Cranham
Church of England (VA)
Primary School

# EYFS Policy

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| Title: | EYFS Policy |
| Status: | Approved |
| Date: | 14.01.2025 |
| Adopted on: | 14.01.2025 |
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| Review Date: | January 2027 |

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## Vision

Our Vision at Cranham Church of England Primary School is "Sowing the seeds of learning, through courage, compassion and community." This is especially relevant in EYFS because this is where we first sow the seeds for learning for the Primary journey. We recognise how much courage is required to take these first steps into school and we closely work with parents to gather them into our community.

## Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to the learning and development of all children from birth to the end of the Reception Year, which in Cranham Church of England Primary School, is Beech Class.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just a preparation for the next stage but is vitally important in itself.

Learning for 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 Foundation Stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

## Aims/Objectives

At *Cranham Church of England* Primary School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent learners. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and carers to help every child reach their full potential.

As outlined in the 'Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage':
*'Every child deserves 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.'*

## Statutory Framework of EYFS

We adhere to the 'Statutory Framework of the EYFS' and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/ carers;
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**.

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven curriculum areas, using play as the vehicle for learning;
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support;
- Work in partnership with parents and carers;
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment and by the children's own ideas and interests;
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated, child-initiated and adult supported;
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors.

## EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve the Early Learning Goals.

All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.

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, both in the EYFS and into Key Stage 1. These three areas are the **prime** areas:

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

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

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

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and promote these in their practice.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

1. **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

2. **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties.

3. **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively and be active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

We create plans based on a series of topics, often based on the children's interests, each of which offers experiences in all seven areas of learning.

At the beginning of each topic the children are encouraged to share their ideas for learning experiences with us which we record in class. These ideas are then used to inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations which identify areas to focus on.

We always remain flexible to allow for unplanned circumstances and children's responses. Our planning is continually evaluated by all staff to ensure that children's individual 'Next Steps in Learning' and personalised learning needs are met.

Children will engage in whole group and small group activities alongside their independent learning. The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS framework: *'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'.*

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those which are planned by adults. During children's play, the adults in class interact when appropriate to stretch and challenge them further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and build these into our practice. We create a stimulating learning environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and outdoors as far as possible.

## OBSERVATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

On entry to EYFS the children complete the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) assessment within the first six weeks of starting school. The RBA has been developed to be an inclusive assessment, accessible to the majority of pupils on entry to schools. It has been designed so that pupils with SEND and those learning English as an additional language can participate. The assessment is a short interactive assessment working with a trusted adult.

Scores for the RBA assessments are not shared or published within the school to prevent any labelling. There is no expected standard, and the children cannot pass or fail. These assessments may be used later to monitor school effectiveness and progress. Formal adult led learning may begin after the completion of these tasks.

We operate a mixed EYFS, Year 1 and 2 class in the afternoons, the children are invited to explore KS1 concepts in their own way or there may be a specific EYFS focus for the afternoon. EYFS children are encouraged to socialise with the older children in the class which we find is good for communication and language development.

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways and each adult working in Beech class is encouraged to contribute.

Observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal, Learning Journal. **However, promoting learning, offering challenge, and engaging in play with children takes precedence over collecting evidence.**

Parents/carers are encouraged to add their own comments and also to upload their own observations to show us what their children are able to do at home, on Class Dojo.

These ongoing observations are used to inform the EYFS provision and the children's progress is reviewed continually. Throughout their time in Reception, parents/carers are welcomed in to share their children's

learning; both informally through our 'open door' policy, learning celebrations and more formally during parent/teacher consultations.

At the end of the year, the EYFS profile provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements. Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the class teacher - who uses the exemplification documents, and their knowledge of the children to make a 'best fit' judgement.

The children are assessed against each area of the EYFS curriculum at the end of each year. This profile data is the statutory data that is sent to the Local Authority and used to help school benchmark and identify improvements.

## SAFETY INCLUDING SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE REQUIREMENTS

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount at Cranham Church of England Primary School. We have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure their safety.

In Reception we provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to take risks, follow rules and stay safe. We comply with the welfare requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and understand that we must:

- Promote the welfare of all children;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately;
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the environment is safe and all equipment and furniture is fit for purpose;
- Ensure all children have a challenging and enjoyable learning experience.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, access to water throughout the day, allocating significant time for physical development and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Cranham Church of England Primary School has robust systems in place to ensure that all practitioners who have regular contact with children are suitable for their role.

The key staff in Beech Class hold the Paediatric First aid qualification, which is a statutory requirement of the EYFS.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals.

We work closely with the parents/carers of our high achieving children to ensure that their individual needs are met and their talents fostered. We ensure that these children are challenged appropriately to reach their full potential.

We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents/carers and outside agencies. We have a designated SENCo in school who supports pupils, teachers and families with any additional needs a child may have.

## THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS

We recognise the central importance of parents/carers as children's first educators. We believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child. We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents/carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

- Holding information events before the children start school;
- Talking to parents about their child's interests and needs during our introductory sessions in school and at our home visits carried out each September;
- Being welcoming and approachable and having an open-door approach for parents to voice concerns/ask questions;
- Inviting them to a parent consultation in the Autumn and Summer Terms to discuss how their child has settled and share progress and next steps for learning;
- Valuing parents' contributions to learning journeys;
- Encouraging parents to read with their child at home and make comments in their reading record books;
- Inviting parents into school for 'parent phonics' sessions to demonstrate how we teach phonics and help them support their child;
- Welcoming parents as volunteers into our school – including asking them to join us for regular outdoor learning sessions;
- Providing parents with an end of year summary report detailing achievements and their child's EYFS profile;
- We also draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting to talk about their lives, work and experiences.

## Monitoring of the EYFS

We are committed to providing the best possible experiences for our children. The EYFS Leader is responsible for monitoring provision, teaching and learning and children's progress. Information is shared with the Headteacher and any necessary actions are taken.

All adults in the Reception team have a key role in children's learning and development. Therefore, they are required to be knowledgeable and skilled in the EYFS curriculum. Any training needs for existing or new members of staff are identified and addressed as part of performance management targets.