

Primrose Hill Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy: *A baseline for outstanding practice*

September 2012
Review date: September 2014

KEY PRINCIPLES

Teaching at Primrose Hill is 'Learning Centred', meaning that each element of whole school and classroom practice is designed with an understanding of how children learn best at its heart.

At Primrose Hill we believe children learn best when:

- learning activities are well planned, ensuring equality in opportunity, quality, consistency and progress in the short, medium and long term
- teaching and learning activities engage and motivate children to learn, and foster their curiosity and enthusiasm for learning
- quality and consistent assessment informs teaching so that there is provision for support, repetition and extension of learning for each child, around their individual needs and interests
- the learning environment is ordered, the atmosphere is purposeful and children feel safe
- there are strong links between home and school, and the importance of parental partnership in their children's learning is recognised, valued and developed



Key Principle

Children learn best when learning activities are well planned, ensuring equality in opportunity, quality, consistency and progress in the short, medium and long term.

THERE WILL BE EVIDENCE IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT OF:

- progress in the children's learning specifically related to the seven areas of learning in the Development Matters in the EYFS (in their portfolios, on the walls, in their conversation while they play, in their learning behaviour)
- provision for individual needs, preferences and interests, and activities to support these within the indoor and outdoor environment
- focused activities to support, develop and extend children's learning at their own pace
- support and provision for children with English as a n additional language, enabling them to access the EYFS curriculum, develop their knowledge of English and feel valued
- tracking children's engagement across the curriculum to ensure access to the seven areas, indoors and outdoors.

TEACHERS WILL ENSURE THAT:

- the children enjoy a wide range of different learning experiences that reflect their interests and the different ways that children learn
- when planning activities, they focus on how children learn (playing and exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically) as much as what they are learning
- those learning experiences are planned around half-termly topics that provide a balance of the seven EYFS areas of learning and opportunities for children to work towards the 17 Early Learning Goals
- weekly plans will provide details of indoor and outdoor purposeful play activities and will be adapted and modified daily according to the children's interests
- strong partnerships with parents and carers allow children's home learning and interests to filter into planning

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL WILL BE:

- the EYFS profile will be completed for each child leaving Reception and passed on to Year 1 teachers informing them of each child's stage of development and learning needs and assist with the planning of appropriate activities in Year 1
- a monitoring cycle is in place to support the progress of individuals and groups of learners: Pupil Progress Meetings, lesson observations, planning scrutiny, portfolio checks



Key Principle

Children learn best when teaching and learning activities engage and motivate them to learn, and when they foster their curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.

THERE WILL BE EVIDENCE IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT OF:

- a wide range of indoor and outdoor resources that stimulate children's play and encourage them to explore and investigate in a safe environment
- children being given the freedom to instigate, direct and extend their own play
- children enjoying and being engaged in their play
- play-based activities that enthuse children so that they persevere when faced with tricky problems and are keen to learn more

TEACHERS WILL MAKE SURE THAT:

- they provide an enabling environment in which children's experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL WILL BE:

- the principles and value of investigating and exploring through play enrich children's learning throughout the rest of the school



Key Principle

Children learn best when quality and consistent assessment informs teaching so that there is provision for support, repetition and extension of learning for each child, around their individual needs and interests.

THERE WILL BE EVIDENCE IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT OF:

- children being given opportunities to develop their own ideas, thoughts and opinions about their play activities
- activities being extended/modified according to what the children like/find tricky

TEACHERS WILL MAKE SURE THAT:

- they make systematic observations and assessments of the children's significant achievements, interests and learning styles to be kept in individual EYFS portfolios
- in their interactions with children, they respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share
- at the end of Reception, the EYFS profile will be completed for each child assessing them against the 17 Early Learning Goals

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL WILL BE:

- the EYFS Profile will form a baseline assessment for Year 1 teachers and inform a dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development.



Key Principle

Children learn best when the learning environment is ordered, the atmosphere is purposeful and they feel safe.

THERE WILL BE EVIDENCE IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT OF:

- easily-accessible resources allowing children to initiate their own play safely
- safe and easy access between indoor and outdoor areas

TEACHERS WILL MAKE SURE THAT:

- each child is assigned a key person
- provision is made (space or partitioned area) for children who wish to relax, play quietly or sleep, equipped with appropriate furniture
- outdoor activities are planned (and outdoor resources prepared) on a daily basis
- there is always at least one member of staff for every 13 children
- at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate will be on the premises at all times when children are present
- risks have been assessed carefully before carrying out any practical activities or trips

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL:

- We are fully compliant with the welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012 – see school safeguarding policy



Key Principle

Children learn best when there are strong links between home and school, and the importance of parental partnership in their children's learning is recognised, valued and developed.

THERE WILL BE EVIDENCE IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT OF:

- parents and carers being encouraged to contribute to children's portfolios
- children's home-learning being valued

TEACHER'S WILL MAKE SURE THAT:

- parents and Carers are encouraged to come and play with their children and share their knowledge and expertise with the children
- they (the teacher) will be available to meet parents and exchange information at the beginning and end of the day

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL:

- ensure parents are informed about school events and relevant topics through regular newsletters, letters, text messaging, notice boards and the school website



Appendix A:

The EYFS Principles

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school children join us in the Nursery in one intake in September. They are also welcome to join Reception, applying centrally, through Camden's department for children, schools and families, for a place starting in September following their fourth birthday.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

A Unique Child

We celebrate the uniqueness of each child by offering personalised learning opportunities and through working closely with families and professionals from other settings who have knowledge of the child. In our school every child matters.

Our skilled professionals understand the process involved in children's growth, development and learning. The curriculum and the opportunities we offer are designed to help children develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture. We recognise that children learn in different ways and at different rates and we accommodate this in the provision we offer.

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families and carers.

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents and carers have played, and will continue to play in educating their children. At our school the class teacher acts as 'Key Person' to all children, supported by the EYFS practitioners.

- We talk to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- Teachers and nursery practitioners visit all children in their home setting prior to their starting school;
- We give children an opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during Open Afternoons;
- We invite parents and carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- We hold one-to-one meetings with parents six weeks after their child has started school to discuss transition and their child's learning at home and school;



- We offer parents regular formal and informal opportunities to talk about their child's development;
- Child portfolios are always available for parents to look at and we invite them to contribute to;
- We have termly meetings to discuss individual children's progress;
- We provide parent's with an annual written report detailing their child's progress;

Enabling Environments

At Primrose Hill Primary School we recognise that the physical and human environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We observe the children and assess their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend their children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Planning is based on each child's ongoing formative assessment. We also have long, medium and short term plans to ensure coverage is equitable but these do change according to the needs of individuals and the class

Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves all adults working with the child. These observations, which form the basis of children's individual Child Portfolios, are matched to the Development Matters document which in turn informs each child's EYFS Profile.

Children in the nursery should be working within 30-50 months Developmental Matters and children in Reception should be working within 40-60 months Developmental Matters.

At the end of the Reception year, each child will be assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs), each one linked to one of the seven areas of learning highlighted in the EYFS curriculum below.

The teachers will record each child's level of development against the 17 ELGs as **emerging**, **expected** or **exceeding**. The profile is then completed with a brief commentary of the child's skills in relation to the three key characteristics of learning (playing and exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically)

We provide a written summary of these judgements for parents. We also give parents an opportunity to discuss these judgements with the practitioners.

The Learning Environment

Our learning environments are organised to enthuse children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classroom is arranged into learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. All our classrooms have their own enclosed outdoor area and learning opportunities are reflected in both areas. Children have the opportunity to freeflow between the two environments. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. We plan activities and resources for the children to access indoors and outdoors that help the children to develop in all six areas of learning.



The Wider Context

We work closely with outside agencies to support children's development. Where appropriate we involve health and social care professionals, family support worker and other members of the local community. We have a diverse school and we actively promote community cohesion. We are working towards developing our links with local children's settings with a view to strengthening the continuity for new families.

Learning and Development

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

Through our teaching and learning we ensure that children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement. Our practitioners understand how children develop and learn, and consider this when they plan teaching opportunities.

We offer children first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play. Our carefully planned curriculum helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS.

We enable children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities. Children are encouraged to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management. Learning is supported by appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment. We identify progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents.

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the Early Years are:

Playing and Exploring

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. We believe that through play children achieve their highest learning potential. Play with peers is important for children's development.

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.



Active Learning

Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. We give children a degree of independence and control over their learning. As they develop their confidence they learn to make decisions and this provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Thinking Critically

When children have opportunities to play and engage with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.

We give children opportunities to be creative in all areas of learning. Adults support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children access resources freely and may choose to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.



Appendix B:

The EYFS Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning in the new EYFS curriculum. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. There are three *prime* areas which are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for helping their capacity to learn. These are:

- **Communication and Language**
- **Physical Development**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

There are then four specific areas through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These are:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

More information about these areas of learning can be found by downloading the EYFS Framework available at:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/a0068102/early-years-foundation-stage-eyfs>

DISSEMINATION OF THE POLICY

The policy will be given to all members of staff and copies will be available for parents.

PROCEDURES FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The head teacher, members of the senior management team and members of the curriculum leadership team, will monitor the policy.