



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

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1. Our aims and vision (Intent)

At Conway Primary School it is our intention that all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) have a happy and positive start to their school journey, ensuring they have solid foundations on which to build their learning on. We aim to:

- Inspire children through an imaginative and immersive curriculum, ensuring that the children are happy and enthusiastic to learn
- Foster and nurture the children's imagination and curiosity
- Immerse the children in their learning by creating an immersive environment that reflects and promotes each classes topics
- Enable our children to become independent, self-motivated and enthusiastic learners, who can adapt their work, think critically and take risks
- Ensure our children are ready to take on the next stage of their learning, with an particular focus on developing early literacy and numeracy
- Enable our children to be their best in all they undertake, encouraging each and every child to try new things, work hard and push themselves to continue to achieve and to persevere in any activity that is before them
- Become curious about the world around them and practice the technique of enquiry
- Encourage the children to develop problem solving skills, tackling any activity they set out to do
- Encourage the children to be aware of the wider community, starting with their local community and provide opportunities to experience and learn about other communities and cultures further afield
- Foster and nurture the children's social and interpersonal skills, ensuring that they have the opportunity to work as a member of a team and can share their experiences and knowledge with their peers

2. Legislation

Our aims and vision work alongside the requirements set out in the [2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

3. Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) structure

Children can join the School Nursery in the first year of EYFS in the September following their third birthday and then join Reception in September of the academic school year when they turn five years old. In some circumstances we may allow children to join the Nursery in the half term before their third birthday.

Nursery

Nursery is the first year of the foundation stage. Our Nursery staff includes a fully qualified teacher who leads the team of Early Years support staff. Each child is assigned a key worker when they start. Key workers are introduced during home visits.

All of our Nursery places are part time, 5 days a week from Monday to Friday. We have space for 60 children (30 am places and 30 pm places). In order for children to have a smooth start to their school life, we initially have a staggered start and finish times. Our Nursery classroom has access to a designated outdoor learning area.

Transition from Nursery to Reception

Our aim is to ensure children have a smooth transition from Nursery to Reception.

Home visits support with this transition. Important induction information is shared with families, and staff work with parents to find out about the needs and interests of the children that will help them to settle well in to our Reception class.

As well as home visits we adopt a staggered approach to starting school. Children and parents attend an open morning in the Summer term where they meet their class teachers, support staff and can familiarize themselves with the school environment.

The key priority is to settle the children in the first week of their start in September. We do this by staggering the start and finish times so the children are completing a full day by the end of the week. During this time lessons are focused on learning names, class rules and adapting to new routines. A transitional timetable is in place for the first half of the Autumn Term until all children settle.

Phonics is taught every day, starting with singing, rhymes and games. We do understand that some children may need longer settling in period and we work with the parents to ensure that we provide support to the families. We work with the parents to listen to their worries and provide strategies to achieve the desired result.

Reception

When children join Reception, they will continue to access the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, building on individual children's experience from birth in the seven key areas of learning as detailed below.

We have 2 Reception classes, each with space for 30 children. Each class is led by a fully qualified teacher and is supported by a team of Early Years support staff/ teaching assistants. Children in reception have access to a designated outside area throughout the day.

4. Curriculum- (Implementation)

We believe that children learn through imaginative and purposeful play and high quality adult interaction during play results in deep learning experiences.

The curriculum is planned in a very practical way and is based around topics that are of interest and are relevant and meaningful to the children. Adult and child directed activities allow children to develop these skills in a safe and investigative way.

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS.

Playing and exploring is the most crucial part of Early Year's curriculum.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum follows a framework, which sets out how, and what children will be learning to support their physical, emotional, social and academic development. Children will be supported to learn new skills, acquire new knowledge and demonstrate an understanding through the 7 areas of learning and development. These 7 areas will be key in planning learning and activities. The professionals teaching children will make sure that the activities are suited to the child's needs.

Areas of Learning and Development			
Prime Areas			
Personal, Social and Emotional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Making Relationships• Self-confidence and Self-awareness• Managing Feelings and Behaviour	Physical Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moving and Handling• Health and Self-care	Communication and Language <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listening and Attention• Understanding• Speaking	
Specific Areas			
Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading• Writing	Mathematics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Numbers• Shape, Space and Measures	Understanding the World <ul style="list-style-type: none">• People and Communities• The World• Technology	Expressive Arts and Design <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exploring and Using Materials and Media• Being Imaginative

In addition to these areas of learning, we strive for our children to develop effective characteristics of learning which will enable them to become learners for life.

Children will **play and explore** their environment showing engagement by:

- finding out and exploring
- playing with what they know
- being willing to 'have a go'

Children will be **active learners**, showing motivation by:

- being involved and concentrating
- keeping on trying
- enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Children will be **creators and think critically** by:

- having their own ideas
- making links
- choosing ways to do things

Learning through Play:

The main part of children's learning will be through different play based activities, some of which will always be available and some based on the topic. As well as adult led activities, children will explore and experiment with materials and equipment to discover how the world works for themselves in child initiated activities. Teachers also provide activities based on children's interest to ensure children are motivated and learn through their choice of play/activity.

Our teachers and professionals are experts who recognise young children learn best through play, especially when they are happy and confident. Our aim in the Early Years is to help the children to share, focus, explore and enjoy a wide range of first hand experiences. All these skills are developed from the start to help their intellectual and physical development, as well as provide a foundation for their future learning.

Learning Behaviours – Characteristics of Learning

Throughout our continuous learning environment, the importance of developing the skills of an effective learner are fostered and encouraged throughout by providing an enabling learning environment both indoors and outdoors.

The three Characteristics of Effective Learners:

1. Playing and Exploring – engagement
2. Active Learning – motivation
3. Creating and Thinking critically – thinking

Children learn to be:

- Resilient- I can do it, I can have a go
- Resourceful- I can find out about ..., I am good at finding out about things
- Reflective- I can add..., I can change this to be ...

Planning

Our practitioners consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in the setting, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Phonics:

We use the Read Write Inc. approach to plan and teach phonemes and our reading scheme is phonetically aligned to this, enabling our children to practise and develop the ability to segment and blend phoneme/grapheme sounds independently. Children start phonics as soon as they start school. This may be through singing and rhyming in Nursery in the autumn term before moving onto RWI Phonics Nursery later in the year.

All children in Reception take part in daily, targeted phonics lessons to help them to improve word reading, writing and comprehension skills as well as strategies to engage with texts. Children are in groups based on the stage at which they are in recognising phonemes (sounds).

Reading in EYFS

We want our children to develop love for reading. Therefore, it is important that reading is a feature inside and outside the classroom. We have a range of ways in which we promote reading:

- Having enthusiastic staff who share their passion and excitement of books with children.
- Book corners that are stimulating as well as being accessible and loved by children in each classroom.
- Using core books to plan for children's interests and class topics.
- Children have the opportunity to read to an adult using banded reading books at least once a week.
- Reading records communicate reading progress between home and school, and include teachers' and parents' feedback.
- Having opportunities for independent writing in all areas of the classroom.
- Using story props, story sacks, role play areas and classroom displays to enhance core books.
- Having well planned, shared reading sessions that all EYFS practitioners are confident to take part in.
- Opportunities for children to learn from clearly modelled 'reading behaviours', for example, the recognition that print conveys meaning, the left to right directionality of English text, the purpose of punctuation and so on.
- Involving parents in understanding the importance of early literacy through parents' workshops
- Listening to and joining in a variety of genres, for example, non-fiction, poems, audio stories, rhymes.
- Opportunities to retell and to act out stories using props and story maps.
- Visits to the local library.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

We provide an attractive, challenging learning environment that offers high quality opportunities for the children to learn through play, both indoors and outdoors. There are a range of "continuous provisions" available in the classroom, that are designed to offer open-ended, practical learning opportunities.

Children are supported to think creatively and imaginatively and explore how resources can be adapted. Each week, the provision is enhanced with additional resources relating to the topic theme for that week.

Adult led activities are a mixture of practical and first hand experiences as well as structured and supported tasks dependent upon the child's ability and skill. The children are supported to develop problem-solving skills through open-ended tasks and opportunities to share their thinking with others. The number of adult led activities that the children take part in increases throughout the year/ their time in the Foundation Stage, as their concentration, ability and skills develop.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

Literacy:

Literacy is taught with a key focus to develop children's communication and language, reading and writing.

Our teachers use rich text (stories, poems and non-fiction). Role play and drama are used to develop an understanding of stories and teach about characters and settings. Children transfer the ideas by creating (drawing, imitating) story maps which helps to retell a story and draw upon language.

Guided Reading:

Guided reading is taught in small groups with children reading the same colour band. Teachers teach a different reading skill to each group each week based on the child's stage of reading. These skills are based on the teachers' assessment and the children's next steps.

Our Approach:

- The books used for Guided Reading sessions should be slightly more challenging than the level that the children have for their reading book which they take home
- The class teacher should work with each group at least once a week.
- Independent activities (those activities carried out when the group is not working with the teacher/teaching assistant in a focus group) should be of high quality and have a clear objective to move the children's learning on
- Guided Reading groups are fluid and children should be assessed by teachers on a three weekly rotation.

Skills taught during Guided Reading sessions include:

- Blending and decoding using knowledge of sounds.
- Reading with expression, focusing on punctuation
- Reading for meaning, using clues – retrieving information
- Teaching new vocabulary
- Developing fluency by modelling reading

- Making predictions based on details in the text
- Basic inference related to character's feelings

The skills are developed based on the reading stage the children are working at.

The key focus is on developing lifelong reading behaviours and early reading skills.

Mathematics:

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measure. Teachers plan and teach a mathematics through real life experiences and use opportunities during play to embed and develop mathematical concepts. The children use number knowledge in games and in creative play, e.g. counting cakes, buying objects from a shop. It is important for children to reflect and explain their thinking using mathematical vocabulary.

Health and Hygiene

The importance of taking care of self and the environment are taught and developed in a friendly and caring manner by all staff. The curriculum aims to develop children's lifelong skills, such as:

- Brushing teeth
- Toileting and hand washing
- Independently conducting themselves at lunch times.

Alongside self-care, children also learn about importance of healthy eating habits and clean environment.

Teachers use every day routines and opportunities, as they present themselves, during the day to instil these lifetime habits.

Inclusion and SEND needs:

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, school SENDCo provides support and guidance and works with staff and parents to consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. If needed, extra interventions in a small group or 1:1 are delivered by EYPs during the day.

Unique child

We pride ourselves in providing the best possible start to a child's education. All children within the early years learn through play: exploring their surroundings; and, developing their characteristics for learning, with support from attentive and experienced adults. Each child is considered 'unique' and their individual learning is catered for within the environment.

Positive Relationships

We believe it is vitally important to develop a partnership between all the adults involved with each child. By working together, we can provide knowledge of the 'whole child' to assist their future learning and needs. Positive relationships are key to every child's education. We pride ourselves in developing excellent working relationships with parents; understanding their role as first and most enduring educators of their children. And with the children by helping them to share, care and learn together.

5. Assessment (Impact)

At Conway Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Warm, positive and focussed interaction play a crucial role in understanding where children are at in their learning stage. Staff also observe pupils during play to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

When a child enters school in Nursery, they are 3 years old. To ensure that we have a good understanding of their learning and development, we conduct home visits and gather information from parents and former settings/providers. Once a child has settled into school, we then observe and complete an on-entry (baseline) assessment. This informs our planning and next steps for individual children.

This first assessment is a snap shot of all the prime areas of learning alongside Literacy and Maths attainment. There are further assessment points at the end of each half term to support the identification of attainment, but also the gaps for further support and learning.

Throughout each child's time within the Early Years, a learning journey is compiled to celebrate achievements and independent evidence of attainment throughout the EYFS referencing development matters and the Early Learning Goals. To support the compilation of each learning journey and to enable us to celebrate children's achievements, we use an on-line assessment system called Target tracker. This enables us to focus upon the process of learning as well as the outcome, linking holistically to all elements of learning and development, alongside the characteristics of learning.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')
- Meeting expected levels of development
- Exceeding expected levels

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers as well as the local authority.

Progress meetings are planned half termly with teachers to discuss and moderate children's attainment and consider support, interventions or further challenge. The Early Year's practitioners work with targeted children and provide information that supports assessment.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development on a regular basis and parents are invited to attend termly parents' consultations, this helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

We encourage parents to email (via school office), write a note or communicate information at the door. In addition to this we offer parents workshops through the year to support their understanding of child development and teaching and learning. We are responsive to the parent's needs and requests throughout the year.

We want our parents to be involved and fully engage with their child's learning process. We believe, children make more progress when their parents are working closely with the school. We encourage parents to read with their child every night and complete a reading record book to show what they have been reading. We work as partners and recognise that it is important to read as well as encourage talking about the story can help develop language and understanding of the world. This may be in child's home language.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by SLT every three years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy