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Early Years Foundation Stage

**Intent**The EYFS principles are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes;

* A Unique Child
* Positive Relationships
* Enabling Environments
* Learning and Development

Effective practice in the EYFS is built on these four guiding themes and informs our intent as follows:

Our curriculum is designed to recognise children’s prior learning, both from previous settings and their experiences at home. We work in partnership with parents, carers and other settings to provide the best possible start at Longhoughton CE Primary School. We believe that learning starts at home and therefore value and welcome parental input at every opportunity. Great emphasis is placed on the home-school relationship and we strive to ensure that we are available to communicate and support parents in a range of ways.

We place great value on providing children with a strong start in EYFS, by ensuring that they are equipped with the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to prepare them not only for school life, but for their life beyond. Our intent in the EYFS is to build strong foundations for life, so that ultimately our pupils can be successful and active citizens in our society, alongside becoming independent, enquiring resilient learners.

Our curriculum is continually adapted and developed by taking account of the non-statutory **Development Matters Guidance (2021), Birth to 5 Matters** and the statutory **EYFS Framework 2021,** alongside the needs of individual children and specific cohorts, within a carefully planned thematic approach. Alongside this, considerable emphasis is placed upon instilling effective habits for learning. Whilst the thematic approach always remains, the way in which we deliver it and the activities we focus on, changes according to the individual pupils needs and the differing needs of each cohort. Indeed, we believe that it is vital to support the social and emotional needs of all pupils alongside their academic development and as such utilise the support of the staff within school and from outside agencies.

Longhougton pupils arrive in our school from a range of backgrounds and many are from RAF families who can arrive with us at any time throughout the year from different parts of the country and abroad and arrive with a wide range of needs and experiences. As such, we spend time when children start with us prioritising the prime areas of learning; personal, social and emotional development, coupled with warm, skilful adult interactions and supporting the children to settle quickly and thrive. We prioritise the teaching of vocabulary through explicit teaching and high quality interactions between adults and children. As the children move through the EYFS adults provide less scaffolding, encourage greater independence and an increase in adult-directed tasks, so that children have learned the appropriate vocabulary, knowledge and skills that they need to begin their journey through the National Curriculum. We value imagination and creativity and seek to create a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning through a balance of adult led approaches, child initiated time as well as learning challenges. This is enhanced by trips, visitors and outdoor learning opportunities.

**Implementation**

**Teaching and Learning**

**Planning**

We produce long term planning based on Development Matters and Birth to 5 for all areas of the EYFS curriculum. This is aligned with our KS1 and KS2 curriculum to ensure progression in knowledge and skills and that they have a firm foundation to build upon.

Each half term EYFS staff introduce a new theme to provide inspiration for learning whilst providing flexibility for children to follow their own interests and ideas. Children in Reception are grouped according to their ability for Read Write Inc lessons, following the scheme with fidelity. Weekly planning is produced for our maths, theme and book focus as well as learning challenges which provide opportunities for children to consolidate prior learning.

**Delivery of the Curriculum**

Teaching in EYFS takes place during whole class carpet times, daily story time sessions, circle times, guided groups, 1:1 sessions and during child independent time in our continuous provision. Children learn through a balance of adult led activities, child initiated time as well as learning challenges across our provision.

**Literacy**

Reading is a cornerstone of our curriculum and our aim is to encourage a love of reading right from the start. In EYFS we have a weekly book theme which we call ‘Super Six’ which is linked to our topic theme for the half term. The books have been chosen to develop vocabulary and comprehension as well as cross curricular links. These books will be embedded in our provision through activities, daily story sessions and on display for the children to access independently. Through this, children will learn new vocabulary and begin to retell stories and make links to all 7 areas of learning.

Our writing is developed using ‘Drawing Club’ which links to the topic focus and encourages the children to think in greater depth. Daily sessions focus on discussing the main characters, the setting of the story and then the children have opportunities to use their imagination to answer ‘adventure time’ questions which they record through adults scribing their ideas, mark making, emergent writing which moves towards independent writing over time. Children are introduced to new vocabulary daily where we discuss the different meanings and how these words can be used in their daily conversations.

Nursery children engage in letters and sounds based activities daily and the Reception children are taught Read Write Inc. daily; we ensure that children have a rigorous and systematic approach to phonics from the start. Phonics interventions are put in place for those children who need it with a minimum of 20% receiving further support to stay in line with expected progress.

**Maths**

In EYFS we follow Master the Curriculum planning which links to White Rose Maths which has a clear sequence of progression and builds upon prior learning. In our daily maths focused group time, following on from whole class teaching, adults can check for understanding, identify and respond to misconceptions quickly, provide real-time feedback which results in a strong impact of the acquisition of new learning. We embed mathematics through our ‘Learning Challenges’ enabling children to show their learning independently. Number interventions are in place for those who need extra support.

**Wider Curriculum**

Our wider curriculum is taught through the learning areas; ‘Understanding the World’ and ‘Expressive Arts and Design’. Through the use of half termly themes we take account of both the children’s interests and the skills and knowledge they need to develop. This allows them to fully engage in their learning and ensure they make good progress. The curriculum is planned using a thematic approach to enable all aspects of the children’s development to be supported. The theme focus provides the children with engaging and contextual learning activities that build on children’s natural curiosity. We plan a theme input, delivered to the whole class, which is then embedded the following week by learning challenges that extend our regular continuous provision. This supports the children in knowing more and building upon prior learning. To build upon vocabulary children will be encouraged to use specific language and terminology. Vocabulary will be modelled by adults in both adult led teaching approaches, child-initiated learning as well as learning challenges across our provision.

**We use the following definitions:**

**Child Initiated**

Where a child determines the activity; what they will use, what they will do and who is involved.

**Learning Challenges**

An activity that has been planned for by an adult that a child can complete independently.

These challenges will build upon prior learning, embed learning, and demonstrate that the children understand what has been taught during adult led activities. These will also give children opportunities to develop skills which need time to practise.

**Continuous Provision**

We use the term continuous provision to describe the provision areas available to children everyday in the environment. In each of these areas is a core range of resources that children can access all the time.

The resources and the way they are organised remains constant throughout the year, offering children a familiar environment in which they can develop sustained play, practice new skills and extend their ideas over time. The adult interaction ensures that learning can be challenging as well as enjoyable. Areas can also be enriched across the year to support progression.

**Enhanced Provision**

Enhanced provision extends learning by enabling children to further develop their ideas and interests. Alongside the development of continuous provision, we promote enhancements as a way of extending and further enriching children’s learning. New resources, books, equipment or artefacts ae made available for a fixed period of time. The new additions do not replace provision but add a new dimension alongside.

**High Quality Interactions**

Throughout the day adults use a wide range of teaching methods whilst working alongside children which include;

* creating opportunities for a child to make a contribution and to make choices in their learning
* scaffolding a child in order to support increasing independence and control
* asking questions to check and develop a child’s understanding
* working collaboratively to solve problems and find answers
* providing formative feedback to help a child consolidate or extend their exploration and thinking further

**Enabling Environments**

The environment is planned effectively to meet the requirements of all areas of learning, and is well organised into clearly-defined areas.

These areas will include:

* comfortable places to read
* sand and water with a variety of equipment
* mathematical and scientific equipment
* a writing area with a variety of paper and tools to mark or write
* role play areas enhanced according to the theme of interest
* a variety of creative media such as paint, collage and junk materials
* malleable materials and equipment
* opportunities to use technology to enhance learning e.g. iPads, interactive screen, beebots
* small world area focused on fantasy and real life scenarios
* a variety of outdoor play equipment

**Assessment**

Our ongoing assessment processes begin when we meet the children and their parents in the summer before they start school.

**Ongoing Observation**

All ongoing observations are used to inform weekly planning and identify next steps. This formative assessment does not involve prolonged periods of time away from the children and excessive paperwork. Adults draw on their knowledge of their own expert professional judgements through discussions with other practitioners, photographs and physical examples of work the children produce. Some observations are put onto Tapestry an electronic learning journey and these are evident of ‘significant learning’. Literacy and maths work, completed during adult directed activities are kept in their literacy and maths books. Any evidence of activities completed during ‘learning challenges’ are filed in their challenge folder.

**Assessment**

Phonic assessments are carried out using the Read Write Inc assessments by the reading lead in school to group children and to quickly identify those who are not making expected progress. Children are assessed using our own progression document to decide whether they are on/off track based on age related expectations referred to in Birth to 5 matters and when the children are in Reception whether they are on/off track to meet a good level of development on the EYFSP using the Early Learning Goal statements which are used at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We moderate regularly throughout the year at Alnwick partnership Early Years meetings.

**Parent Partnerships**

We communicate with parents in a wide range of ways; these include face to face at the start/end of the day, phone calls when necessary, via the Tapastry app, weekly blogs on the St George class page on the school website and group parents information meetings.

We also offer parents the chance to come in and join their children in stay and play sessions and to take part in learning workshops for phonics.

We follow our school behaviour and SEND policy when communicating concerns about a child. The premise with these is to communicate concerns at the earliest point so that support can be put in place to support the family and child with the issues faced.

**Visits and Visitors**

* Visits and visitors are carefully planned into our themes and enhance our curriculum by enabling children to have first hand experiences of places and activities not available in school.
* They introduce children to aspects of the world around them that they may not yet have experienced.
* They contribute to the development of their confidence and independence.
* They contribute to their social development through sharing an experience with their peers.
* They can be of great benefit to their language development through discussion during and after the visit.
* They enrich children’s enjoyment of school.

**Inclusion**

Our inclusive approach means that all children learn together as much as possible, but we have a range of additional interventions to support children with specific barriers to learning. This includes phonic, number and speech and language interventions.

Staff will always appropriately modify learning and teaching for children with SEN and/or disabilities. We value each child as a unique individual and are familiar with and meet all the requirements of relevant equal opportunities legislation regarding race, gender and disability. We work closely and in partnership with parents and any other involved agencies to meet the needs of our children with is inclusive to all. Children with identified Special Educational needs and/or disabilities have an EHCP, developed with support of parents and any involved agencies. The SENDCO monitors the progress of all children with SEN to ensure that they are benefitting from an appropriate curriculum which enables them to feel safe and secure, and to learn effectively. Where children with SEN are making poor progress, further assessment is undertaken or support sought.

**Monitoring and Leadership**

Our regular monitoring of teaching, learning and our environment, includes regular coaching and feedback from the phase leader during phonics sessions. The phase leader works alongside the EYFS team, which incorporates ongoing CPD alongside discussion of individual pupils and their needs. This is in addition to performance management meetings twice a year and whole school CPD, to ensure that staff are confident within the wider school but also within EYFS.

**Impact**

Our curriculum and its delivery ensures that children make good progress. We believe our high standards are due to the enriched play-based exploration, alongside the rigorous approach to Literacy and Maths. A rich diet of balanced and carefully scaffolded learning experiences is undoubtedly the best way to develop happy, curious children, who are ready for the next step in their educational journey.