

**CROWMARSH GIFFORD C. E.
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



**EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE
POLICY**

(Updated April 2016)

Linked to Article 3, Article 9, Article 12 and Article 29 from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: Article 3: The best interests of children must be the primary concern in making decisions that may affect them. All adults should do what is best for children. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children. Article 9: The child should have the right to freedom of expression, including the right to seek and receive and share information and ideas. Article 12 (Respect for the views of the child): When adults are making decisions that affect children, children have the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into account. Article 29: (Goals of Education) Children's education should develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest.

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life. (Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage, 2014)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to 5 years. At Crowmarsh Gifford C.E. Primary School, the majority of children join us full or part time in the September after their fourth birthday. A staggered intake at the beginning of the school year enables children to adapt to the changes in their routine and ensures they have a positive first experience of school. 'Every child is unique' so at Crowmarsh Gifford we ensure that the transition into the Foundation Stage class suits the needs of each individual child through liaising with their parents/carers.

At Crowmarsh Gifford C.E. Primary school we believe that "every child is unique" (Development Matters in the early Years Foundation Stage, 2014) and "deserves the best possible start in life"(Statutory Framework for the Foundation Stage, 2014) we feel that adults are involved to facilitate children to help them help themselves. enabling them to fulfil their potential to become lifelong independent learners who demonstrate the Characteristics of Effective Learning in all areas of learning." Children develop quickly in the early years of life and their experiences can have a major impact of their future. At Crowmarsh Gifford we understand that positive relationships and an enabling environment have a major impact on the learning and development of our unique children. "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." (Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage, 2014)

The EYFS is based upon four overarching principles:

Faith ◇ *Service* ◇ *Integrity* ◇ *Responsibility* ◇ *Truth* ◇ *Excellence*



Development matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014)

A Unique Child

At Crowmarsh Gifford school we understand that “every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured” (Statutory Framework for the Early Year foundation Stage, 2014). Children learn and develop in different ways and at varying rates. From the beginning of each child’s learning journey at Crowmarsh Gifford we strive to ensure that we learn about their interests and motivations through conversations with parents/carers and through meetings with their previous care providers. As they continue their learning journey through foundation stage observation enable us to recognise how the children are learning and to teach them how to learn in different ways. The children’s dispositions and attitudes to learning can be influenced by feedback from people in their life. In school we use praise and encouragement, celebrations and rewards for each individual child who demonstrates the characteristics of effective learning including resilience, perseverance, ‘have a go’ attitude, grit and effort to encourage the children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children at Crowmarsh Gifford Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or ability. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that every child matters. We encourage and give our children every opportunity to ‘be the best they can be’. We listen to the children; allowing them to share life experiences and goals. We use their ideas and take account of their life experiences when planning for learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic yet challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the individual needs of each child regardless of whether they are boys or girls, children with special educational needs, or children who are more able. We support all children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds and children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;

Faith ◇ *Service* ◇ *Integrity* ◇ *Responsibility* ◇ *Truth* ◇ *Excellence*

- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe, secure and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for all children including those whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children’s progress and taking action to provide support or as necessary.

Safeguarding and Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are ‘safe’. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children this document should be read alongside the whole schools Safeguarding Children Policy.

“Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the people caring for them”. (DfE, 2014)

At Crowmarsh Gifford C.E. Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirement as stated in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2013. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Ensure a first aid kit is available at all times with appropriate content.
- Manage children’s behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

- Ensure the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child has a key person and that they can explore and actively engage in challenge learning tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain record, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the EYFS and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Transition

At Crowmarsh Gifford Primary School we believe that the transition from pre-schools and other settings into Foundation Stage as well as the transition into Year 1 are extremely important times for our children.

The outdoor space at Crowmarsh Gifford Primary School is shared with Crowmarsh pre-school. This provides valuable opportunities for children transferring from the pre-school to meet our team and build relationships before starting school.

Children new to Foundation Stage are given three opportunities to visit the classroom with their peers before starting school. These visits include a stay and play with parents/carers, a stay and play, with parents in the hall and a full morning when parents/carers can leave the site.

During the summer term, prior to children starting school, the Foundation Stage team visit settings to meet the children in their familiar environment and talk to their key person at the setting.

We aim to ensure that all our children settle well into school, building their confidence slowly within their new environment. We operate a staggered start to Foundation Stage to give the children an opportunity to explore their new surrounding and meet new friends before returning to their home where they can relax and rest to be ready for the following day. In the first week of term the children learn about morning routines and leave school at midday. In the second week of term the children are introduced to the lunchtime routine and are collected by parents and carers at one o'clock. In the third week of term the children stay all day. We understand that every child is unique and some children may require further transition time.

We believe this staggered start to their schooling gives them a positive start to their school experiences and enables them to come to each new school day well rested and ready to learn.

Children transitioning into year one have informal opportunities to meet their new teachers through sharing books and discussions in their current familiar

surroundings and becoming familiar with other adults during break time. In the last two weeks of the summer term three formal visits to year one are planned in. Two hour visits and a full morning. Every child is unique and may need additional informal visits by adults into their familiar environment or into their new classroom.

Positive Relationships

At Crowmarsh Gifford Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong, independent individuals from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and the contribution they make towards their child's learning and development is invaluable. We actively encourage parents to support and engage their children in learning through

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school with an optional home visit.
- Giving the children the opportunity of spending quality time in the setting with their parents/carers in the summer term before starting school.
- Inviting all parents to a series of induction meetings during the term before their child starts school;
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- Formal meeting in the Autumn and Spring terms at which the class teacher about the curriculum;
- Parents receive a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the Foundation Stage.
- Subject based meetings: Reading, phonics, mathematics to support parents on how they can help their child at home.
- Class blog is updated weekly; parents can find out about their child's learning, it contains suggestions about what they can do at home to support their child's learning in school.
- Encouraging parents to contribute to the assessment record of their child through 'smile' observations.
- Open classrooms every term.
- Class teacher being available at any time for parents to meet with any question, concerns or queries.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS teacher and two teaching assistants are the 'key person' to a group of children in EYFS. The 'key person' is responsible for keeping the individual Learning journeys

up to date and should be available at parent meetings to discuss learning and development and next steps.

Enabling Environments

At Crowmarsh Gifford Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development, learning needs and how they are learning, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences as well as extending the continuous provision to extend the children's learning and to encourage and develop their exploration, motivation, creative and critical thinking.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS indoor and outdoor classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The environment is organised into learning areas, where children are able to select equipment and resources independently. Display is used in different ways to support the children's current learning through themed working walls, display children's effort and good work; they are also used as a basis for discussion about 'purple learning' and next steps.

Learning and Development

At Crowmarsh Gifford Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are linked.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching for learning (updated October 2015) defines the features of effective teaching for learning in our school and is based upon the key principles which underpin successful learning as developed by Diana Pardoe and focuses on meaningful communication and the significance of purposeful talk in establishing a learning culture, building motivation and involving learners actively in their own learning. These features apply to teaching for learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS is based around half termly or termly themes. These themes are based on the children's interests and a medium term plan is planned from using their ideas. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning; however the teacher alters these in response to the needs

(achievements and changing interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly/ medium term planning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation in many shapes and forms including extended observations, snap shot observations, annotated photographs and work, this involves the child's key person, other adults within the foundation stage as well as parents/carers and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways and are used to inform the EYFSP.

Within the final term of the EYFS, a meeting with parents/carers concludes with a written summary which is given to parents, reporting the achievement at the end of Foundation Stage. The parents are given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the teacher and both parents and children are encouraged to complete a feedback sheet.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Playing and Exploring

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They have the opportunity to practise skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually. The children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. Adults model play and support children to explore new experiences. Adult focus

Active Learning

Children learn best through physical and mental challenges, purposeful conversations with others as practitioners we understand that "as agents of their learning our children must be willing" and "it requires becoming involved and concentrating, expending effort and preserving with an activity even when it is difficult or not turning out to plan...driven by the desire to satisfy a goal" (Stewart, 2013) Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

"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. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions."

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom and into the outdoor area freely to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning and Development

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning and development that, three prime and four specific. The Prime areas of learning and development underpin the children's development in the EYFS.

Prime Areas

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

Specific areas

- Reading and Writing
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

All areas of learning are delivered through adult led and child initiated activities, at Crowmarsh Gifford Primary School the percentage of each changes over the duration of the year to suit the needs of the children and to ensure their readiness for year one. In each area there is an Early Learning Goal that defines the expectations for the end of the EYFS.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the Foundation teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor has the opportunity to discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Headteacher and subject co-ordinators carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

References –

Department of Education (DfE). 2014. Statutory Framework for the Early Year Foundation Stage.

Early Education (2012) Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Stewart, N(2013). Active Learning. In Moylett, H. ed, Characteristics of Effective Early Learning: Helping young children become Learners for Life.