



Pinfold Primary

'Learning is our passion'

'Small but mighty!'

Pinfold Primary

Early Years Policy 2020

Head: Claire Tjaveondja

Chair of Governors: Nicola Jackson



“Intelligence looks for what is known to solve problems. Creativity looks for what is unknown to discover possibilities.”

Journey into childhood

In the Early Years everything is unknown so everything is possible- what an exciting time to teach and learn!

Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of 'The Early Years' at Pinfold Primary School.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. Our Early Years Foundation Stage accommodates children from the age of 3 to 5 years and is a mixed aged class of Pre-School, Reception and Key Stage 1 children. The class has a full-time Teacher, a full-time Level 3 Early Years Specialist Teaching Assistant and an Early Years apprentice.

Aims

We have high expectations at Pinfold Primary. We are passionate in our belief that the early years is the most important stage of a child's life. We can set them up as lifelong learners, encourage them to be healthy, remain healthy and lead happy, secure lives if we get it right in the early years. Here is where children form positive attachments, learn from observing what adults do, what children do- they observe everything. We know it is crucial to be sensitive, nurturing teachers through all we do with your children.

We recognise that you, as the parent and carer are the child's first educator and we will strive to work with you, as partners to make sure they are happy and to get their education right for them.

We encourage children to develop independence and resilience, to hypothesise and try things out. Young children are naturally curious and open-minded- we want to feed this desire to learn with stimulating challenges in a safe yet exciting environment. We know the importance of the learning environment to promote independent learning and to allow children to develop through their schemas. Schemas are a natural stage of development every child goes through and it is integral they get to explore and develop these schemas. For example, a child may learn through 'transporting' so we will enable that child's schema by providing the children with baskets, prams, trolleys and time to collect and transport.

We recognise that children's wellbeing and involvement needs to be high to ensure their learning is optimum and they need to be able to share, communicate and be heard. We set up situations, model behaviours and read books, sing action rhymes, use puppets that will help your children learn to behave calmly, positively and politely. It is at this age when children are just beginning to learn that the world does not just revolve around them and we are here to explain and praise.

We believe it is integral to a child becoming a lifelong learner that they are involved in their own learning and next steps from the start. We will share your child's learning journey and targets with

them and you along the way. The children will be praised when they achieve something, have a clever thought or carry out a kind deed and then encouraged to think what they could do next that will further their learning. They will be encouraged to set themselves challenges and develop resilience.

We recognise the importance of early literacy. We love picture books at Pinfold and each classroom sports an attractive reading corner. The staff are trained in the teaching of phonics. We use the Letters and Sounds guidance and ensure our environment is enhanced with phonics and word rich. We have just purchased new reading schemes to ensure all guided reading books are fully phonetically decodable and these books go home with the children on a daily basis.

"Strengthening children's early language development is the golden thread in improving quality and outcomes for young children. The size of a child's vocabulary at five is a key indicator of later academic success. That is why it is so important to support practitioners in developing communicative environments so that children can build their stock of words and, quite simply, talk more."

Sue Ellis

Research shows that speech and language develops more quickly when children play out of doors. In boys, they develop 25% better when engaged in play outside. We are passionate about outdoor play and are constantly thinking of ways to develop our outdoor learning. The children bring their own wellies, we provide waterproofs and staff are trained in Forest School so we can access nature and learn about it in all weathers, through all seasons.

Our high expectations will enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally and to achieve their full potential. We will offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited availability for development through a wide range of new and exciting first-hand experiences that will give children the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test their skills, knowledge and understanding alongside existing experiences. We will ensure that children are kept healthy and safe and that they achieve the knowledge and skills they need for their transition to Key Stage One.

The Curriculum

Pre-School and Reception curriculum is planned and implemented using the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document. We currently use the Development Matters (2012) document as guidance. Development matters has a section called 'Characteristics of effective learning. We like to think of it as 'Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning' because we believe these elements are integral to delivering outstanding teaching and ensuring children are learning to their full potential.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and how it is through play they can explore and think critically about the world around them. The characteristics are:

Playing and Exploring - children investigate and experience things, they engage in imaginative role play or small world, they take on a role, they become the teacher and they are not only willing but eager and keen to 'have a go'

Active Learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, they enjoy the journey not only the end result, the achievements are succeeding at what challenge they have set themselves, for example, jumping one brick higher or sliding down the pole independently.

Creating and Thinking Critically - children are given the opportunity to think, problem solve and develop their ideas, changing and adapting as they evaluate what they are doing; make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things and being given the opportunity to articulate their thoughts, what they did and think about why.

This EYFS document is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

We will endeavour to understand and observe each child's development and learning. We will assess their progress and plan for next steps.

Positive relationships

We foster positive relationships. We are warm, loving sensitive practitioners who care about each child. We are interested in each child, in its interests and needs. We listen to them and ensure they feel safe. We will promote independence and resilience through nurture and encouragement and through consistent clear boundaries.

Enabling environments

" We need to challenge the historical stereotypes that often exist around the way that learning environments are set up for children, blending new understanding of learning styles, how children really learn and their preferred contexts so that our environments can be responsive and dynamic."

Elizabeth Jarman, 2013, The Communication Friendly Spaces Approach

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We ensure our learning environment is safe, stimulating and values all types of people.

Our learning environment, both inside and outside promotes independence and deep thinking. We have set it up in a way that is communication friendly with natural resources and displays that are useful and meaningful.

Learning and development

Our learning is set up to encompass all the characteristics of effective learning. We value the importance of real learning through play and hands on activities. As with the rest of Pinfold Primary, we plan our curriculum so it is cumulative taking account of prior knowledge and experience. All our EYFS children are included in visits, for example to a farm, a pantomime, a farm shop to ensure the children understand and have experience of what they are learning about. There is careful thought given to transitions both with Home Visits for young starters to visits to Oak class during the summer months.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS has three prime area of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

In addition, four specific areas of learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

At Pinfold Primary, we believe all areas of development are equally important. However if your child is struggling in any of the prime areas of development then we may speak to you about any difficulties and devise ways to help your child progress in these areas. Mrs Tjaveondja is our SENCo and she may speak to you about outside agencies that we can get to offer us advice on helping your child for example, a Speech Therapist or Occupational Therapist. It is our responsibility to assess children and put in strategies to help them. Equally if you have any concerns please speak to any of the staff about your worries. We will be happy to reassure you.

Developing Independence

Please help your children to become independent. Weeks before they are starting school begin potty training. When they come to school dress them in easily accessible clothes, Velcro shoes, jogging bottoms, label their socks (yes they will come home with someone else's!) Tights are very tricky to manoeuvre when rushing for a wee! We will be training your children to dress themselves, to fill their

own book bags, to hang up their own coats. Please make sure they have a hook that they can hang up and have their names in. Please do not send them in in their best clothes. Learning at Pinfold is all about getting muddy and covered in paint. We do have aprons and waterproofs but these only offer a certain amount of protection. We have changes of clothes here so do not worry- we will never leave your child in wet or damp socks or undies. Please send in a pair of wellies, with your child's name inside.

Our long-term curriculum overview can be seen on the website. As a small school, we plan whole school topics and then in the EYFS tend to go very much with the children's interest as well as predictive interests for example collecting conkers in autumn.

By the end of the EYFS, the end of Reception children are generally expected to achieve the 'Early Learning Goals'. However all children develop at different rates and the EYFS is measured in children's age in months- something that is not catered for when leaving the Early Years Foundation stage.

Play

'Playing' is *never* 'just playing'!

When you ask your child what they have done today at school and they say 'nothing' it means,

"I watched a snail slowly crawl across a log and I held my breath when it got to the end and I was terrified it would fall off and then we discovered that the snail did not fall off- it stuck!" or it means,

"I listened to a story that was absolutely terrifying about a witch and I asked Miss to read it again and again, and then I read it- and then I was the witch in the garden and I grew so big I was humongous!"

Inclusion

At Pinfold, we believe in equality. We recognise and respect the abilities and strengths of our children at all levels of development and the wealth of knowledge and experience that they bring from their differing backgrounds and cultures.

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 and we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of individual children, so that children are able to reach their full potential. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We aim to build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs

We adhere to the Equal Opportunity and Inclusion policies of the school.

Early Years Pupil Premium – we will endeavour to identify our least advantaged pupils and inform parents or carers of their opportunity to apply for their child's entitlement to extra funding in school. We direct a lot of the funding towards culturally rich visits and trips. We will track children's progress and ensure that support is adjusted to target specific areas as the child develops.

Assessment

Throughout Pre-School and Reception children's knowledge, understanding, skills, wellbeing, styles of learning and achievements are assessed and tracked using the developmental stages set out in the document 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)'. We keep observations of what the children have said to evidence their deeper understanding or highlight areas we need to develop. Most of your children's progress and achievements will be in their Learning Journeys' in photographic form.

Observational evidence and samples of children's work throughout the school year will be used to assess children as 'emerging', 'developing' or 'confident' based on their understanding and achievement in their actual age banding of development for example 40-60 months and then move on to the Early Learning Goals.

Our children's knowledge, skills and understanding will continue to be tracked throughout The Foundation Stage and assessed against the ELG's at the end of Reception to establish an end of Foundation Stage achievement and learning profile for each child in preparedness for their transition to key stage one.

Transitions

We offer a Home Visit for your child before they start in our school. This is an integral part of your child's transition to school. It means they have a friendly face when they leave you and we have a great background knowledge of their likes, dislikes, what they enjoy doing, what they may be scared of and you can discuss allergies or any other concerns you may have.

Willow class teacher holds a parent meeting in the summer term with all parents whose children are due to start in our school for the following term. This is to provide parents with key information, school expectations, knowledge on our curriculum and assessment and advice on how they can help their child.

If required, at the beginning of the school year new Pre-School children can have staggered entry times if their parents feel this is necessary or the Class Teacher feels it would benefit the child in order to ensure that they have the time to feel welcomed and to support them in exploring their new environment. This is discussed with parents during the home visit. Mrs Wilson has good ideas to help your child settle in for example she will give you a brown paper bag for your child to collect things over the summer, photos of what they have been doing or their family and then they can chat about them to their new friends and the adults in class when they first start.

In the summer term, all children moving to Oak class have the opportunity to meet with their new teachers in the next class for two set mornings, to help them prepare for their new experiences. We will also work with the needs of the child if more are necessary.

Community Links

We pride ourselves on developing strong community links from the farm shop at Diglake to the mission in the village. We also welcome your grandparents to come in and read with the children or share their gardening or whatever skill they have with us. We open our doors to all our Pinfold family at Christmas and serve you all with a Christmas dinner. We really are like a family here at our tiny school and any suggestions of how to develop further links with our local community are warmly welcomed.

Health and safety and safeguarding

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance and we adhere to the school's safeguarding policy, Lancashire County Council Guidance and national guidance;

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835733/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2019.pdf

We are a healthy school and our children have access to fresh water, milk and fruit daily. Reception children who stay for lunch are eligible for free school meals or can choose to bring in a healthy packed lunch.

We teach the children the importance of hygiene, hand-washing techniques. We love cooking and baking and throughout the year we plan cooking activities to give children experiences of a range of healthy food.

