

# Caldecote Community Primary School



# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

**‘Care, Challenge, Persevere, Succeed – we are Caldecote!’**

Draft completed October 2020 by KW

Ratified by Governing Body

Review (Term and year) September 2024 in line with the new curriculum

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children aged 0 – 5 forms the foundation for provision at Caldecote Community Primary School (C.C.P.S.). At CCPS it refers to our Nursery and Reception children aged 3-5 years old. Good Early Years education is a firm foundation for future learning and development.

### Entitlement

Children are admitted to the Foundation Stage in line with the LEA policy and procedures.

- Children requiring a place at C.C.P.S. should be registered at the school office. Arrangements will be made to admit them in line with the school and LEA procedures.
- Children are usually admitted at the beginning of the Autumn Term.
- Children who have turned 3 by September 1<sup>st</sup> are eligible for a full time place for 6 hours per day. This cohort is known as Nursery.
- Children who have turned 4 by September 1<sup>st</sup> are eligible for a full time place in Reception.

### Starting School

**Nursery :-** Children start nursery in the September following their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. To ensure a smooth induction we arrange the following:-

- The Parents and Children are invited to meet their Teacher and to attend a series of stay and play sessions in June/July before the children are due to start school.
- The Teacher and a Nursery Nurse or Teaching Assistant visit each family once at home in the weeks prior to entry. During the visit a booklet is filled in to give us as much information as possible about the child.
- Children start in small groups building up to 5 sessions per week.

**Reception: -** Children start Reception in the September following their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday. To ensure a smooth induction we arrange the following:-

- Children who attend our nursery join the Reception class in small groups for several sessions during their time at nursery in the summer term. These sessions help the children become familiar with both the environment and the staff.
- Children who have not attended our nursery are invited in for at least two stay and play sessions with their Parents during the summer term prior to them starting school. A Parents open evening meeting is also arranged. Information regarding the classes, school policies, school uniform, start and finish times of the day and a look around the school are all part of this meeting. Support is provided to Parents to help them fill out the necessary paperwork for starting school and Bilingual support is also available to help to translate information.
- We also try to visit new children in their pre-school placement (if they have one) so that we can see the child in a setting where they are already confident. This also gives us a chance to discuss the child with staff that have known the child for some time. We also exchange data/evidence with the local Schools, Nurseries and Children's centers to get a clear picture of the child before they start our setting.
- We visit new children at home and complete an information booklet to ensure that we have as much information about the child as possible.
- The children start in small groups over a week to ensure the children settle well in the environment and can familiarise themselves more quickly with the staff and routines of the day.

### Aims and Objectives

At C.C.P.S. we follow the EYFS guidance, aiming to respond to the individual needs of our children, their families and the community to establish robust foundations on which future learning can be built.

We will ensure that the EYFS fulfils the aim of improving outcomes and reflects the right of every child to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution. The life skills they acquire will support them for their future wellbeing.

The Early Years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do.

- It ensures that all children are included regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability.
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors.
- It recognises the need for consolidation and challenge.
- It provides a rich, stimulating and safe environment.
- It encourages independence and a positive attitude towards present and future learning.
- It promotes positive relationships and co-operation with others.
- It develops confidence, self esteem and acceptable behaviour.
- It actively involves parents/carers in their child's school life.

## Content

The principles which guide the work of all early years practitioners are grouped into four themes:

- A unique Child – every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured.
- Positive Relationships – children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and /or a key person.
- Enabling Environments – the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.
- Learning and Development – children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates; all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter connected.

The 7 areas of learning that form the basis of learning for children in the Foundation Stage are the 3 prime areas.

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Physical Development

### 3. Communication and Language

And the 4 specific areas

4. Literacy
5. Mathematics
6. Understanding of the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

These learning areas are not viewed as separate entities. When we plan activities they are designed to meet several, and sometimes many, learning intentions. Excellent knowledge of the children ensures that they are challenged appropriately.

### Characteristics of Effective Learning

There are 3 characteristics of effective learning that we look to encourage throughout the day.

**Playing and Exploring** – do they investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’?

**Learning Actively** – do they concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements?

**Creating and Thinking Critically** – do they have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

**With a system of focus children, a workshop style environment and records kept on ‘in the moment’ planning sheets and learning journeys, the children are learning effectively all the time!!**

### Developing the home-school partnership

We believe that Parents and Carers are the child’s first and most enduring educators. We aim to work with them as partners in their children’s learning. We try to develop a close working relationship between home and school involving parents in their child’s development as much as possible. Some of the ways we encourage this are:-

- As described above in the ‘starting school’ section.
- Parents and teachers have the chance to chat informally at the beginning or end of the school day. Parents are welcome to make appointments at any time if they wish to discuss anything in greater detail or privacy.

- Inviting parents into school for open sessions and singing time.
- Each child will be a “focus” child for one week per term. Parents are invited to complete a form prior to this week giving information about family events, posing questions etc. The focus children also take home a camera to record out of school events and significant people. The parents are invited to a meeting in the week following the focus week. At these parents meetings, the development of each child is discussed and further information from the parents can be added at this time. Children receive a written report at the end of the year.
- Support and advice is available regularly for parents of children with special educational needs.
- Whole-school newsletters are sent out regularly, there are parent information sessions and events throughout the year. Parents are invited to join our ‘Parent Mail’ text message and email communications.
- Parents are provided with termly targets for their children so that they can support the areas of learning that are a focus in school.
- The support of our Child Support Mentor where necessary.
- The support of our Family Support Worker where necessary.

### Organisation of classes

We have 39 full time places available in the Nursery. There are two Teachers and two Teaching Assistants split evenly in the Nursery classrooms.

We have three Reception classes. There is a Teacher and a Teaching Assistant in each class in Reception with one other additional Teaching Assistant to support across the year group. We also have 1:1 support workers for children with specific needs. Other unqualified assistants (e.g. trainees and volunteers) may provide additional assistance under the supervision of qualified staff.

### Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning in the early years curriculum is planned spontaneously and adapted to meet the needs of all the children. We plan a range of experiences and

opportunities which give children the chance to make decisions and choices, work individually or in groups and explore the learning environment, within adult led, or self-chosen activities.

### Planning

The cycle of observation, assessment, planning, observation is carried out on a moment-by-moment basis.

We have focus children each week (approximately 10% of the group).

Activities that occur are recorded when the cycle is complete. These records are in the learning journeys for the focus children and on spontaneous planning sheets for activities in which a group have become involved.

### We work in this way because...

“Babies and young children are experiencing and learning in the here and now, not storing up their questions until tomorrow or next week. It is in that moment of curiosity, puzzlement, effort or interest – the ‘teachable moment’ – that the skilful adult makes a difference. By using this cycle on a moment-by-moment basis, the adult will be always alert to individual children (observation), always thinking about what it tells us about the child’s thinking (assessment), and always ready to respond by using appropriate strategies at the right moment to support children’s well-being and learning (planning for the next moment).”

From National Strategies document Learning, Playing and Interacting P.22 - 23

The revised EYFS advises us to continue using this document.

We have focus children **NOT** focus activities. **The adult goes to the child.** The child is **NOT** called to come to the adult. We work this way because high-level involvement occurs in child-initiated activity.

We prioritise:

- Partnership between practitioners and parents/carers, so that our children feel secure and develop a sense of wellbeing and achievement.

- Practitioners understanding of child development and how this affects their learning.
- The range and flexibility of approaches used that provide first hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop talk, play and learning.
- A carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals.
- Opportunities for children to choose activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- Encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence, self confidence and respect for others views;
- Support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and resources.
- Identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through continual observations and questioning.
- The involvement of children in their own learning through the introduction of individual targets.
- Ongoing dialogue with parents/carers to share each other's knowledge of the children.
- Clear aims for outcomes and regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we offer.
- Identification of training and Continuing Professional Development needs of all practitioners.
- The implementation of whole school policies, to ensure children's transition to Year 1 and through the rest of their career at C.C.P.S. is consistent and smooth.

### Planning in the moment

We use the observation cycle on a moment by moment basis. The focus children are given extra attention, but all the children are busy and learning all the time.

The planning sheets are a record of activities that have occurred. It is particularly important that the adults' input is recorded. Adult input is high-lighted in yellow: - "I suggested ... encouraged ... modelled ... asked ... wondered... helped ... provided...supported...offered resources ... etc."

The child's outcome from the adults input is highlighted in pink to show the new learning and progress made.

### Planning

The "planning sheets" are blank at the start of the week. Targets are added for focus areas of learning based on staff knowledge and assessment of the child. They are then filled up gradually during the week. All adults contribute to these sheets. When possible, photos are printed and added to the records. In addition, "Wow" moments are recorded for all children as and when they occur to be added to learning journeys.

Weekly plans for phonics, talk for writing, guided reading, shared reading and snappy maths and maths activities are also used for short Teacher led activities throughout the day.

### The role of play

Play underpins the delivery of all of the EYFS. Children need to have the opportunity and time to play indoors and outdoors. Through play in our school, children:

- Make relationships and interact appropriately
- Learn to explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world around them.
- Practice and consolidate ideas, concepts and skills.
- Develop an understanding of the need for rules.
- Take risks and make mistakes in a safe way.
- Have the opportunity to think creatively and imaginatively.
- Develop communication skills.

### Assessment

Initial baseline assessments are completed in line with the LA. As soon as possible after entry, we observe and assess the developmental age of the nursery children. We also

assess them against a profile based on the document “Development Matters.” We continue to complete this profile during the year recording the information on Target Tracker in line with the whole school. In the final term in the nursery, the developmental ages of the children are again assessed and all information is passed to the Reception Teachers.

In Reception, initial baseline assessments are also completed, in line with the DFE. Evidence relating to all seven areas of learning is collected throughout the year and at the end of the year The Foundation Stage Profile is completed.

- All staff make regular observations of children in the seven areas of learning. Each week more detailed observations are made of the focus children. These are used to inform staff in deciding possible activities and provision that would help the development of that child.

More formal assessment of children’s learning in phonics and reading and maths is in line with whole school assessment and allows practitioners to track children’s learning in these areas.

- Individual reports are used as the basis for reporting to parents and informing the teachers for the following year.

### Progress and Development

When children show high levels of involvement, that is when there is progress and development occurring – when the brain is at its most active. High level involvement occurs most often when children are able to pursue their own interests in an enabling environment.

“In the moment” planning helps to make this possible.

### An Enabling Environment

We have a workshop style environment indoors and outside. Nothing is set out on the tables. The children select what they want to do in each area. The principal is that

resources are accessible to the children and they are varied, open-ended and high quality. This gives children the opportunity to select resources to support their chosen activity.

### The Role of the Adult

The adults are there to facilitate learning. They do this through observations and interactions. Our adults know the children very well and have a sound understanding of child development. This ensures that the adults enhance and extend the learning at the appropriate level.

### Meaningful Interactions

The children and the adults have time and space to engage in meaningful conversations. The children set the agenda and the adults are there to show interest and engage with the children. The modelling of conversation skills is then adopted by the children who have long conversations in pairs and groups.

### Inclusion in the EYFS

We give all our children every opportunity to achieve to the best of their ability. Every child at C.C.P.S. has the right to be included in all learning opportunities regardless of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability.

Through weekly team meetings, regular monitoring, continual observations and Pupil Progress meetings, all children are given the support to enable them to reach their full potential. We will involve other agencies and professionals, as well as internal support systems as appropriate to facilitate this.

### Equal Opportunities

Access to learning experiences will be ensured for every child regardless of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender, ability or age. This will be achieved by creating effective

learning environments in which stereotypical views are challenged and pupils learn to appreciate and view others differences in a positive manner. We will ensure that:

- All forms of bullying and harassment, including racial harassment, are challenged and dealt with appropriately.
- There is differentiated work to support the learning of children of all abilities.
- All children are encouraged to contribute to group discussions in an atmosphere in which they feel secure.
- There are good adult role models in school.

### Special Needs

Every child in the Foundation Stage is entitled to be taught at an appropriate level to ensure they fulfil their own potential. Children with Special Educational Needs and Disability are identified as early as possible. Working alongside parents, relevant professionals and in accordance with the school's S.E.N.D. policy and Code of Practice, we will address the child's needs. S.E.N.D targets are set and reviewed termly with the SENCO.

### ICT

All children will have opportunities to experience ICT in ways that will enhance their learning. These will include:

- Discussion about, and contact with, technology in their everyday environment e.g. washing machines, televisions, CD players, story phones, laptops, ipads and remote controlled toys.
- Using toys that simulate real-life applications of ICT e.g. telephones, cameras and ICT based toys and games.
- Using and developing an understanding of computers, with consideration to safe, sensible and appropriate use.

### Health and Safety

The Health and Safety of our pupils is paramount and at all times will be in accordance with the School's Health and Safety Policy. All staff will be vigilant and report any necessary concerns to The Head Teacher, the Business Manager and/or the Premises Officers as soon as possible, if they consider it may cause harm to children or adults.

### Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or revised if necessary due to new legislation.