

Christ Church C.E & Lewis Street Primary Schools

Early Years and Phase 1 Policy



Date	Spring 2017	
School	Christ Church CE	Lewis Street
Review Date	Spring 2019	Spring 2019
Signed by Designated Governor	E. Cross	K. Lee

Inline with statutory requirements, we follow the EYFS handbook/Development Matters document. The aim of our policy is to write a rationale of our approaches to delivering the EYFS.

Our Aims

- To settle children into their new environment so that they feel happy and secure and enjoy coming to school
- To support children in becoming competent and confident beings, which will allow them to progress into learners, who enjoy learning
- To provide a safe and stimulating learning environment in which creativity and expressiveness are valued
- To provide a broad and balanced skilled based curriculum for every child
- To be a community for children and their families

Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on the principles of The Early Years Foundation Stage. This document begins when children enter Nursery, usually the September after their third birthday, and continues until the end of the Reception year. We believe that The Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting and fostering the children's personal, social and emotional wellbeing. It encourages positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning in the children.

The Foundation Stage is divided into the following areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)
- Communication and Language (CL)
- Physical Development (PD)
- Literacy (L)
- Maths (M)
- Understanding of the world (UW)
- Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

These areas of learning all carry equal importance and we aim to immerse children in each of these areas through planned activities and child initiated learning. We constantly evaluate our methods and we find that many of our children have a lack of experiences when entering the Foundation Stage, so some need to be shown how to use resources and taught key skills before they can begin to apply it in their independent play. With this in mind, we plan for focused activities which children are drawn into as well as continuous and enhanced provision. Evaluation of the last four years shows this way of working is successful for our

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children, in that children are supported in developing key skills and experiences so that they are able to operate with increasing independence. Directed teaching sessions are kept short and differentiated to meet the needs of our learners. Nursery children may have a focus in a very small group i.e. in the book tent, progressing to larger group sessions when they are ready, whereas Reception begin with large groups, half class and move towards whole class by the end of the year. Data analysis suggested that each year a larger number of children were not ready to access Level 1 in the September of Year 1, hence the whole school approach to phases. Year 1 follow the principles of EYFS and continue to work on reception profile points for all children in Autumn Term. Continuing data from 10.11 onwards, shows an improvement in attainment in year 1, we believe this is due to the approach of children accessing a curriculum which is relevant, has a play based theme and is pitched to support transition from EYFS to National Curriculum. This approach allows children to apply the skills they are contently developing, such as listening skills and prepares them for the transition to Year 2. We have evidence that our children respond well to routines and we can see a positive impact of encouraging them to focus for short spells of time. Although this may sound formal, observations will show that the majority of children respond to this type of provision and are engaged in their learning. Continuous and Enhanced Provision is also a key aspect of our planning, this gives children the opportunity to explore new resources and to play independently.

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and Learning in Phase 1 is based on a clear understanding of how our children learn.

We believe that young children learn best through

- Play
- First hand experiences which are well structured and meaningful.
- Interacting with others in a cognitive and reflective way
- Being physically active
- Having their interests valued, developed and extended.

The teaching is designed to provide a stimulating learning environment inside and outside, with provision arranged into areas for different types of play. There is a high level of staff involvement in children's chosen activities and play. There are planned 'focused activities' for specific children, or groups of children. However, any child who wishes to join in an activity is allowed to do so. We operate a choice policy and usually find that once children are settled most will choose to take part.

Suitably differentiated activities are organised to meet the learning needs of each child. There is some whole class teaching for short periods, such as shared story. Adults not implementing focus activities will support pupils in continuous provision, encouraging and enhancing independent learning.

Classroom Organisation.

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Christ Church C.E

Nursery and Reception are in a separate building to the rest of the school but building work is currently underway to move these classes to the main school. Christ Church C.E is a one-form entry school. Children and families are welcomed into their classroom in a morning, Chat and Play is used as a whole school approach to settle children ready for learning.

There is one outdoor area for nursery and reception and year 1 use the main playground with the rest of the school.

Lewis Street

Phase 1 is in a separate building to the rest of the school, due to building design. There are currently six classrooms, four which house 2 Reception classes and 2 Year 1 classes and one Nursery classroom.

Children and families are welcomed into their classroom in a morning, Chat and Play is used as a whole school approach to settle children ready for learning.

There are two outdoor areas, one recently redesigned for Nursery and Reception use (accessed from Nursery and Reception S classes) and one for year 1 use, accessed from the year 1 corridor where an adult accompanies the children both in and out.

Play is essential for young children's learning. Independent self-initiated learning is supported by classrooms which have a flexible yet structured layout. Each classroom is divided into areas, such as:-

- sand and water
- home corner and role play areas
- mark making area
- attractive book area
- construction area
- malleable area
- creative area

The classrooms are well organised and designed to give the children space to move about between the different play activities safely and with ease.

We encourage the children to become autonomous and independent by ensuring that the resources and equipment are accessible to them. This is evident in areas such as construction where boxes are clearly labelled with an image and text. We model to the children how to access and put away resources.

Observation

Observation is a key strand of the planning cycle as observations give us the opportunity to tune into children's interests, abilities, needs, likes and dislikes. Our observations are being undertaken with "Orbit" which enables staff and parents to contribute to the cycle. We can then base our teaching, activities and experiences provided on the results of our observations and next steps/feedback/"postcards" from Parents/carers. All adults in the

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unit contribute to the observations. We hold half termly team meetings to review the week update Orbit profiles, share observations and suggestions and plan next steps

Home-School Partnership.

This is very important to us and we make every effort to ensure the partnership is effective. This starts from before the children join Nursery. Informal coffee mornings are held and families invited to come and see the setting and meet staff. We are keen to conduct home visits to give us the opportunity to meet children and families in their own environment. These visits prove very popular and the majority of parents engage. There are regular parents meetings/Learner review days and other opportunities for parents to find out about how their child is getting on at school and pass on information about their child at home. Early intervention workshops are delivered by the Home/school link teacher in order to relay the developmental strands and skills children will learn from their entry to Nursery and beyond. All children in Nursery are assigned a Key Worker, linked to pastoral care and parents and children meet them during home visits and induction.

ORBIT challenges are set in Nursery and Reception which further engage parents and pupils in home/school work and play. Parents play a vital role in the education of their children. Reading remains a key priority in Phase 1 too with home/school links encouraged from the start. Evidence shows that children who love books achieve better in school than children who don't value books. We offer a Share a Book Scheme in Nursery and the school reading scheme in Reception and Year 1 to develop this.

Equal Opportunities & Special Educational Needs procedures

*See whole school policies