

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Policy Creation and Review	
Author(s)	Caron Harrison Clare Barber and Sam Dutch
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1. INTRODUCTION

"Every child deserved 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." (DfE 2014)

2. PRINCIPLES

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **A unique child:** We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise, encouragement and celebration to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning.
- **Positive relationships:** We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.
- **Enabling environments:** We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests,

stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

- **Learning and development:** The Nursery and Reception classrooms are organised to allow the children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classrooms and outside areas are set up in learning areas which encourage the children to locate and use equipment and resources independently in ways that suit their development, interests and learning.

At Odessa Infants School we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. It is important to recognise that the EYFS is preparation for life as well as the children's future education.

The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. The final year of the EYFS is Reception. All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of the practitioners working within the EYFS to build upon the prior learning and experience that all the children bring with them. This is done through an holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents and all school staff work effectively together to support children's learning and development.

3. AIMS

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being. At Odessa we aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

To meet our aims we:

- provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs.
- provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- enable choice and decision making through our continuous provision fostering independence and self-confidence.
- work in partnership with Parents/Carers and value their contributions
- 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.

4. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Early Learning Goals (the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the end of Reception year) and the educational programmes (the matters, skills and processes which are required to be taught to young children) are set out in the 'Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework' document (DfE 2018).

The seven areas of learning and development are:

Three Prime Areas:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development
Physical Development
Communication and Language

Four Specific Areas:

Literacy
Mathematical Development
Understanding of the World
Expressive Art and Design

At Odessa we believe that all seven areas are of equal importance and fully ensure that the three prime areas are firmly embedded in the four specific areas. All the areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play with a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities.

5. PLANNING

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what the children know and can do. Our planning is informed by observations we have made of the children in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning. All practitioners who work in the Early Years are involved in the process of identifying next steps for our children.

There are three stages of planning the curriculum:

- **Long Term Planning:** we have created a framework which gives structure and coherence to the curriculum. Topics are planned for each of the six terms and the Power of Reading books are mapped out to support them and to determine a broad and balanced coverage. Coverage of the Early Learning Goals in Reception are distributed over the terms.
- **Medium Term Planning:** We address particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail for each term. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities and activities for each area of learning and development are identified.
- **Short Term Planning:** We identify specific learning objectives and plan activities, differentiation and the deployment of adults and resources to meet the learning needs of the children on a weekly and day-to-day basis. We assess, identify and plan for the children's individual next steps. Planning reflects and supports the characteristics of effective learning and the different ways children learn; play and exploration, active learning and creative and critical thinking.

6. Assessment, recording and monitoring

At Odessa Infants School we undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning and then make informed decisions about the child's progress.

This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

Across both the Nursery and the Reception we use formative assessment. At the end of Reception we complete a summative assessment

- **Formative Assessment:** This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on continual observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations and other focused assessments e.g. annotated examples of work, photographs and information from parents. Evidence for this assessment is found in the children's Learning Journey books, writing/mark-making assessment book and is held electronically on our assessment tool Target Tracker.
- **Summative Assessment:** At the end of the Reception year the EYFS Profile is completed which provides information of a child's knowledge, understanding and their progress. The Profile reflects the on-going observations and assessments which have been made during the year. Evaluations are made in each of the seven areas of learning assessing against the Early Learning Goals criteria. Each child will be assessed as either 'meeting expected levels (2)', exceeding expected levels (3) or emerging (not yet reaching) expected levels (1) in each of the seven areas of learning.

Teaching and Learning is monitored in line with the School's Monitoring Policy through lesson observations, learning walks, pupil progress meetings and 'book looks', these include literacy assessment books and Learning Journeys. The Senior Leadership Team monitor teaching and learning across the Foundation Stage throughout the year and analyse the EYFS data. There is also a specific EYFS Governor who monitors EYFS across the year.

7. LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

We support children's learning through planned play activities and decide which child-initiated or adult-led activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children's learning through play by getting involved in the play themselves with a particular focus on developing language skills. To support this we use the 'Sustained Shared Thinking' Model

8. THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

We create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment both inside and outside which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. We also make it a place where children feel secure, confident and are challenged to develop their independence. Children have the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor classrooms throughout the school day. The learning environment is divided into different zones in order to fully support all seven areas of learning. Resources are always available for the children to use in our Continuous Provision and they are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

9. LIAISON WITH PRE-SCHOOL SETTINGS AND INDUCTION

At Odessa we have close links with the local pre-school. Reception practitioners utilise the transfer records from pre-school settings to inform them about each new intake. HOME VISITS/VISITS TO OTHER SETTINGS All prospective children have the opportunity to visit the school and their classroom in the summer term TASTER SESSIONS/COFFEE MORNING/INFO FOR NEW PARENTS CHILDREN'S INDUCTION IN SEPTEMBER

10. RECEPTION TO YEAR 1 TRANSITION

Reception and Year 1 work closely together to make the transition from the EYFS to KS 1 as smooth as possible.

- Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the Reception year
- Reception practitioners plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the Spring and Summer terms encouraging less dependence on adult support
- EYFS Profiles including a report on the Characteristics of Effective learning are passed on to the Year 1 teacher
- Reception and Year 1 teachers meet to discuss the individual needs of the children in July
- Reception children visit their new Year 1 class and teacher to a session in July
- The 'Letters and Sounds' approach to phonics and spelling is continued throughout KS 1
- Where possible the Year 1 children continue to access a 'Continuous Provision' model for the first half term

11. HOME/SCHOOL LINKS

We recognise that parents are the child's first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together in Early Year settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

We develop this by:

- Outlining the Reception curriculum to parents during the new parents' meeting in July to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home.
- Holding half termly meetings to outline topic activities and ways that parents can help their child.
- Inviting parents to 'Stay & Play' every week where they can play with their child and see how learning happens in a Continuous Provision
- Operating an 'open door' policy whereby parents can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner
- Making their child's Learning Journey available for them to share with their child and to add photos etc. to.

12. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

At Odessa Infants School we provide all pupils all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual.

Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.

13. INCLUSION

Children with additional educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to access and benefit from the curriculum. This includes children who are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. The school's SEN Coordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary.

14. SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE

At Odessa Infants School we provide a welcoming, safe, secure and stimulating environment enabling all children to develop into independent and confident individuals.

All staff have had Safeguarding training and have read the document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2019).

Please also refer to the Safeguarding Policy and Health and Safety Policy.