



# North Curry C of E Primary School and Little Herons Pre-school

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Headteacher

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Chair of governors

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 1. Introduction

Richard Huish Trust (the Trust) provides governance and oversight to those Academies which are part of the Trust namely: The Taunton Academy, West Buckland Primary, North Curry CofE Primary and Little Herons Pre-school, Nerrols Primary and Nursery, North Town Primary and Nursery and Lyngford Park Primary and Nursery.

This Policy applies to North Curry Primary School and Little Herons Pre-school.

## 2. Policy Name

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

## 3. Policy Statement



‘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. 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 the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021).

At North Curry Primary School and Pre-school, we greatly value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children’s ‘school readiness’ and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We seek to provide:

- **Quality and consistency**, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and parents.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

#### 4. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

- The GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018

This policy has due regard to statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2021) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Working together to safeguard children'
- DfE (2015) 'The prevent duty'

## 5. Aims

At North Curry 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 believe that every child is unique and valued. We aim to provide an environment in which all pupils feel safe and can flourish. We will respond to individuals in ways which take into account their varied life experiences and particular needs. We are committed to providing an education with aspirational outcomes, which enables all pupils to make progress, become confident individuals living life in all its fullness (John 10,10). In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do. Our vision is underpinned by the Christian values of Koinonia, Kindness, Respect, Joy, Hope and Happiness.

Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Give each child a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.
- Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- Work alongside parents to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.

Four guiding principles shape our practice:

- 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 the school and parents.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

To put these principles into practice, the school:

- Provides a balanced curriculum which takes children's different stages of development into account.
- Promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Works in partnership with parents.
- Plans challenging learning experiences, based on individual needs, which are informed by observation and assessment.
- Implements a Key Person approach (in Pre-school) to develop close relationships with children.
- Provides a safe and secure learning environment.

## 6. Learning and development

The EYFS curriculum is based on an observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development.

In partnership with parents, the school promotes the learning and development of pupils to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

These are split into two sections – prime and specific. Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. These are the prime areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

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

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

## **Educational Programmes**

Educational programmes must involve activities and experiences for children, as set out under each of the areas of learning.

### **Communication and Language**

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

### **Physical Development**

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

### **Literacy**

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy

working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

### Mathematics

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

### Understanding the World

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

### Expressive Arts and Design

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

Activities are planned to reflect children's interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience. The school must consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development. Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to ensure a strong foundation for children's development in the three prime areas. The specific areas of learning provide children with a broad curriculum and with opportunities to strengthen and apply the prime areas of learning. This is particularly important in developing language and extending vocabulary.

Throughout the early years, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, practitioners must discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. Practitioners must consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support.



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For children whose home language is not English, the school must take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. Providers must also ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin year 1. When assessing communication, language and literacy skills, practitioners must assess children's skills in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, practitioners must explore the child's skills in the home language with parents and/or carers, to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay.

Each area of learning and development will be implemented through a mix of adult-led and pupil-initiated activity. The school will respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through friendly and positive interaction. In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

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

## **7. Inclusion**

All children are valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender.

The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.

The Equality and Diversity Policy ensures that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have.

The SEND Policy ensures all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible.

SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the school's SENDCo.

## **8. The Learning Environment and Outdoor Spaces**

The classroom and pre-school are organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment.

Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area, and daily outdoor activities are planned, unless circumstances, such as the weather, would make outdoor activity inappropriate and unsafe.

There are toilet facilities available to the EYFS, and there are hygienic changing facilities located in the nursery containing a supply of intimate care products and spare clothes.

## **9. Assessment**

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners knowing children's level of achievement and interests, and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge. In their interactions with children, practitioners will be responding to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and interests and observations that parents and carers share.

Spending quality time with each child is a priority. Assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement and should not be required to prove this through collection of physical evidence. However, pertinent observations or celebratory learning will be recorded in children's individual Pathways File/ Learning Diary.

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Parents and/or carers will be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development. Practitioners should address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals. Assessment should inform an ongoing dialogue between practitioners and year 1 teachers about each child's learning and development, to support a successful transition to key stage 1.

## **10. Staffing**

A robust Recruitment and Selection Policy is in place, which aims to ensure that members of staff employed are suitable.

Upon employment, all staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about safeguarding, child protection, emergency evacuation procedures and health and safety.

Staff will be supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience.

All members of staff are provided with the opportunity to:

- Discuss any issues, particularly concerning the development or wellbeing of children, including any child protection concerns.
- Identify solutions to address issues.
- Receive support to improve their effectiveness.

The Nursery Manager holds a full teaching qualification alongside at least 18 years' experience working in an Early Years setting. All the EYFS staff hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.

There will be at least one member of staff on the school premises at all times who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate.

Any member of staff who has sole responsibility for looking after a group of children will also hold a PFA certificate.

All newly qualified staff with a level 2 or 3 qualification will be PFA trained.

The school will organise PFA training to be renewed every three years.

The list of staff who hold PFA certificates can be found displayed throughout the school.

The school provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.

Only members of staff with level 2 English and maths qualifications will count towards the staffing ratios at level 3.

The school adopts the following staffing ratios:

- For children aged two, there is one member of staff for every four children. All staff members hold a full and relevant level 3 (or above) qualification.
- For children aged three and over there is one member of staff for every eight children. All staff members hold a full and relevant level 3 (or above) qualification.
  - Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, there is one member of staff for every 13 children, and at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.

Only under exceptional circumstances, and where the quality of care and safety of children is maintained, will changes be made to the ratios.

Parents will be informed about staffing arrangements and, when relevant and practical, will be involved in staffing arrangement decisions.

Each child is assigned a Key Person whose role it is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs.

The Pre-School Manager will inform parents of whom their child's Key Person is and will explain the role of the Key Person when their child begins attending the pre-school.

## **11. Parental involvement**

We firmly believe that the EYFS cannot function without the enduring support of parents.

Parents are invited to three termly parents' evenings; however, the school has an open-door policy and parents are welcome to talk to teachers at the start and end of the school day. I

Parents are asked to complete a bi-annual data collection sheet giving permission for any visits out of school, use of photographs of their child and using the internet at school etc.

Parents are asked to complete admission forms, a medical form and to give further information about their child to help the school to understand their character and personality.

We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate in their child's education.

We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts at our school or pre-school.
- The teacher offers to visit all children in their home setting prior to them starting school.
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during several transition sessions.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress to all adults with an open door policy.
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Show and Share assemblies, Share sessions/ days, class assemblies, Sports Day etc.