



# ST. NICHOLAS SCHOOL CHILD OKEFORD

## A CHURCH OF ENGLAND VOLUNTARY AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL

### MISSION STATEMENT

‘At St. Nicholas, we nurture everyone *to be the best we can be*, in a caring and inclusive Christian environment.’

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# EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

## POLICY SUMMARY

*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. (‘The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.’ DfE March 2014).*

Current EYFS lead: Miss Ireland  
Teaching Assistant: Mrs Brewer

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Curriculum  
Behaviour  
SEND  
Assessment  
Child Protection

DATE ADOPTED  
March 2018

REVISION NUMBER  
1

LAST REVIEW

NEXT REVIEW  
March 2019

## 1. Introduction

- (1) The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school all children join us on a phased introduction at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. This policy outlines the guiding principles that underpin the early year's provision at Child Okeford School and explains how we plan, deliver, assess and evaluate our early year's curriculum.
- (2) We aim to:
  - (i) provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs;
  - (ii) provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development in KS1;
  - (iii) provide opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development;
  - (iv) use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress;
  - (v) enable choice and decision-making, fostering independence and self confidence;
  - (vi) work in partnership with parents/carers and value their contributions; and
  - (vii) ensure that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.

## 2. Themes:

- (1) **Theme: Unique child**  
Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- (2) **Theme: Positive relationships**  
Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- (3) **Theme: Enabling environments**  
Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- (4) **Theme: Learning and development**  
Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.
- (5) See Appendix for what these principles look like in practice at Child Okeford School.

## 3. What are the EYFS principles?

- (1) Areas of learning: All areas of learning are important and interconnected.
  - (i) Prime Areas: for igniting curiosity, enthusiasm and building capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.
    - (a) Communication and language;
    - (b) Physical development; and
    - (c) Personal, social and emotional development.
  - (ii) Specific Areas: four areas through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied:
    - (a) Literacy;
    - (b) Mathematics;
    - (c) Understanding the world; and
    - (d) Expressive arts and design.
- (2) Characteristics of effective learning:

- (i) these characteristics of effective learning underpin learning and development across all seven areas of learning areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner:
    - (a) playing and exploring;
    - (b) active learning; and
    - (c) creating and thinking critically.
  - (ii) Children are provided with rich, meaningful first hand experiences, which promote these key characteristics and compliment and support our whole school drive to develop key learning attitudes (Resilience, Relationships, Resourcefulness, Reflection and Risk Taking): (see Behaviour Policy and Learning to learn document on our website: [www.childokeford.dorset.sch.uk](http://www.childokeford.dorset.sch.uk))
- (3) Planning:
- (i) We write medium term plans reflect all the seven areas of learning. These plans then inform our short term weekly planning, alongside our observation, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children’s responses. Plans are uploaded on our class page termly.
  - (ii) Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS. Daily phonics session is taught using our ‘**Read Write Inc**’ scheme from September. Please visit the Curriculum page on our website for more details: [www.childokeford.dorset.sch.uk](http://www.childokeford.dorset.sch.uk)
- (4) Play:
- (i) The curriculum is delivered using a play based approach as outlined by the EYFS.
  - (ii) ***‘Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult led and child initiated activities.’***
  - (iii) The principles underpin all that practitioners are required to do. At Child Okeford School we recognise that children learn best through play. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. The adults model play and play sensitively with the children fitting in with their plans and ideas.
  - (iv) The children are encouraged to try new activities and judge risks for themselves. We talk to them about how we get better at things through effort and practice and that we can all learn when things go wrong. They practice and build up ideas learning how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own.
  - (v) We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child initiated activities and those planned by adults. During children’s play, staff interact to stretch and challenge children further.
  - (vi) In planning and guiding children’s activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.
  - (vii) We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside an out. Age appropriate resources are available inside and out for hands on learning, accessible to the children. These are planned for and reviewed by staff to ensure they match the topics and support children’s learning across all areas.
- (5) Observation and Assessment:
- (i) Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners recognise children’s progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. At Child Okeford School, we observe the

children, taking notes and photos, to understand the achievements the children have met and their individual learning styles. From this we can shape learning opportunities for the children. Our day to day interactions and the observations, that parents and carers share with us, through wow cards and dialogue, contribute to building a holistic picture of each child and their subsequent learning experiences.

- (ii) At Child Okeford School, we report progress to parents each term, offering individual consultations to discuss.
  - (iii) In the summer term we complete the EYFS profile for each child, reflecting ongoing observation; relevant records; discussions with parents and careers, and any other adult whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. This profile will provide a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. Each child's level of development is assessed against 17 early learning goals, and we will indicate if they are meeting expected levels, exceeding them, or not yet reaching expected levels (emerging).
- (6) Safety:
- (i) Children's safety is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, making choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.
  - (ii) We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of healthy snack, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.
- (7) Inclusion: we value all our children at Child Okeford School, 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 most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that the early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.
- (8) Parents as Partners: we recognise the important role parents play in educating the children. We do this by:
- (i) talking to parents about their child before their child starts our school;
  - (ii) inviting the children to spend time with their teacher in the classroom before starting at school
  - (iii) inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
  - (iv) encouraging parents to attend consultation meetings in the first two terms to discuss their child's progress;
  - (v) providing parents with a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
  - (vi) encouraging parents to contribute observations and celebrate learning at home by filling out a WOW slip;
  - (vii) sharing our approach to reading and phonics; and
  - (viii) inviting parents to a curriculum meeting where the topic is explained.
- (9) Liaison with pre-school settings and induction: at Child Okeford School, we have close links with our feeder preschool, The Ark. During summer term 2, pre-school children who will be starting school in September make visits to the Reception class. Also at this time, the Reception Class Teacher and Teaching Assistant undertake home visits and visit preschools if necessary. All prospective children have the

opportunity to visit their classroom for an hour or an afternoon during the week. In the summer term an information evening is held by the Reception class teacher, Teaching Assistant and Headteacher to introduce parents/ carers to the school, reception procedures and the curriculum.

(10) Reception to Year 1 transition:

- (i) Children are encouraged to develop their independence throughout Reception.
- (ii) Teachers plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer terms.
- (iii) Reception and Year 1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July.
- (iv) Reception children visit their New Year 1 class and teacher for an hour session in July.
- (v) There is a similar structure to the school day during the autumn term when the children move into Year.
- (vi) Where possible, the Year 1 children continue to enjoy practical learning experiences which gradually becomes more formalised towards the end of the academic year.
- (vii) We provide an annual written report to parents/ carers in July summarising the child's progress against the Early Learning Goals.

(11) Monitoring:

- (i) Teaching and learning in EYFS is monitored as part of the school annual monitoring cycle by the Headteacher and subject leaders. External moderation is also completed by County Advisors and as part of the Sturminster Pyramid.
- (ii) The EYFS lead has produced a Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) for our early year's provision, in conjunction with the Headteacher. This is reviewed termly and can be found on the **KEY INFORMATION** page on our website: [www.childokeford.dorset.sch.uk](http://www.childokeford.dorset.sch.uk)

## Appendix: Themes

### 1. A unique child

Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

The EYFS commitments	A unique child at Child Okeford School
<b>Child development</b> Babies and young children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Every area of development- physical, cognitive, linguistic, spiritual, social & emotional – is equally important.	Individual needs and interests Different teaching styles used Children observed when working in all areas of the classroom Circle time Assemblies Collective Worship World days Visits to local church
<b>Inclusive practice</b> The diversity of individuals and communities is valued and respected. No child of family is discriminated against.	Class mascot Festivals and celebrations Visitors and outing Year 5/6 buddies Assessment records Photographs/ examples of work for all children displayed in setting
<b>Keeping safe</b> Young people are vulnerable. They develop resilience when their physical and psychological well-being is protected by adults.	Classroom environment Equipment Classroom rules School charter Risk assessment completed Circle time Teach children about risks and staying safe Playground Charter Children make choices
<b>Health and well-being</b> Children’s health is an integral part of their emotional, mental, social, environmental and spiritual well-being and is supported by attention to these aspects.	Opportunities for children to talk about feelings- 1:1, small group, circle time Outside agencies School and classroom rules open door Home visits- chance to share information Range/choice of activities offered during the day Parent consultations Peer mentoring/ support

## 2. Positive relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships

The EYFS commitments	Positive relationships at Child Okeford School
<p><b>Respecting each other</b> Every interaction is based on caring professional relationships and respectful acknowledgement of the feelings of children and their families.</p>	<p>Open door policy Observations of children Open communication between school and home</p>
<p><b>Parents as partners</b> Parents are the first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on children/s developments and learning.</p>	<p>Home visits Parent helpers Coffee mornings/ parents drop in sessions Open door policy Parent teacher consultations End of year report Parent workshops Class projects Wow cards</p>
<p><b>Supporting learning</b> Warm, trusting relationships with knowledgeable adults support children’s learning more effectively than any amount of resources.</p>	<p>Links with pre school Transfer sessions Nurturing ethos Celebrating success/achievement</p>
<p><b>Key person</b> A key person has special responsibilities for working with a small number of children, giving them the reassurance to feel safe and cared for and building relationships with their parents.</p>	<p>Coffee mornings Nurturing ethos Transfers from pre-school to reception Transfer from reception to year 1</p>

### 3. Enabling environments

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

The EYFS commitments	Enabling environments at Child Okeford School
<p><b>Observation, assessment and planning</b> Babies and young children are individuals first, each with a unique profile of abilities. Schedules and routines should flow with the child's needs. All planning starts with observing the children in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning.</p>	<p>Records of learning and development EYFS profile Observations- planned and spontaneous adult directed tasks Child initiated learning Parents can see/ add to records Children's own reflections - Green great/ Pink think</p>
<p><b>Supporting every child</b> The environments supports every child's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable.</p>	<p>Indoor and outdoor learning Choice of activities Safe environment Appropriate resources Real experiences, trips and visitors Flexible planning and timetable</p>
<p><b>The learning environment</b> A rich and varied environment supports children's learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe, yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces.</p>	<p>Opportunities indoor and outdoor throughout the year Appropriate resources Use of local environment/ wider community Significant adults provide security and support</p>
<p><b>The wider context</b> Working in partnership with other settings, other professionals and with individuals and groups in the community supports children's developments and progress towards the outcomes of every child matters: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and economic well-being.</p>	<p>Interaction with parents Links with preschools Transition to year 1 Special needs- multi agency working Links with wider community Sturminster Schools Network</p>

#### 4. Learning and development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. All areas of learning are important and interconnected.

The EYFS commitments	Learning and development at Child Okeford School
<p><b>Play and exploration</b> Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.</p>	<p>Range of opportunities for free play with other children, adults or on their own Role play Child led learning Play is supported/extended Flexible resources Links to real life experience</p>
<p><b>Active learning</b> Children learn best through physical and mental challenges/ Active learning involves other people objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.</p>	<p>Children involved in planning Secure environment Good resources Links with parents Attractive environment</p>
<p><b>Creativity and critical thinking</b> When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adults support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.</p>	<p>Indoors and outdoors Flexible resources Adult supported learning Child initiated learning Chance to ask questions and to find out from an adult or through exploration/investigation Open ended activities Weekly celebration activities</p>
<p><b>Areas of learning and development</b> The EYFS is made up of 7 areas of learning. All areas of learning and development are connected to one another and are equally important. All areas of learning and development are underpinned by the principles of the EYFS.</p>	<p>Balanced curriculum Supportive community-school, parents, wider community Resources Attractive and supportive learning environment Clear adult expectations</p>