

# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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## **1. Our Aim:**

At Crook Primary school we aim to ensure all children in Nursery and Reception are given the best quality care and education to ensure they have a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe, happy and stimulating environment with motivating and challenging learning experiences to help children become confident and independent learners. We value each individual child and work alongside parents and outside agencies to ensure each child reaches their full potential and we celebrate every child's individual success.

## **2. Intent**

Our curriculum is designed to recognise children's prior experiences and provide first hand learning based on their interests, needs and stages of development. There is a strong emphasis on the prime areas of learning; Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication and language within our curriculum, especially Nursery. Communication and language are a life skill that will ensure success beyond school and in future employment. This also develops children's thinking and understanding which in turn promotes resilience, self-confidence and also improves academic outcomes. As the pupils move into Reception, we also invest time and energy into helping pupils aim high and develop a love for reading, writing and maths. We therefore provide a meaningful curriculum that maximises opportunities for cross curricular links as well as offering extending periods of play and sustained thinking to foster a lifelong love of learning both in and out of school.

By the end of Reception our intent is to ensure that all children make at least good progress from their starting points and that children are equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to begin their journey into Year 1.

## **3. Foundation stage Curriculum:**

We plan an inspiring and exciting curriculum for the children which is based on their interests, needs and stages of their development across the 7 areas of learning with the goal in mind of children being able to achieve the early learning goals by the end of Reception.

### Prime Areas of Learning

Personal, Social and Emotional Development is supporting children in developing relationships and getting along with one another as well as adults. It is developing social skills and learning how to manage their feelings, their confidence and self-awareness, and understanding how to manage their behaviour. We offer opportunities for children take part in simple turn taking and co-operative activities and allow them to build and maintain positive relationships with adults and peers.

In Communication and Language, we ensure children are given opportunities to develop good listening, attention and understanding skills and also opportunities to improve their confidence and skills in speaking and being able to express themselves effectively. We ensure children are confident to ask questions and use a broad range of vocabulary in extended conversations.

Physical Development is all about providing young children with opportunities to be active and to develop their large and small movements in a variety of ways, having good control and co-ordination when handling different tools and equipment. It also covers health and self-care, looking at ways to keep ourselves healthy and safe.

### Specific Areas

During Literacy children learn about stories, rhymes, books and reading and are given opportunities to access a wide range of materials. We show children how passionate we are about reading and books. We also ensure children are given the phonic skills to blend sounds together and decode relevant unknown words. The children are also given lots of opportunities to develop their mark making and emergent writing skills to develop into becoming confident writers.

In Mathematics we ensure children have an in depth understanding of number, be confident to have a go at solving problems, use mathematical knowledge and language in their play, talk about numerical patterns and be able to understand shape, weight, length and size.

In Understanding the World, we ensure children are given opportunities to find out about the physical world and community through knowledge, visits, pictures and exploring. Children also learn about showing care and empathy towards living creatures and things. They learn about how important it is for every child to be individual and unique and discuss similarities and differences. We ensure we provide opportunities to show awareness of our community and people who help us as well as looking at changes that happen in the world around us.

Expressive Arts and Design gives children opportunities to explore music, dance and song. The children use a variety of media and materials to develop creativity and imaginative play. We support children's confidence in expressing themselves and ensure they are confident to select and use a range of resources to create their own representations.

In Nursery with the youngest children we focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning. The three prime areas reflect the key skills all children need to develop and learn effectively and become school ready. As the children progress there will be more of an equal focus on all areas as they move through the Early Years.

Children are taught in EYFS as a whole class for all subjects using a play-based approach. We plan a balance between child-initiated activities and adult led activities which builds and extends on what children can already do. During children's play all staff interact to stretch and challenge children's thinking further. Children also have free flow access inside and out at all times.

#### **4. Learning through play**

Through play our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. Through careful on-going assessments of children's play the EYFS team aim to provide engaging experiences based on children's current interests and fascinations that are appropriate for the children's ages and stage of development. The prime areas are fundamental throughout the EYFS.

#### **5. Assessment:**

Assessment is a key part in EYFS and this happens on a daily basis as staff work/play alongside the children, questioning and observing what they do and say.

Our EYFS team will:

- Observe children as they access provision and interact in their play both with their peers and staff
- Consider ways to support the child to embed and strengthen their current learning and development.
- Provide a range of opportunities for children to initiate their own play, but also for staff to carefully intervene and guide play to challenge and extend learning.

At our weekly planning and assessment meetings observations and interests are discussed and interventions and next steps are put in place. Information shared by staff at these meetings will feed into the next weeks planning and provision for each area of learning in order to respond to children's interests and provide further opportunities to extend learning and improve progress.

Staff will take photographs, write observations, and annotate work and video activities which will all be kept as evidence in their own personal learning journal, which are shared with parents three times a year formally but parents can look at them anytime. We also ask parents/carers to add to this evidence by sending in observations/stories from home. In the final term of the academic year parents also receive a formal written report about their child's achievements and next steps.

Upon entering our Nursery and Reception classes staff will complete a baseline for each child. This will ensure the children are making progress from entry until leaving. The teacher will also complete a summative assessment on Arbor our school assessment system each term using their formal assessments and teacher knowledge. These

assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort in order to adjust the teaching style or learning for individuals or groups of children.

## **6. Parents:**

We believe parents have an important role to play in the education of their child so we strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents and carers as we recognise that together we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. Parents are invited into Nursery at least once a term for a stay and play session to enjoy activities planned linked to our topics or special days and this gives us all the opportunity to talk about their children while in our care and for parents to see what happens in Nursery. In Reception parents are invited in once a term for topic related activities. We also have an app called Class Dojo for parents which is to try and engage parents more in their child's learning. It is a quick and easy way for staff to send messages, pictures and comments home about what their child has been learning or doing in Nursery/Reception that day and parents can reply to these or upload pictures back to let us know what they have been doing at home. We also have a website which Nursery and Reception have their own page to update and keep parents informed of what is happening each week in their class.

Parents in EYFS are invited to attend parent evenings 3 sessions throughout the year (1 every term) and this allows staff and parents to discuss how the children are settling in and developing.

EYFS has a friendly open-door policy which allows parents to catch staff at the beginning and end of the day with any questions or queries they may have. Both Nursery and Reception also have a year group email that parents can use to get in touch with staff. This is constantly monitored and emails are responded to on a daily basis.

## **7. Admissions**

At Crook Primary School Nursery unit, we offer part time (15 hours) and full time (30 hours) provision. Parents can get an application form from Nursery main office and put on our waiting list from the year in which they turn 2. We then contact parents to ask if they would still like the place and the induction begins. Nursery children can join us from the term of their third birthday. If they join us in the term of their birthday we use this as a transition period supporting the children to follow rules and routines and enjoy Nursery life. Before the children start we offer an information meeting for parents which is also an opportunity to meet the staff and have a look around the unit.

In Reception during the Summer term we also offer an information meeting which is held in school. At this meeting information is shared regarding the induction process, routines and expectations of school as well as opportunities for informal chats and questions from parents. Information packs will be handed to parents with all relevant paperwork to complete before their child can begin their journey with us. From September the children attend Reception full time unless an agreement is made between parents and school for them to attend part time or have a slower transition into school. We ensure all children feel safe, secure and happy in school and parents are reassured when their child begins with us.

## **8. Transitions:**

Transitions are a vital aspect of EYFS and are planned for carefully at Crook Primary. We ensure meetings with parents and children are given and opportunities to look around Nursery and Reception are available by appointment. We also acknowledge the children's needs and ensure an effective partnership with other agencies or settings is recognised. Children attend introductory sessions into Nursery/Reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners.

In the final term of Reception, the Year 1 team will meet with the EYFS team to discuss each child's development and next steps to develop a smoother transition into Key Stage 1.

Policy reviewed- September 2023

To be reviewed September 2024