

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14

School Vision

At Crookham Infant School we aim to make learning irresistible so that as Team Crookham we all develop the life-long learning habits of resilience, resourcefulness, reflectiveness and reciprocity through exploring together the loving invitation of Jesus to 'live life in all its fullness' John 10:10. Our vision stems from our Christian foundation and is firmly rooted in our values: Love God, Love Others, Love Learning.

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for 'The Early Years Foundation Stage' at Crookham Infant School.

Aim

In the Early Years we aim to provide the highest quality care and education in a safe and happy environment for all our children. We create an enabling environment that inspires and motivates the children to become confident and independent and to develop a love for learning. We plan for learning that is irresistible and meets the needs of all the children giving them a strong foundation for their future education. We value each individual as a unique child and work alongside parents and others to ensure that they reach their maximum potential. Our pupils develop the learning habits of reflection, resourcefulness, reciprocity and resilience so that they are well prepared for their next steps and lifelong learning.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS):

'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.'

We believe the four main themes and principles within the EYFS plays a vital part in every child's development and these are embedded within our early years setting.

- 1) **Unique Child:** Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- 2) **Positive Relationships:** Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- 3) **Enabling Environments:** Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and carers.
- 4) **Learning and Development:** Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

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We acknowledge the importance of **how** children learn by reflecting and enabling the characteristics of effective teaching and learning throughout our setting. As stated in the EYFS these are:

Playing and Exploring - engagement

Active Learning - motivation

Creating and Thinking Critically - thinking

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum across the seven areas of learning (as outlined below) where we value play to support the children's learning
- Deliver daily phonics learning using the 'Sounds Write Programme'.
- Promote equality and inclusion so that all children can feel valued, respected and progress in their learning
- Provide early intervention for those children who require additional support and ensure challenge for our most able pupils
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan motivating and challenging learning activities that are matched to the needs of the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in learning where adults and children are both involved in sustained shared thinking in child-initiated and adult outcome led activities.
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outside
- Engage with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings/inviting members of the community into our school. This includes participating in 'Outdoor learning sessions' throughout the year.
- Develop the key learning habits that support children in becoming effective learners
- Introduce the school's 'Christian Values' and encourage the children to begin to understand the significance of these values with a focus on Loving God, Loving others and Loving learning.

Foundation Stage Curriculum

We believe play is a valuable tool in our curriculum to support the children's learning and allow plenty of opportunities for child-initiated play alongside delivering some structured adult-led activities.

As the EYFS states:

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'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum consisting of half termly topics where stimulating texts and books lead the learning. We also follow the children's interests by allowing them to explore and develop their own learning. The planning is adapted according to each child's stage of development across the seven areas of learning.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

As outlined in the EYFS three of the areas are **Prime Areas** of learning and are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The Prime Areas are:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Communication and Language

Physical Development

The other four areas are known as **Specific Areas** of learning, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The Specific Areas are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Observation and Assessment

We continually observe and assess the children's development and this is then used to inform our planning and identify their next steps. We gather our evidence for assessment in a variety of ways including verbal comments, dialogue, work samples, annotations and individual, group and class records. The learning is recorded in floor books which are used both to support assessment and to celebrate the children's learning. They are shared with the children and their parents during the year. The children are assessed on entry to school as part of the Baseline Assessment and then against the Development Matters/Early Years Outcomes guidance at the end of each term. At the end of the foundation stage the children are assessed against 17 Early Learning Goals linked to the 7 areas of learning and it is reported whether they are emerging (working towards the goal) or expected (have met the goal). The children's learning and progress is

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discussed with their parents at a parent's meeting in the autumn and spring term and through a written report in the summer term. The children's achievement against the 17 Early Learning Goals, along with a short commentary related to the three Characteristics of Effective Learning, is also reported to parents in the summer term.

Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have additional policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

We are a healthy school who promotes the good health of the children in our care in a variety of ways, including the provision of nutritious food, promoting exercise and self-care such as teeth cleaning, and following set procedures when a child becomes ill or has an accident.

Inclusion

Our aim is to be an inclusive school which values all children as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. Our curriculum is planned to meet the needs of all children in our care and help them to learn and progress to their full potential. We believe that the early identification of children with additional or special educational needs is key in providing them with the support they require. Where necessary we work closely with parents and outside agencies. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

Parents as Partners

We endeavour to create and maintain a positive partnership with parents and carers. We believe that they play a valuable part in their child's education and have a significant impact on their learning. We actively encourage parents to offer support in regards to children's education and care.

Transitions

Transitions both into school at the start of Year R and into Year One at the end of the Foundation Stage are carefully planned for. We acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child including parents and pre-schools.

Teachers start building relationships with the children and their families through a variety of activities throughout the Summer and Autumn terms.