



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

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INTENT

At Catmose, our curriculum is designed to be creative, inspiring, challenging, memorable and to provide all children with the opportunity to reach their full potential. We recognise the children's prior learning from previous settings and their experiences at home and build upon these. We recognise that every child is unique and will bring different skills and experiences to the classroom. We celebrate the children's individuality and beliefs. The ability to learn is underpinned by the teaching of basic skills, knowledge, concepts and values. We spend time ensuring that we are aware of the children's interests and provide experiences which will inspire them. We provide enhancement opportunities to engage learning and believe that the children's first experiences of school should be happy and positive, enabling us to develop a love of learning.

We intend:

- To work in partnership with parents and carers to encourage independent, happy learners who thrive in school and reach their full potential from their various starting points.
- To understand and follow children's interests and provide opportunities through our curriculum to support learning, consolidate and deepen knowledge and ensure children meet their next steps.
- To create an indoor and outdoor environment which supports learning.
- To prepare children to reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of the year and ensure children make at least good progress from their starting points.
- To support transition into Key Stage 1.

IMPLEMENTATION

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The children will learn new skills, acquire new knowledge and demonstrate understanding through the seven areas.

PRIME AREAS

Personal, social and emotional development, Physical Development and Communication and Language.

SPECIFIC AREAS

Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding of the World, Expressive arts and design.

The prime areas run alongside and support learning in all other areas, so these are our focused areas when the children start school.

We ensure activities support the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

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.

LEARNING IN ASH CLASS

“Play is the work of children” Montessori.

Play is fundamental within early years. Ash classroom has been organised to allow the children to explore and learn in a safe, engaging and exciting environment.

We begin each year by looking at the individual needs of our children and their different starting points. With this in mind we plan a range of broad and balanced learning experiences including our Big Experiences.

We believe that a balance of child-led and teacher-led activities is vital in order for our children to become fully engaged and excited by their learning. We have structured phonics and maths sessions each day. During free learning time, the children are able to choose their own activities. As the children progress through Ash class the academic learning activities increase. From the start of the year, the children have at least one 1:1 reading session a week as well as at least 2 teacher led tasks. The children are also given challenge activities which they complete independently through the week. Each child is supported and challenged through our curriculum, which caters for each child’s individual needs and abilities.

Through the learning environment, we promote learning across all 7 areas of the EYFS framework. We use the Continuous Provision model in the Ash class, this encourages the children to become independent, inquisitive and creative learners. Enhancement activities are planned throughout the classroom based on children’s next steps, interests and the theme. Throughout the week the new activities within the class are modelled by the adults for the children to then explore independently. Continuous Provision gives the children the opportunity to work independently, work collaboratively with their friends and with members of staff.

In line with new regulations in EYFS staff will spend a majority of their time assessing the children through high quality interactions ensuring to challenge and promote progress for each individual child. Staff will make occasional observations, which will be recorded through Class Dojo. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the children’s Class Dojo portfolio’s, recording significant experiences and achievements. Through interactions and observations, activities and interventions are planned to ensure the children continue to make at least good progress.

In Ash class, we work in partnership with the parents. We have an open-door policy with parents and regularly communicate with them; formally through parents’ evenings and termly reports and informally at the classroom door and through Class Dojo. Parents are regularly invited into school for Meet the Teacher, weekly assemblies, the yearly Nativity Play, Stay and Play sessions and class assemblies. This ensures that the parents are kept up to date with their child’s development and how they can support their learning at home.

We use dedicated elective time to focus on extra-curricular activities such as yoga, stem activities, dance, singing and activities to support the children’s mental well being. The children all take part in a Nativity play, receive certificates in assembly, and participate in

trips. They enjoy visits from the local road safety officer and take part in whole school Super Learning Days. We also hatch ducklings and watch them grow, as well as growing plants and vegetables. The children take part in our annual May Dance and also have the opportunity to take part in the Catmose Dance Show.

We also support the transition into Key Stage 1 for both child and parents. We prepare children for Year 1 with visits to their new class and meeting the teacher. Parents also have the opportunity to meet with the new teacher and visit their new classroom.

IMPACT

We strive to ensure that our children's progress across the EYFS curriculum is good from their varied starting points. We also strive for children to reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of Ash Class and to be near National expectations.

High quality interactions and observations are used to make formative assessments which inform future planning. Summative assessment is recorded termly. This is tracked using the school's own data tracking system. Pupil progress meetings are held with the class teacher and a member of SLT to ensure that all children are making at least good progress and intervention is put in place where required. Our assessment judgments have been moderated and validated within local school network meetings and by our local authority.

We understand that when assessing children against the Early Learning Goals, there will be many children who are awarded the same level, but may be working at differing levels within this range. Effective communication between Reception and Year 1 staff is therefore crucial to achieve an effective transition for children and to plan accordingly for the next step of their school career. We endeavour for the children to be Key Stage 1 ready and be happy, independent and enthusiastic learners.