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Christ Church School places high value on good Early Years Practice in Nursery, Reception and across the school

1. Aims

The curriculum for the Early Years should underpin all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

- a. Personal, social and emotional well-being
- b. Positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning
- c. Social skills
- d. Attention skills and persistence
- e. Language and communication
- f. Reading and writing skills
- g. Mathematical skills
- h. Knowledge and understanding of the world
- i. Physical development
- j. Creative development

The school believe that early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. Children learn in a complex way and are influenced by everything in their environment.

They use their senses to explore and make sense of the world around them.

They learn through play, hands on experiential learning, through conversation with adults and other children and through a variety of planned activities.

Staff will follow the Early Years Statutory Framework from Birth to Five and agree with and strive to implement in practice the principles stated for excellent early years education:

- a. Effective education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements.
- b. Effective education requires practitioners who understand that children develop rapidly during the early years –physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.
- c. Practitioners should ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued.
- d. Early years' experience should build on what children already know and can do.



- e. No child should be excluded or disadvantaged regardless of their need; inclusion is at the heart of this.
- f. Parents and practitioners should work together.
- g. To be effective the curriculum should be carefully structured.
- h. There should be opportunities for the children to engage in activities planned by adults and also those that they plan or initiate themselves.
- i. Practitioners must be able to observe and respond appropriately to children.
- j. Well-planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process.

For children to have rich and stimulating experiences, the learning environment should be well planned and well organised.

Above all, effective learning and development for young children requires high-quality care and education by practitioners.

2. Equal Opportunities

We believe that all children should be treated as individuals and that they have equal access to the Early Years curriculum.

All staff should have an awareness of what Equal Opportunities means in principle as well as in practice.

Practitioners should plan to meet the needs of girls and boys, children with S.E.N, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children with EAL, Children from disadvantaged backgrounds, children from all social and cultural backgrounds and children of different ethnic groups.

3. Learning and Teaching

Staff believe that learning for young children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes.

During the Early Years many of these aspects are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

Effective learning involves:

- a. Children initiating activities that promote learning and enable



- them to learn from each other.
- b. Children learning through movement and their senses.
 - c. Children having time to explore ideas and interests in depth.
 - d. Children feeling secure which will help promote confident learners.
 - e. Children learning in different ways and at different rates.
 - f. Children making links in their learning.
 - g. Creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of language.

We believe that teaching is the process whereby children are systematically helped to make connections in their learning and are actively led forward to reflect and make use of what they have already learnt.

Teaching has many aspects, including planning and creating a learning environment, organising time and resources, interacting, questioning, responding to questions, working with and observing children, assessing and recording children's progress and sharing knowledge gained with other practitioners and parents.

Effective teaching requires:

- a. Working in partnership with parents.
- b. Planning experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable.
- c. Practitioners who model a range of positive behaviour.
- d. Using language that is rich and grammatically correct. Teaching new vocabulary through modelling and explanation.
- e. Using conversation and carefully framed questions.
- f. Direct teaching of skills and knowledge.
- g. Promoting positive attitudes to learning through interaction and support.
- h. Planning both indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- i. Skilful and well-planned observations of children.
- j. Assessing children's development and progress.
- k. Identifying the next step in children's learning to plan for individual children's progress.

4. The Areas of Learning

There are seven areas of learning and development. All of these areas are equally important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their



capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the prime areas, are:

I. Communication and language;

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

II. Physical development;

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement.

Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

III. Personal, social and emotional development.

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

We also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

IV. Literacy;

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write.

Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest and ensure they learn well.

V. Mathematics;

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.



VI. Understanding the world;

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

VII. Expressive arts and design.

Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and use a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

5. The Value of Play

Well-planned play, both indoors and outdoors, is an important way in which young children learn. It is the process through which children explore, investigate, recreate and understand the world in which they live. It is a vital component of children's lives and is the medium through which skills can be developed and practised.

The role of the practitioner is crucial in developing high quality play in the learning environment. This includes planning and resourcing a challenging environment, supporting children's learning through planned and spontaneous play, and extending and developing children's language and communication in their play

Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- a. Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- b. Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- c. Creating and thinking critically - children develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.



6. Planning and Assessment

Reception staff organise the curriculum through topics. These are topics that are relevant to needs of the children and are chosen to develop, and take account of their interests. They may be topics that have been successful and enjoyed by classes in the past. The staff will also ensure a balanced curriculum over the year.

Assessment in the Early Years is constructive and always used to inform planning. Assessment is carried out through observations- both informal and planned.

7. The Role of Additional Adults in EYFS

The role of all adults in EYFS is extremely important and it is essential all adults are seen as 'practitioners' in the classroom. They are involved in planning, assessment, teaching and liaison with parents. They have a special role to fulfil and the following list is seen as some of the qualities and skills they bring.

- a. To assist in providing a full range of activities which meet the emotional, physical, social and intellectual needs of the children.
- b. To take groups of children for various activities in the different curriculum areas.
- c. To participate in the preparation of the learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, before the children arrive and with classroom management during the session.
- d. To make observations of the children and share these with other staff.
- e. To contribute to the planning of the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children.
- f. To contribute with regards to record keeping and reports as required by the teacher
- g. To provide first aid and comforting ill children if trained
- h. To help children acquire self-help skills including toileting and personal hygiene as necessary.
- i. To work closely with parents and carers, providing a welcoming environment.
- j. To assist with the tidying up of materials and organisation of resources used during the sessions.
- k. To help with the putting up of displays.



- l. To carry out lunchtime duties and attend staff meetings and courses when required.
- m. To attend Early Years meetings and contribute their knowledge and ideas.
- n.

8. Transition

A smooth transition from and within the EYFS is very important. We ensure good transition to the Nursery through visits to early years settings and Home visits.

Transition to Reception includes home visits, visits to preschools and Drop in sessions before starting. There are transition meetings for children entering Year One. There are parent meetings at each transition time.

9. Role of Parents

The EYFS Team is keen to develop an effective partnership with parents.

We recognise that parents are the children's first and most enduring educators and that in order to have a positive impact on a child's development and learning it is essential to develop a close working relationship, based on mutual respect.

The Reception team are always happy to talk to parents about any issues as they arise and communication between home and school is a fundamental to children's learning.

10. Safeguarding and Child Protection

Please read our school policy which provides all the relevant information regarding our Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.