



Churchfields
The Village School

Atworth ∞ Monkton Farleigh

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

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Introduction

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 in itself. For young children there is no distinction between work and play.

Learning for young 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.

Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

In EYFS 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.
- 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 whose beliefs, cultures and opinions differ 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.

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

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

These 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.

Active Learning through Play

We organise the day to provide a balance between the following:

- Child initiated Activities - children make choices from within the learning environment to meet his/her outcome for learning.
- Adult Initiated Activities- practitioners provide the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning.
- Adult Directed Activities – Children engage in planned activities to meet specific learning outcomes.

At Churchfields, the Village 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 our EYFS setting has an ethos of learning through play.

We recognise the importance of children's play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play 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 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.

Planning

Teachers plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, Teachers and TA'S working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Teachers 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, we consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, teachers reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

Assessment & Record Keeping

At Churchfields The Village school, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Teachers and TA's observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Teachers also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

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

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local cluster schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Parents as Partners

At Churchfields, the Village 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, teachers endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents. We value the role of parents as children's primary educators. We 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 us 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, reading records and informal chatting at the beginning and end of the day. This also gives suggestions of how parents can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been covered in the setting. Curriculum information is also sent home on a termly 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 teachers and parents to discuss how children have settled into the setting. Another parent's evening takes place during the spring/summer term where teachers will feedback on children's learning and development progress. 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. Parents are also invited into the setting on other occasions such as Gem Learner assemblies where children show them their work. The setting has a friendly, open-doors ethos and teachers 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.

Safeguarding and Welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- Being good role models

Admission & Induction

Churchfields, the Village School provides full-time Early Years education for children in the Reception Year. This is for children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old. Before they start in the setting, all children are offered a series of come and join in sessions during the summer term. The purpose of these initial visits is for the children to meet their teachers and start to become familiar with the setting environment. The aim of these visits is to support teachers to develop their knowledge and understanding of each child in order to make the transition period to Churchfields, the Village School as smooth as possible. In the summer term parents are invited into school to meet the class teachers and TAs. 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. Information packs will be distributed to parents at this meeting, detailing school routines and expectations. Induction packs for children to complete with parents will also be given out as another way to support teachers' knowledge and understanding of each individual child. From September children attend the setting full-time, though parents can opt for their child to attend part-time should they see fit after discussion with the headteacher. Every effort is made to make children feel safe, secure and happy. There is a relaxed and open ethos in the classroom. Established routines, a calm atmosphere and encouraging talk are some of the strategy's teachers use to maintain children's positive feelings about school.

Monitoring & Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the name EYFS lead regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. The headteacher and subject leaders will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.