

East Stour Primary School

Early Years & Foundation

Stage Policy

2014

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1: Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and 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)

At East Stour primary school the Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children aged from three to five years and incorporates the Nursery and Reception classes. This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at East Stour Primary School.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of practitioners working in EYFS setting, including both teaching and non-teaching adults.

2: Aims

At East Stour we are committed to underpinning our provision with the four themes of the Early Years Foundation Stage in our Nursery and Reception classes.

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and Development

We aim to support each child’s welfare, learning and development needs by;

- Recognising that all children are unique and special
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued by the practitioners looking after them.
- Fostering and nurturing children’s self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings appropriately
- Encouraging children’s independence and decision making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes.
- Developing children’s understanding of social skills and the values of codes of behaviour required for people to work harmoniously.
- Understanding the importance of play in children’s learning and development.
- Provide learning experiences in play which reflect children’s personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn.
- Providing experiences which build on the children’s existing knowledge and Understand in order to challenge, stimulate and extend learning and development.
- Providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, inside and outside.

3: The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

There are seven areas of Learning and Development which are interconnected. Three areas (prime) are crucial to develop lifelong learning and to help children form relationships.

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – children develop confidence and self-esteem, learn how to manage feelings and respect others.
- Communication and Language – children have opportunities to speak and listen in a range of situations and experience a language rich environment.
- Physical development – children have opportunities to be active and develop co-ordination (both gross and fine motor); they learn about healthy choices.

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through four specific areas:

- Literacy – involves children learning how letters link to the sounds and begin to read and write. At East Stour this is achieved through the whole school Read Write Inc programme.
- Mathematics – Children have opportunities to develop counting and calculation skills to use numbers in everyday activities and recognise and describe shapes and measures.
- Understanding the world – Children have opportunities to find out about people and communities, the environment and technology.
- Expressive arts and design – involves exploring feelings and ideas through music, dance, role-play and design.

4: The characteristics of Learning:

At East Stour we reflect the varying ways and rates at which children learn in our provision through the characteristics of effective learning to support the child to become a motivated and effective learner. Children will **play and explore** and ‘have a go’ using all available resources; developing their experiences. Children will develop resilience and enjoy achievements through **active learning** and will make links, explore their ideas and strategies for problem solving through **creating and thinking critically**. Practitioners support the children in developing all of these characteristics through playing alongside children and, where necessary, scaffolding and supporting their thoughts.

At East Stour we recognise the importance of children’s play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to provide a variety of skills and concepts.

At East Stour Primary school practitioners provide both structured and unstructured play opportunities inside and outside.

5. Assessment and Record Keeping

To ensure that we meet the individual needs of all our children we make regular observations of the children's interactions, interests, skills and development of concepts. These observations are used to inform our planning for groups of children, for individuals and our provision for resources as appropriate, identifying children's interests, abilities, needs, play schemas and learning styles. These observations take place on a daily basis and are both formal and informal. Practitioners make time to carry out planned observations of individuals and groups of children regularly. They also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children's learning. Observations are recorded mainly through the use of an app from 2Simple, called 2Build a Profile. Each Reception class and Nursery has two tablets that allow evidence to be collected through electronic post it notes and photos. These observations are then uploaded onto a secure website (Web Management Suite) where both achievements and gaps in learning can be identified and therefore inform future planning. All practitioners are involved in observing children. Unique observations are collated in each child's 'Learning Journey' booklet which parents are encouraged to share and contribute to.

There is continuous monitoring and assessment of each child's development against the development stages as identified in the Foundation Stage Curriculum. This is updated termly. Baseline assessment is taken from the record of transfer document supplied by pre-school settings. Where a child has not attended a pre-school setting, observations are carried out over the course of play and stay sessions in the term prior to starting school and the first initial weeks of attending school to inform 'on entry' ability. Judgements made on children's development across the development stages are based upon practitioner's evidence of children's behaviour observed independently and consistently in their self-initiated activities across all areas of learning.

6. Planning

The EYFS framework provides a long term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year. There is a continuous provision plan which indicates how our environment will support and provide opportunities for learning and development across all areas of learning. The environment is adapted to reflect the changing needs of the group, reflecting the children's interests. This is recorded on an enhanced environment plan. The environment is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate resources. Throughout the year the children are involved in mini-topics which are developed from observations of the children's interests. These are often linked to the seasons of the year, religious festivals drawing on the faiths reflected in each class and experiences that go beyond the classroom such as a trip to the local park, shops or woods. The short term planning is completed weekly, reflecting on the previous week's achievements. There are specific plans for Phonics and Maths and Physical development in

the Reception classes. There are additional teacher led activities which are identified on a weekly timetable for both the reception and nursery classes.

7. Parents as Partners:

The importance of parents as the primary educators of their children is valued and recognised. The information that they share with regards to their children helps to form the on entry assessment and parents are encouraged to comment on their child's unique story report. As part of the transition process all parents are invited into school for a welcome meeting to find out how to support their child in school. At the start of the September term a home visit is carried out as a means of developing a secure and trusting relationship between parents and school. During this meeting the parents contribute to on entry profile sharing their views of their child's strengths and identifying areas they would like the school to support. All parents are encouraged to participate in adding to their child's learning journey document throughout the school year by including wow note observations, photographs and pictures. During the year parents are encouraged into the classroom to celebrate their children's successes, joining the class for craft activities and watching performances.

8. Admissions and Induction:

East Stour follows the KCC guidelines for admissions to Primary school. A child is admitted to the Reception classes in the September after the child's fourth birthday. A child is admitted to the nursery class in the term after their third birthday. Places in the nursery are allocated from an in school waiting list.

The transition process in both the nursery and the reception classes takes into account the need for each child to feel safe and secure and to develop positive relationships with the adults in the setting. In the nursery each child is allocated a key person who is the primary link between home and setting. The key person will support the child during their play and stay session prior to starting in class and will also visit the child at their home. Each child's settling-in needs is assessed on an individual basis. For some children it may be necessary for them to begin attending their nursery session for short periods of time building up to staying for the full session. In the reception class all children are invited to six 'stay and play' sessions in the term prior to starting school. These also include a lunchtime visit. The class teacher and teaching assistant will visit each child at home prior to them starting school. When the children start school they spend the first week attending the morning session which is then built up to include lunch. All children attend school full time from the third week of the autumn term.

9. Equal Opportunities

All pupils in this school are entitled to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum regardless of ability, gender, race and social circumstances. Both Gifted, talented and able children and those with Special Educational Needs are considered and the curriculum adapted to suit all levels of ability. We have a full Equality and Diversity and Equal Opportunities policy available at school.

10. Additional Educational Needs

Care is taken to assess the needs of each child from Nursery age onwards. Should a child have any special need the parent will be informed at an early stage. Group and individual help is provided within the school where possible. We have links with various agencies and when necessary their involvement may be required to support certain children. Parents/Carers will always be informed if an outside agency is assisting us to support their child. We have a full Special Educational Needs (S.E.N) and Gifted and Talented policy available at school.

11. Health and Safety

We have a Health and Safety policy which all staff and students are familiar with and we have designated people responsible for first aid in school. Foundation Stage staff have had paediatric first aid training. Children are taught the safe and appropriate use of equipment and materials. Children are taught to be mindful when moving around the school and are aware of safety issues. Risk assessments are undertaken before after school activities take place and before we embark on school outings. A full Health and Safety Policy is available in School.

12. Monitoring and Review.

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow this policy. The Senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring system. This policy will be reviewed before the start of each academic year and will evolve to incorporate the views of all staff concerned.

Approved by Full Governing Body:

Signature of Chair of Governors _____ Date: _____

Review Date: *When required.*