Ickleford Primary School

Shared Values · Shared Aspirations · Shared Achievements

EYFS Policy

Date adopted: Autumn 2022

Review date: Autumn 2026

Introduction

This policy has been developed in line with relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that every child has a positive start to their school life, both academically and emotionally. At Ickleford Primary School, we value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for children to develop into lifelong learners, and we deliver our teaching in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021 government framework.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

This framework sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure that children develop a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide a secure foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

• **quality and consistency** in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind

• **a secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly

• **partnership** between practitioners and parents and carers

• **equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

The Statutory Framework for the EYFS is a principled approach to early years education based of four guiding principles which should shape practice in early years settings. These are:

• **A Unique Child** - Every child is unique and are constantly learning to become resilient, capable, confident and self-assured

• **Positive Relationships** - Children learn to be strong and independent when positive relationships are formed

• **Enabling Environments** - Children learn and develop well in environments which are well planned and thought through, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and carers.

• **Children Learn in Different Ways and at Different Rates** - The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with SEND.

Within the framework there are seven areas of learning and development. These are split into three prime areas and four specific areas of learning.

The prime areas are:

- **personal, social and emotional development**
- **physical development**
- **communication and language**

Personal, Social and Emotional Development includes: self- regulation, managing self and building relationships

At Ickleford Primary School, our children are supported in developing a strong, positive sense of themselves, and of others; to form attachments and relationships and to develop respect for others. They will develop their social skills and learn how to recognise, name and effectively manage their feelings. They are encouraged to understanding the importance of physical activity, making informed healthy choices at meal times and vital self-care skills such as brushing their teeth.

This area also supports the children in understanding appropriate behaviour and develop a self-confidence in their own abilities.

Physical Development includes gross motor skills and fine motor skills

This area of development is delivered through two weekly-dedicated sessions with our specialist PE teacher, regular 'Daily Mile' sessions and daily use of our outdoor area as well as carefully planned daily fine and gross motor activities in class. Children are provided with many opportunities to be active and to develop their control and coordination. Children are supported to develop their confidence in expressing themselves through movement.

Communication and Language includes listening, attention and understanding, and speaking

At Ickleford Primary School, we are passionate about providing opportunities for children to experience a language rich environment as the development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Carefully planned opportunities to engage in conversations, role-play, circle times and story sessions enable children to become comfortable in using a rich range of vocabulary and help to develop vitally important listening skills.

The specific areas of learning are:

Literacy - comprehension**,** word reading and writing

Mathematics - number and numerical patterns

Understanding the World - past and present, people, culture and communities, and the natural world

Expressive Arts and Design - creating with materials, and being imaginative and expressive

Observation, Planning and Assessment

The seven areas of learning and development above address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic and social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others, as all areas of learning and development are all closely interlinked. All areas of learning and development are given equal weighting and value. This approach ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum that allows children to make many links between what they are learning.

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. In Reception at Ickleford Primary School, we aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum planned around the children's interests. The long and medium term planning within the EYFS is based around topics and themes. These plans are used by the Reception team as a guide for weekly planning. However, we may alter these in response to the needs and interests of the children.

We do not make a distinction between work and play. Children learn through planned play activities as well as through organically occurring child-initiated play. Staff will decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities will provide the most effective learning opportunities. Staff have the knowledge and expertise to support, develop and enhance child-led play through questioning and provision of further resources where necessary or to stand back and simply observe in order to gain the most from each and every experience.

All staff in Reception are involved in the process of observing the children's interests, learning and play, taking note of themes that emerge from child led play, stories they have enjoyed, interesting experiences or changes in our environment for example. These observations are used to inform the planning of further child led play activities and adult led experiences as well as opportunities for child initiated learning through indoor and outdoor enhanced continuous provision that develop and build on these interests.

Our daily observations of children also allow us to build an in depth picture of each child as an individual and ensure that their learning is embedded and secured. We are quickly able to identify misunderstandings, difficulties or areas where a child is at risk of falling behind so that we can provide quick and effective support. In these

incidences, we have a range of small group session or additional teaching opportunities where children can work closely with an adult to provide extra support or a boost in confidence in a particular area.

During the first three weeks of the child's first term in Reception, the class teacher spends time with each child getting to know them and working alongside them in a range of activities in order to make a baseline assessment of their ability in each of the seven areas of learning. We record each child's level of development in terms of whether the child is working towards, working at the expected level or working at greater depth in the Early Years Outcomes age-bands. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

At the end of the final term in Reception, the class teacher uses their professional judgement to make an assessment, based on their in depth knowledge of each child and what they understand and can do, in each area of development. We record whether a child in working towards or at the expected level in each area. This provides an accurate assessment of each child's progress throughout the year and their development at the end of the EYFS against each of the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) in the seven areas of learning. This information supports a successful transition to Key Stage 1 by providing the Year 1 class teacher with a reliable assessment about each child's stage of development which can be used to help them plan the Year 1 curriculum to meet the needs of all children in their new class the following September. We also send a summary of these assessments to the Department for Education (DfE) for analysis. Each pupil's attainment in each of the seven areas of learning is reported to their parents as part of their end of year report.

Learning through play

At Ickleford Primary School, we believe that young children learn best when they are active and that teaching and learning in the EYFS should be as practical as possible. We recognise the importance of play and its vitally important role in all aspects of children's learning, development and wellbeing.

For the majority of the day, children are encouraged to develop their independence and make their own choices from the learning activities on offer. However, staff ensure that in addition to several adult-led 'carpet based sessions' which cover all areas of learning over the course of the week, each child experiences a sufficiently broad range of learning experiences to enable them to make progress in all of the ELGs.

Our ethos of learning through play is evident in:

- The structured and unstructured play opportunities provided both inside and outside each day which allow children to discover, investigate, problem solve, explore, rehearse and develop their understanding of specific concepts and the world around them.

- Our commitment to offering free-flow between our indoor and outdoor environments for the majority of the day regardless of the weather.
- Our commitment to continually updating and enhancing our beautiful outdoor area.
- The emphasis on quality interactions between adults and children in our setting.
- The role of adults who are experienced in guiding and enhancing child-initiated play in order to support their development and ensure that opportunities for learning are not missed.

Partnership with parents

At Ickleford Primary School, we recognise that parents are a child's first, and most enduring, educator. We do this through:

- Opportunities given to children and parents to visit the school which we call transition mornings.
- Asking parents to fill in an 'All About Me' sheet the summer before starting school for us to share with their child during their first week at school.
- Our class welcome evenings in September for parents to listen to a detailed presentation given by the class teacher about what to expect over the course of the year.
- Seeking to encourage an open door policy that places great value on parental input on their child´s achievements at home. We are always happy to discuss children´s progress at a mutually convenient time and not just at the allocated parent consultation evenings (see below for more details).
- Encouraging parents to talk to us if there are any concerns. Parents are told that they can speak to a member of staff at the beginning or end of the school day or contact the school office to arrange a longer phone call or meeting if required.
- Actively engaging with parents in order to gain a rounded picture of each child. Weekly 'Reception newsletters' are sent home to inform parents of the things we have been learning about at school in recent weeks as well as details of upcoming activities and topics. This correspondence often provides details of optional 'learning at home' practical challenges and activities that we encourage families to share with us at school.
- Our outdoor noticeboard is updated daily with information about the day's activities, phonic sounds taught and ways in which the parents can support our learning in school.
- Keeping in regular communication via their child's reading record book and encouraging parents to record comments and observations in it to share with us.

Reporting

There are formal parent consultation evenings in autumn and spring term each year for parents to discuss their child's progress with their class teacher. In addition, parents receive a detailed end of year report in the summer term that reports on their child's attainment and progress throughout the year as well as a copy of the EYFS data.

Inclusion in the EYFS

We believe that all our children are entitled to the opportunity to achieve their best in an environment which feels safe and supportive. The uniqueness of each child and their contributions are highly valued and celebrated. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences, needs, strengths and interests when we are planning for their learning. At Ickleford Primary School including Reception class, we have high expectations of all of our children and carefully tailor our teaching, providing support and challenge where needed, so that most children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We plan to meet the needs of all children regardless of gender, SEND, academic ability, social and cultural background, faith or ethnic group. We plan opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence. We use a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs and provide a wide range of opportunities to help all children to learn effectively. Our teaching and resources reflect, support and celebrate diversity.

Equal Opportunities

All staff have a responsibility to promote and maintain positive attitudes towards diversity and difference and to ensure that inclusive practice is delivered in our EYFS setting. All children, regardless of gender, ability, culture, religion, race and social background have the right and opportunity to experience a safe, happy and challenging education within our EYFS setting.

This policy should be read in conjunction with; SEND Policy, Equality policy, anti-bullying policy, Behaviour policy, Child protection policy, Admission arrangements, all of which are available on our school website