



Chalkwell Hall Infant School

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) **POLICY**

Agreed by full Governing Body: Autumn 2024
Review date: Autumn 2027

Chalkwell Hall Infant School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

This policy outlines our approach to EYFS at Chalkwell Infant School. It should be read in conjunction with a number of other policies, namely the Nursery policy, Nursery Intimate Care Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Inclusion Policy and Behaviour/Relational Policy.

Curriculum Aims

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the education of children from 0–5 years old. At Chalkwell Hall Infant school we guide the children from the age of 3 in our Nursery class and then through their final year of the EYFS, the Reception year.

At Chalkwell Hall Infant school, our curriculum is shaped by our key drivers. These drivers were developed over time by considering the needs of the children in our school and the community that we serve. The drivers steer the focus of what is important to us and our learners, and shape the depth and breadth of our provision:

- Our Values – the REACH vision
- To prepare today's learners for tomorrow's world

Our motto is 'reach for the stars' linked to our REACH vision and values. These values can be seen, heard and felt within everything we do in school. Teachers and staff refer to these values all the time and they form a part of the way we manage behaviour and celebrate achievements in school. In the Nursery classroom, we focus on the value of "Care" and our agreements and behaviour management are all linked to this. Children receive house points and "star of the week" certificates for demonstrating them.

Respect

- *We learn to take responsibility for ourselves, and for each other*
- *We build strong relationships and learn in a secure and safe learning environment*
- *We seek to understand and accept similarities and differences*
- *We value partnerships with families and the community and take every available opportunity to celebrate and share our learning together*
- *We promote equality of opportunity, respect for ourselves, each other and our local and global community*

Enjoy

- *We are positive, we smile and have fun*
- *We inspire in order to motivate*
- *We encourage, challenge and take risks*
- *We sing, we laugh and we play*

Achieve

- *We have high expectations of ourselves, and each other*
- *We believe that we can, so we do*
- *We foster persistence, determination, resilience and humour*
- *We celebrate our efforts*
- *We are lifelong learners*
- *We develop our skills independently and collaboratively*
- *We sometimes fail so we can learn from our mistakes*

Care

- *We care about ourselves, each other and our environment*
- *We develop hope, empathy and compassion*
- *We care about what happens, both in school and beyond*

- *We build strong relationships*
- *We foster a nurturing, secure and safe learning environment*

Healthy

- *We are a 'Healthy School'*
- *We learn about being healthy both physically and mentally*
- *We focus on the wellbeing of children and adults in the school community*
- *We promote healthy lifestyles*

Preparing Today's Learners for Tomorrow's World

It is important to us that we prepare our children for the next steps in their learning in the short, medium and long term. We have a strong focus on developing the children's Prime areas of learning first. These Prime areas are Communication and language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Physical Development. We also prioritise basic skills in Maths and English in order to build a strong learning foundation, be it tomorrow, next week, or next year. We know that many factors of future life, including technologies and potential careers don't yet exist, and therefore we see it as our responsibility to prepare our pupils with wider skills and dispositions that may help them in their future lives. To support this we develop the children's 'Characteristics of Effective Learning'. These are the behaviours children use in order to learn such as being curious to find out more, to keep trying in the face of adversity, making links between their learning and having their own ideas.

Using these drivers our curriculum intends to ensure:

- **Children are happy and safe.** We provide a nurturing, safe environment where staff and children care for one another.
- **Children develop a love of learning and take pride in their achievements.** We celebrate the achievements and progress of all children, recognising that we are all unique and have different strengths and talents.
- **Children have the confidence to explore, take risks and learn from mistakes.** As well as celebrating success, we challenge children and give them the opportunity to learn from mistakes in order to develop resilience and persistence.
- **Children learn and develop lifelong learning skills.** We actively encourage children to be independent enquirers, reflective learners, creative thinkers, self-managers and team workers. These skills are also modelled by EYFS staff.
- **Parents and teachers form a strong partnership in order for children to make the best progress possible.** Parents are valued as key contributors to their child's learning journey. Staff endeavour to form strong relationships with families and work with them to ensure we are positively impacting children's learning and wellbeing.

Legislation and Guidance

Our early years curriculum is based on the EYFS Statutory Framework September 2021. The framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the Prime Areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Curriculum Approach

At Chalkwell Hall Infant School, we use a range of whole class lessons, group activities and independent child-led activities to support these areas of learning and development. We teach our curriculum through topics and themes which are reviewed and evaluated regularly. Stories and books are a key tool we use to support all areas of the curriculum.

The table below shows the areas of learning as well as some examples of how we develop these areas at our Nursery and school:

Area of Learning	
Prime Areas	
Communication and Language The children at Chalkwell bring their own rich culture from their home and community and we encourage them to share and build on this with us. We invite them to make connections between home and school when exploring their ideas and support them when expressing their thoughts and emotions.	
Listening, Attention and Understanding	- The continuous provision is planned to offer communication and language opportunities such as the roleplay area, small world, construction area. The children are encouraged to communicate and work with their friends. - Staff use interactions with children as a way to develop communication and language skills. - Through positive interactions in play staff model the art of two way communication wherever possible and also support children to extend vocabulary. - Greg Bottrill's Story Dough and Drawing club are used to enhance and develop vocabulary.
Speaking	- Planned daily carpet time discussions are used to develop listening, attention and understanding. These discussions are linked to a range of areas of the curriculum, depending on the needs and interests of the pupils at the time. - Stories and books are valued as a powerful tool to support children to develop language. -Planned vocabulary stories are used weekly. These stories are used to develop and extend key vocabulary and teachers use questioning to check for understanding. - Alongside a phonetic reading book, children take home a "class library book" to encourage families to spend time reading with their children. - Learning partners are used as a way for children to share ideas and to develop communication and listening skills. - Classrooms provide a language rich environment that aims to encourage the children to ask lots of questions about the world they live in. This supports the children with the development of their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and communication. - "Big Talk" topics are sent home to encourage families to take time to communicate about a range of topics at home. - "Tapestry Time" is an opportunity to share part of their learning journey with their class. -Wellcomm screen is used to identify children whose vocabulary is below the expected level for their age -Wellcomm intervention is used to help the identified children to develop their vocabulary, understanding and use of language. It also supports other important skills like attention, listening and turn taking.
Personal Social and Emotional Development At Chalkwell we learn how to make relationships with new friends and develop our play skills including sharing and turn taking, as well as developing self-confidence to share our thoughts and ideas in class.	

Self-Regulation	- Each day begins with a "soft start" where staff take time to welcome the children into the classroom in a very relaxed environment and take time to have discussions with children. - Building relationships is a priority: pupil to pupil and between adults and pupils - Our REACH values are at the centre of the way we teach and nurture PSED.
Managing Self	We explore the 'REACH' Values of our school: Respect; Enjoy; Achieve; Care and Healthy. The children are taught these through: - Independent play - Children have opportunities and time to plan, develop and extend their own play, interests and learning. It develops self confidence in children by allowing them freedom to test their own hypothesis, try new things and take healthy risks. They create ideas, learn about themselves and what they like, build on developing skills and most of all they become comfortable with who they are.
Building Relationships	- Staff interact with children in order to support their PSED They model talking about their own feelings in order to support children's understanding and develop their vocabulary linked to feelings. - Carefully selected themed stories. These stories include themes such as exploring our different emotions, how to share, how to be a good friend. We talk about our different emotions to explore how and why we feel them. The children learn how to recognise their feelings and develop key self regulation strategies to manage them. - Teacher-led role play experiences. This is where we explore different social scenarios, act them out for the children to discuss and help find solutions to tricky situations. This could be what to do if someone has a toy you want to play with or what to do if someone is unkind to you or you see someone being unkind to someone else. - Staff and adults in school model empathy and conflict resolution. - Whole class discussions. During carpet time we have the opportunity to share our ideas with one another. We talk about the Characteristics of Effective Learning (prerequisite to the KS1 preparation skills) and think about what we can do to be a good learner such as having a go, not giving up and working as part of a team sharing our ideas. - Embers the Dragon scheme - This is an animated series, accompanied by interactive activities that supports young children's development, emotional wellbeing and school readiness. This has been adapted and used alongside the "Zones of Regulation" to support children to understand and talk about their emotions. - Social stories - This is a simple story written specifically for a personal, social or emotional need in pictures and child friendly language. It explains the expectations and rules for different social situations.
Physical Development	
Gross Motor Skills	Gross Motor Skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and will be the initial focus for our physical development opportunities when children join us in their reception year. - The continuous provision is planned to offer gross motor activities. Daily activity times are timetabled in our outside area, where they have access to larger scale tools and equipment, enabling the children to develop their core strength, balance and coordination. This could be through building obstacle courses using planks, crates and blocks as well as experiment with stilts and wobble boards. Children can also develop their mark making on our large Perspex painting boards and outdoor chalk boards. - Indoor physical development activities provide an additional opportunity

Fine Motor Skills	for the children to develop core strength such as; tummy drawing. - A twice daily physical dance session using software such as Dance n Beats enables children to follow and copy dance moves and refine them across the week. This also gives them the opportunity to talk about the importance of exercise to keep us healthy and how it makes them feel. -A weekly "Physical Friday" afternoon on the large playground is planned for where the children are able to enhance their skills using equipment such as balance bikes, trikes, skipping ropes and large balls. They have access to the large obstacle course and climbing equipment. -The continuous provision is planned to offer fine motor activities, such as threading, tweezers, play dough and peg boards for the children to access. -Regular "Big Write" handwriting sessions give children the opportunity to work on a large scale to develop control and precision when "mark making" and writing. The initial focus is on pencil grip and pre-writing patterns (the formation of different types of lines or shapes) progressing to individual letter formation. -Daily "Funky Fingers" sessions are planned to have a specific focus on developing fine motor skills. Carefully planned activities will include cutting for scissor control; peg and peg boards, tweezers, threading and malleable materials such as play dough. These sessions provide opportunities for the children to practise using small tools, allowing them to develop proficiency, control and confidence. These fine motor activities become progressively more challenging throughout the year. The children will work with an adult twice a week to work on guided writing tasks that have been differentiated to meet the child's needs.
Specific Areas	
Literacy	
Comprehension	-Comprehension skills are developed during daily stories. -There is a wide range of books as part of the provision in the classrooms to broaden children's experience of books, such as recipe books in the role play area and books about a range of artists in the creative area. -Children are encouraged to explore online books through Oxford Owl which are closely matched to their phonic ability. They have the opportunity to take home a story book to share, as well as a coloured level reading book.
Reading	-The systematic teaching of phonics through daily "Read, Write Inc sessions support children to develop reading and writing skills. -Children read with an adult in a small group or 1:1 basis to practice their reading, fluency and comprehension skills with either a teacher, LSA or a class volunteer. -During class or small group discussions, the language used is modelled through writing and displayed in the classroom. -The continuous provision provides many opportunities for writing or mark making for a range of purposes and in a range of areas. These include the construction area, role play and in our outside learning space.
Writing	-Greg Botrill's Story Dough and Drawing Club develop children's oracy, pencil control and writing skills in a way that can be adapted to meet the needs of all learners and is accessible for all. -Daily "Funky Fingers" activities and the "Big Write" handwriting sessions support children to develop the skills needed for writing. Our 'Funky Fingers' consist of three independent activities and two teacher led. The children will work with an adult twice a week to work on guided writing tasks that have been differentiated to meet the child's needs.

Maths The challenge of maths in Reception is that first grasp of number and pattern. At Chalkwell we approach early mathematics in as practical a way as possible. The children discover and deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts through play, experimentation and the use of practical, concrete objects.	
Number	-Daily “Maths Meetings” ensure children become confident with key mathematical concepts such as counting, recognising numbers, place value, shape, patterns, money and time. It enables them to repeat and consolidate these basic skills and concepts so that they can build a more rapid recall of them. Maths meetings are taught through songs, rhymes and games whilst pointing to a “Maths Meeting Wall” where the key concepts are displayed. -We have adopted the Singapore approach for teaching maths, where children learn through a progression of concrete, pictorial and then abstract methods (CPA), utilising White Rose Maths as a scheme of learning. -Children take part in maths lessons that follow the CPA approach. Lessons are delivered using a wide range of teaching resources including Numicon, cubes and counters, alongside puzzles and games from online learning platforms. An activity is planned to enhance the continuous provision following the maths lesson.
Numerical Patterns	-The continuous provision both inside and outside provides the opportunity to extend their mathematical learning. Mathematical opportunities are available in different learning areas e.g. balance scales in the home corner, 3D shapes in the construction area, natural objects to sort and create patterns within the loose parts area, shapes to draw around in the creative area. -Staff are skilled at using interactions to bring maths into the children’s play.
Understanding the World	
Past and Present	-At Chalkwell Hall Infants, we pose BIG questions and topic concepts to the children. We encourage the children to make connections; solve problems; make choices and communicate their own ideas and feelings about the physical world around them. - Throughout the school year we create a visual timeline of key learning events for the children to look back on when revisiting their past learning experiences. Photographs and artefacts are displayed that encourage the children to ask questions about the past and present.
People, Culture and Communities	-At Chalkwell Hall Infants, each class is named after a country. The reception classes make up 3 of the countries of the United Kingdom. -We celebrate and learn about a range of festivals and celebrations that take place both in the UK and around the world. -In order to develop the children’s understanding of their own culture and those of other people we compare and contrast their family and community or their special places. We draw upon what the children have read together in class, their diverse experiences and beliefs and celebrate different festivals and special family times as they occur throughout the year. -We value the different experiences and cultures of the children and their families at Chalkwell Hall Infant School. -We develop a sense of community by inviting parents and visitors from different professions, religions and cultures into school. We value the sharing of their experiences with the children. This gives children the

The Natural World	opportunity to ask questions and develop their curiosity about past and present events. -We deliver Outdoor Learning sessions in our local area throughout the year where we explore 'The Magic of the Seasons'. The children observe seasonal changes in the natural world and compare and contrast the changes in the world around them. -The children are offered real-life experiences such as visiting the nearby Chalkwell Park, the beach or library. These practical activities enable our children to learn new skills and to explore, observe and talk about their experiences. -To support and develop their scientific enquiry, the children find out about living things and talk about how things work by exploring artefacts found in the natural world.
Expressive Arts and Design	
Creating with Materials	- The children enjoy expressing their imagination and creativity using media and materials. They will do this in a range of ways including singing songs and making music, dancing, playing with colours, textures and design. - Staff carefully plan experiences that link across the different areas of learning in order to provide opportunities for the children to enjoy Expressive Arts and Design. - The continuous provision provides children with a fantastic opportunity to select their own resources and be creative. - Children are encouraged to experiment with their own design ideas and explore different colours, textures and materials using different tools and techniques. - Specific art skills and techniques are taught and modelled such as colour mixing, colour shades, printing and collage.
Being Imaginative and Expressive	- Children are introduced to new vocabulary which supports the art skill or technique and are encouraged to explain the process they have used and build on their ideas alongside one another. - Children are also given the opportunity to experience different media including watercolours, chalk pastels, charcoal and oil pastels. - The children will enjoy visits from artists, crafts people and musicians to inspire them where they can observe and learn from seeing these skills in action and then apply them to their own play and creative activities. - Through exploring different genres of dance, music, story telling, and the visual and digital arts, the children are encouraged to express their own feelings and point of view. - Exciting areas to explore are created both inside the classroom and in our garden provide an invitation to play. Children are encouraged to play with purpose and work on ideas together. - Children have the opportunity to practise and refine their thoughts, both real and imagined through their expressive and creative play. This is also promoted through imaginative role play experiences which help the children to make connections with their own lives.

Teaching and Learning

Planning Nursery

Nursery staff work together to plan group sessions, stories and enhancements to the provision which will best suit the needs of the children and help them to make progress.

This planning can include themes which are linked to events, such as festivals and seasons but can also happen in the moment based on children's interests. Each member of the Nursery team also plans for their key children. They may plan small group activities or they may use interaction during play as a tool to support learning and progress.

Reception

Teachers work together to plan a range of engaging, adult-led lessons and activities. These can be delivered to the whole class or a small group. They also plan opportunities for learning and the application of skills during child-led activity time within the provision. The balance between adult and child led activities changes as the school year progresses but also depends upon the needs of the cohort. Teachers are also responsible for adapting and differentiating learning activities to ensure the needs of **all** children in their class are met.

Teachers plan using a themed approach. Sometimes this links to the whole school theme but can be changed or adapted depending on the interests of children. Opportunities are planned for children to take part in regular outdoor learning sessions both on and off site. These activities are carefully planned to link to our learning in class, providing context for the children and bringing learning to life.

Teaching

EYFS Staff build strong and nurturing relationships with pupils as a good foundation for teaching and learning in the classroom. They get to know all the children and adapt the learning and provision in response to their changing needs and interests. They act as role models for children, modelling behaviours that we encourage the children to display. These include respect, resilience, persistence and communication.

We teach using a number of different methods in EYFS:

- whole class lessons or discussions during a carpet session.
- small group work such as during a Funky Fingers session or a focused activity in activity time.
- one to one when working with a "Focus child" or reading.
- quality interactions during play.

During child led play adults facilitate and scaffold learning. This can be through effective questioning, being involved in children's play to enhance it or take it in a new direction or sometimes being a silent observer when children are deeply engaged in a purposeful activity.

Adults also support children by extending language and vocabulary. They model how to use language to express thoughts, negotiate, problem-solve, and communicate with each other. They also take the time to have meaningful conversations with children and allow children time to have meaningful conversations with each other.

Gender stereotypes will be challenged and children will be shown that resources are not gender specific and that we can strive to be whatever we want to be.

Enabling Environment

Staff work together to ensure the classrooms and outdoor areas are inviting and safe places to play and learn. There are opportunities provided to access learning linked to all areas of the Early Years curriculum. There is a well stocked continuous provision where children can be independent and access the things they need to play, explore and learn. Staff also enhance this continuous provision with exciting "invitations to play" based on the theme or the children's changing interests. The environment is exciting and motivates children to explore and learn.

Curriculum Enrichment and Enhancement

Nursery

Nursery take part in some whole school events such as World Book Day where they participate through adapted activities. Children also participate in termly events which their parents are invited to attend. In the term before children start school, they have the opportunity to take part in some outdoor learning sessions at Chalkwell park to build their confidence and enhance their learning.

Reception

Each term, events and or visits are planned to take learning beyond the classroom and to 'hook' and excite interest. Visits might be local, or further afield and are based on topic focuses and intended learning objectives. We also invite visitors into school. These visitors might be from our locality to celebrate different faiths, as well as artists, poets and professions of all kinds. Our aim is to show the children the broadest range of careers and life choices.

We know that increasing the children's general knowledge of the world helps to increase their 'cultural capital' and increase their learning more rapidly (Chris Quigley), therefore we maximise opportunities to learn about word meanings, different text types, wider topics and vocabulary and current affairs.

Throughout the year we participate in themed weeks, examples of this are: Children's Mental Health Week, Book Week and Science Week. We also celebrate wider events and festivals, such as the Olympics, Diwali, Eid, Hanukkah, Easter and Christmas.

We provide opportunities for all children to become involved in projects, e.g. Eco schools. There are also a number of opportunities for individuals to lead or represent the school as Eco Warriors, Sports Captains and Pupil Voice representatives.

We have developed strong community links and actively support the local food bank or other charities through fundraising events.

Assessment

Nursery

Baseline Assessments- We have developed a baseline assessment to be completed by a child's key worker in the first 6 weeks of them starting Nursery. This baseline assessment has been created using the statutory EYFS framework as well as development matters. The baseline will then support staff to see what the next steps are for each of their key children.

Ongoing Assessment- At Chalkwell Hall Infant School our priority is that staff build relationships and know the children well in order to support them in their next steps in learning. They will regularly observe children's learning and use these observations to inform future planning. Staff will particularly focus on their key children and will upload observations to Tapestry (an online learning journal) to build a profile of the child's learning journey. These observations are shared with parents and parents are also encouraged to upload observations of their child's learning at home.

End of Nursery Assessment- The term before children start school, staff will complete an end of Nursery assessment which has been created using the statutory EYFS framework as well as development matters. They will share this

Reception

Baseline Assessments - Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). This is a statutory assessment that is used to measure progress from the start of Reception to the end of Key Stage 2. Alongside this the school administers its own baseline through observing and engaging

with the children.

Ongoing Assessment – At Chalkwell Hall Infant School our priority is that staff build relationships and know the children well in order to support them in their next steps in learning. They will regularly observe children's learning and use these observations to inform future planning and to assess whether the children are on track to meet the ELG at the end of the year. Staff will work more intensely with a number of "focus children" each week. The teachers will upload observations to Tapestry (an online learning journal to build a profile of the child's learning journey. This is shared with parents. Parents are encouraged to upload observations of their child's learning at home.

End of EYFS Assessment – 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:

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

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Partnership with Parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents. Parents' contributions are vital and support staff in getting to know children well. In order to promote this strong partnership, staff endeavour to build relationships with families from the very beginning with parents and teachers meeting before children start school.

Throughout the school year, communication between staff and parents is encouraged in a range of ways. Tapestry is used to share key moments in learning at school and at home. We have an open door policy so that parents feel able to catch up with their child's teacher and ask questions if needed. There are also opportunities for a more formal meeting with the teacher during the school year. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to become a part of the school community. They are invited to attend school events throughout the year and attend trips and outdoor learning sessions. After Christmas the parents are invited to become a regular reading helper in Reception.

Transition

Transition is vital in order for children to feel happy, safe and ready to learn at school. Early Years staff at Chalkwell aim to give children the smoothest possible transition into Nursery, from their pre-school settings to school and then from Reception to Year 1. Positive and nurturing relationships are at the heart of our transition process.

Nursery

When pupils have been offered a place at Nursery, they will be invited with their parents for a stay and play and face to face meeting with the Nursery teacher. This will allow the children to get to know the environment and staff can find out key information from parents. After this stay and play session, children will gradually build up to attending their 5 full sessions. The speed of this transition can be adapted to suit the needs of individuals. All Nursery pupils are allocated a key worker within the first 2 weeks so that all children can build strong bonds and attachments to their key person in school.

Nursery staff support all children with their transition to school whether they will be attending Chalkwell Hall Infants or other schools in the local area. Once school places have been allocated, parents will be asked to share their child's school so that the EYFS leader can make contact with schools to find out more about their transition process. We

will support the transition process by welcoming staff from other settings and sharing relevant information which will support the child's transition to school. We will also endeavour to support children by sharing stories and or photos from their new setting.

Reception

We build strong links with local pre-school settings so that we can learn about the children and the experiences they have had before school and use this to inform our planning for the beginning of the reception school year. All known pre-schools, nurseries and childminders are invited to bring children to visit school in the summer term before they start. For the pupils who attend Chalkwell Hall Nursery, they will have the opportunity to regularly visit the reception classrooms and get to know staff. Staff will begin to get to know these pupils and build relationships with them to support them with their transition.

Before children start school they receive a transition booklet, with photos of staff and their classroom to help them to become familiar with the setting. Teachers visit the children at home. This allows teachers to begin to form relationships with children in a more relaxed setting. Children are also invited to stay and play sessions and story sessions which help them to build relationships with their teacher and spend time in their classroom.

Transition from Reception to Year 1 is also important so that children start the year feeling happy, comfortable and ready to learn. Reception and Year 1 teachers work together to share all relevant information about the children. We also provide opportunities for children to get to know year 1 staff during the summer term and to formally meet their teacher. Year 1 usually follows a similar timetable to Reception at the start of the school year until children feel happy and settled.