what children know. Also fundamental to our practice is to assess how children learn and it is our duty to report to parents their children's individual dispositions and attitudes to learning. This will be assessed using the Characteristics of Effective Learning which are:

- **Playing and exploring** – engagement. Children investigate and experience things and events around them and 'have a go'.
- **Active learning** – motivation. Children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve.
- **Creating and thinking critically** – thinking. Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different and experiences and develop strategies for doing things.

Planning

Through planning, teachers ensure that there is a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities across the day. During child-initiated activities the adults' role is to show an interest in the children's ideas, build conversation, facilitate and share ideas and model different skills. Such interaction with the children is essential as this helps to build the children's understanding and therefore guides new learning. This informs the planning in order to ensure that the topics being covered reflect the children's fascinations currently within the class. By being fluid in this way current topics can be readily introduced and adapted. This allows for spontaneity within our Foundation Stage and allows for unexpected occurrences, such as a butterfly in class, birthdays, new siblings, the window cleaner, to become an integral part of our learning.

Direct Teaching

At specific times in the day the children will take part in an activity that is teacher led. Such sessions include daily phonics lessons, reading and maths/counting experiences, as well as teaching new skills to support their learning within the classroom environment and also in our various outdoor classrooms. In Reception and Nursery, shared story-time take place 5 times a day in line with the whole school policy for reading. These books and stories form part of our planning, including texts to support Talk for Writing, mathematics from the White Rose scheme and also to support our themes. Children's interests also play a big part here and we encourage children to bring favourite stories from home to encourage that development of a love of books, stories and reading for pleasure. All direct taught sessions are carefully planned and tailored for each group using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. Planning is changed and tailored regularly and, in response to the result of taught sessions, ensuring all teaching and learning is relevant and challenging for each child.

Learning Through Play

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. Children learn best from activities and experiences that they have initiated and play with peers is important for children's development. We carefully plan our environment and provide opportunities to reflect these interests to inspire them further, whilst also making sure that children also have the opportunity to extend and practise the skills they have learned through direct teaching. Constant opportunities are provided for children to be able to make their own decisions and choices in order that they can become independent, confident and happy learners as soon as is possible for each individual child. Some children will need gentle encouragement in this step as they become more comfortable in their new setting.

Through play children explore and develop learning experiences, helping them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. Children at Churchtown make promises which reflect the rules and expectations we have in our Foundation Stage. Children have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. They enjoy risk taking in a controlled and fun way. Our 'Forest School' experience is a prime example of this.

Giving children the opportunity to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, allows them to discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. With adult support this process enhances children's ability to think critically and ask questions. Adults can support them in making connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning. Children have the choice to be outside during the entire day, unless there are exceptional weather conditions. There are provisions for a typical British winter. Lots of puddle suits and wellies!

Assessment, Recording and Reporting of Progress

Assessment is an essential and important part of the Early Years for children's learning and development. Assessment takes a variety of forms in order to gain an understanding of each child's level of understanding. These can be through observations, photographic evidence, examples of work, parental conversations. Assessment occurs throughout any taught session as well as during free flow times when children are embedding and extending any previous learning. These assessments will then be used to shape and adapt any future learning.

Assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement and should not be required to prove this through collection of physical evidence.

Observations across Early Years are taken using **Tapestry**. This assessment tool allows staff to take photos, videos and to make notes while observing what the children are doing or saying. From such observations we

can ascertain what the next steps are for the children. We are then able to share these experiences with the children's parents on a regular basis. This is a two-way process whereby parents may input observations of their own, add comments to post and like observations they can view. As it is an app based 'Online Learning Journey', it is highly accessible as parents can access on mobile phones, tablets as well as on computers.

On entry to Reception and Nursery a baseline assessment is carried out for each child.

Mid to late Autumn: Children who are "Cause for concern" in terms of both attainment and progress will be reported to the Phase Leader/Assistant Head and SENCO where appropriate. Interventions, additional support and tailored groupings are then put in place.

Spring: Children will be grouped by class teachers.

Group 1: Those children who will not reach the ELG before the end of Reception.

Group 2: Those children who will definitely achieve the ELG's.

Group 3: Those children who are not at the stage of development where we could confidently make that decision /judgement at this point.

Summer: As above for Spring, children will be placed in one of the 3 groups, but alterations will be made based on formative teacher assessment of individual children. Towards the end of the summer term Reception teachers will make a judgement about each child and indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels – emerging. Reception teachers will then meet with Year 1 teachers to discuss each individual child and assist with planning activities for those children to ensure a successful transition to Year 1.

Opportunities for a Parent Teacher Consultation are provided in the Autumn, Spring terms to provide information about children's progress and to discuss the children's learning journey from Tapestry, to talk about children's strengths, achievements, interests and next steps. These form the basis for the monitoring of pupil progress as the children progress through school. On-going teacher assessments are undertaken in line with the Foundation Stage Profile and these form the basis for the end of year report to parents.

We ensure our end of EYFS assessments are reliable through:

- our knowledge of the child gained through observation and interaction
- our environment enables the child to flourish to their full capacity
- our assessments ensure a range of contributors e.g. parents, the school nurse, Speech and Language Therapy,
- in-house moderation across the EYFS team
- moderation with the Local Authority and In CORE groups

Special educational needs and disability and Inclusion

At Churchtown we value the diversity of all children our school. We believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

Assessments and teacher observations are used to identify children who may have specific needs within the first half term and ongoing through each child's primary education. Results of assessments are used to ensure that a differentiated curriculum is offered to such children to meet their needs.

Safeguarding and Children's Welfare

Children learn best when they are happy, safe and feel secure. We aim to ensure that all children feel happy, safe and secure through the continuous development of positive relationships between children and staff as well as relationships with their peers. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the

Early Years Foundation Stage Guidance. Our school has rigorous Safeguarding and welfare policy and procedures that are used to identify anyone at risk or harm of radicalisation that sets out clear procedures for reporting any concerns. It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to teach children that, in society as in a classroom, there is a need for boundaries, rules and limits to which we all need to adhere to help us stay safe. We aim to teach children to be consciously aware of their feelings and the feelings of others and how to manage their own behaviour by identifying behavioural issues and using them as a teaching moment. We also aim to teach our children to take risks whilst learning how to recognise and avoid hazards.

- Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#), and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.
- The DSL is [Sue Anderson](#)
- The deputy DSL is [Jeanette Healy, Christine Wilson](#).
- Other designated leads are: Tina Godfrey, Chris Bateman, Belinda Taylor, Jinnie Payne, Lisa Standeven
- The DSL is responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate.
- The deputy DSL will undertake the duties of the DSL in their absence, but overall responsibility for safeguarding will remain with the DSL.
- The DSL and deputy DSL will undertake child protection training as required.
- Staff will receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect
- All EYFS staff should refer to the Social media policy regarding the use of mobile phones and cameras in school.

Health and safety

- 1.4. A first-aid box is located in each Reception classroom and in the Nursery, there is also access to first aid equipment in the community room. There is a defibrillator located in the EY building hallway.
- 1.5. Only medicine prescribed to a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist will be administered.
- 1.6. The school's [Administering Medication Policy](#) outlines the procedures for administering medicines.
- 1.7. The [Class teacher](#) will report any accident or injury involving a child to their parents on the day it occurs, and any first-aid treatment administered to a child will also be reported to their parents.
- 1.8. Accidents and injuries will be recorded on the accident log on an iPad, located in the [EYFS building](#)
- 1.9. The [headteachers](#) will report any serious accident, illness, injury, or death of a child whilst in the school's care to Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the incident occurring. Local child protection agencies will also be notified.

- 1.10. The school has a [Fire Evacuation Plan](#) in place.
- 1.11. Any food or drink provided to children is healthy, balanced and nutritious.
- 1.12. The [headteachers](#) will notify Ofsted of any incidents of food poisoning affecting two or more children within 14 days of the incident.
- 1.13. Information about any dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and any special health requirements a child has will be recorded.
- 1.14. Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- 1.15. Smoking is not permitted on the school premises.
- 1.16. The [Health and Safety Policy](#) outlines the full health and safety policies and procedures.

Induction and Transition

We want to ensure a smooth transition from home to school and to work effectively in partnership with parents/carers/guardians. We establish and maintain effective links with relevant adults through:

- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- The Nursery children have a home visit and a Pre-Nursery visit. They come for a session with their parents in small groups. This provides opportunity for staff to get to know the children/parents and share important information. All children start normal sessions and are phased in during the following week.
- The Reception children have pre-school visits, where they can spend time in their new class with their new teacher/teaching assistant and meet new friends before starting school. The Phase Leader will also go and visit the children in their current provision.
- The Phase Leader will liaise with local nurseries or playgroups to gather information.
- Parents are always able to speak to staff before or after school each day. A suitable time can be arranged for more detailed meetings.
- Regular newsletters and Parentapp system are in place.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

The school recognises the importance of establishing effective relationships with parents/carers in ensuring the children achieve their full potential. Parental involvement is actively encouraged. Parents are very welcome to chat to staff prior to the start of the school day or at the end of the school day giving them opportunities to discuss any concerns with staff. Staff ensure that parents are well informed about the curriculum their child is experiencing through Tapestry, reading diary, letters, newsletters, Twitter and the school website. Staff take the opportunity at the end of the day to talk to parents about significant achievements or any concerns.

Throughout the year, Nursery and Reception parents are invited to attend workshops that help support their child's development at home. Parents are very welcome in the Reception and Nursery classrooms to talk about interesting pets, hobbies or jobs. A celebration event takes place at the end of each term. Parents are invited to come into class at the end of the school day and enjoy spending time with their child looking at their workbook and celebrating their achievements.

Equal Opportunities

Staff ensure that all children have equal access to the curriculum. They will be encouraged to respect similarities and differences within cultures other than their own. The school seeks to develop tolerance and concern for others.

The Early Years Team

Our Early Years team consists of experienced, skilled teachers and practitioners. They understand the needs of the young child and how best to create an environment to enable a love of learning. Our aim is that it is hard to distinguish between teacher and teaching assistants in our setting. Everyone works towards the same goal: to ensure every child achieves to their highest ability by learning through play and enjoyment. A robust recruitment policy is in place, which aims to ensure that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable. There will be at least one member of staff on the school premises at all times who has a current paediatric first aid certificate.

There is an up to date list of PFA staff on the EY staffroom noticeboard. Dates for renewal are on this list. PFA training will be updated every 3 years.

The school provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the statutory framework for the EYFS.

1.17. The school adopts the following staffing ratios:

For children aged three and over:

- Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, there is one member of staff for every 13 children, and at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
- Where a member of staff does not hold QTS, early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification, there is one member of staff for every eight children. At least one staff member holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification, and at least half of all other staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

1.18. Only under exceptional circumstances, and where the quality of care and safety of children is maintained, will changes be made to the ratios.

Monitoring

The Early Years Phase Leader is responsible for the monitoring of this policy. Areas for development will be incorporated into the School Improvement Plan as necessary.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy is reviewed annually by the Early Years Lead and the Leadership Team

The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2021.