



**Charlton-on-Otmoor CE Primary School**  
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## **FOUNDATION STAGE UNIT POLICY**

### **Introduction**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their reception year. At Charlton-on-Otmoor C.E. Primary School, children enter the Foundation Stage Unit (FSU) the term after they turn three, and remain there until the end of their reception year.

### **Aims**

In line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, 2017, we aim for children in the FSU to be happy, safe, and secure individuals. Through high aspirations and effective practice, we aim to provide a happy, stimulating and positive environment to support children in becoming independent and collaborative learners.

The EYFS is based on four themes:

1. Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling environment
4. Learning and Development

At Charlton-on-Otmoor C.E Primary School, we aim to closely follow these themes to give children the best start to their education and lives.

### **The Unique Child**

We recognise and celebrate that all children are individuals. We identify that children develop at their own rates and in their own ways and differentiated planning and personalised assessment in the FSU reflects this.

Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Staff ensure children are safe and value and respect all children and families equally.

## Positive Relationships

In the FSU, we recognise the importance of good and positive relationships between home and school. We work hard to establish these relationships early on and maintain them throughout a child's time with us. This is achieved in a number of ways.

- **A weekly newsletter** is emailed out to inform parents of what staff have planned for the children in the week ahead. The newsletter also provides ideas and tips for parents about how to support their child with areas of their learning at home.
- **Useful documents and information** are regularly posted on the school website to support parents with their child's education.
- When possible, **home visits** are offered to new families to school so children can meet their new teacher in a familiar setting to them. This also gives parents a chance to chat to teachers informally and ask any questions they may have.
- Parents are invited into the FSU with their child on their first settling in session. (This is currently unable to happen due to Covid-19 so we have invited parents in on INSET days so they can see the school when there are no other pupils present. Parents have also been offered video calls with teachers)
- On entry into the FSU children are assigned a **key worker**. Staff have special responsibilities to provide the reassurance to their key children so they feel safe and cared for. They also build strong relationship with their parents. This is enhanced by regular observations of children at school which are emailed to parents using the **Tapestry app**. These observations give parents an insight into what their child is enjoying and achieving in at school and we invite parents to email observations from home to build up the communication between the two environments. Parents also have access to their child's **Learning Journey** folder where observations and work are kept to track and celebrate children's progress in all areas.
- **Wow-wee certificates**. We celebrate children's achievements at home with wow-wee certificates. These are notes that parents write, to staff in the FSU, to celebrate something significant their child has done. Examples we have had include, riding a bike for the first time and getting dressed independently. Once read out, these take pride of place on our display board in the classroom.
- Staff always try to make themselves available before and after school to communicate with parents and give regular feedback about their child's day. Staff are always encouraged to email teachers if they have any concerns or questions.
- **Good links with feeder nurseries**. Building relationships with staff at feeder nurseries positively aids the transition for children who have attended settings previously. Email communication, sharing of information about individuals and visiting settings are examples of how we achieve this.
- Parents help out on class trips.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as class assemblies, Christmas productions, Harvest festival and sports day.

- **Annual reports** inform parents of their child's academic achievements. In addition parents receive a report centring on how their child learns, identifying the characteristics of their learning in the FSU.
- Offering two **parent/teacher consultation meetings** per year at which their child's progress is discussed.

### **Staffing in the FSU**

The ratio of staff to children in the FSU is good. Alongside the Teacher, we have an Early Years worker who works every morning (when the nursery children are present as well as the reception children) and two additional afternoons.

### **Enabling Environment**

Recognising the importance of the environment in supporting and extending children in their development, children in the FSU have a stimulating, challenging and flexible free-flow environment in which to learn.

Children have access to an indoor and outdoor environment where a wide variety of activities and resources are available. Activities are planned to reflect their interests, current topics and all areas of learning. In addition, activities are flexible and open in order to stimulate and inspire children to think creatively. We have a covered area to facilitate outdoor play all year round.

Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. FSU staff support, challenge and extend children in their chosen play through high quality interactions.

### **Learning and Development**

At Charlton-on-Otmoor C.E Primary School, our topics are chosen from the Dimensions Curriculum Programme and tailored by the teachers to meet the needs and interests of our children. Each topic lasts one small term.

### **Planning in the FSU**

Children in the FSU are taught in adult-led, whole-class sessions and small group activities but predominantly **learn through play**. Planning for all adult-directed and child-initiated table-top activities are carefully planned for and differentiated to cover all seven areas of learning. These are the three prime areas and four specific areas outlined in the Early Years Framework.

Prime areas:

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

Specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

While child-initiated activities are planned for according to children's developmental needs, resources are open-ended and adaptable so planning is flexible to fit in with the ever changing interests and developmental needs of the children.

### **Characteristics of effective learning**

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- **Playing and exploring** - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **Active learning** - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.
- **Creating and thinking critically** - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Evidence of children demonstrating these characteristics of effective learning are recorded using the Tapestry app and displayed on a display board.

The characteristics of effective learning and the prime and specific areas of learning are all interconnected.

### **Assessment**

All children are assessed on entry into the FSU to provide a baseline for their assessment and measured against progress made. We record each child's level of development against the 17 areas of learning as Emerging (c), Expected (b) or Exceeding (a) within developmental age bands. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to inform future planning. Tracking grids are updated three times a year to identify progress made and areas of development for each individual and as a cohort. In the Summer term, reception children's' Early Years profile is completed when they are assessed against the Early Learning Goals and a summary of their scores is sent to the Local Authority for analysis. Furthermore, the cohort's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the

year ahead.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal daily observations, photographic evidence using the Tapestry assessment app on iPads and assessment sheets from planned adult-led activities. Assessment involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate, and also incorporates information from parents, for example from wow-wee certificates and home observations.

## **Transition**

At Charlton-on-Otmoor C.E Primary School, we recognise the importance of transition. We appreciate that children develop socially, emotionally and academically at different stages and that some children find transition easier than others.

### **The transition to year 1**

There are a number of strategies that we have implemented in order to ease the transition from the FSU into Key stage 1. These include;

- When possible, F1 children play in the Key stage 1/ 2 playground during break times in the Summer term
- When possible and safe, key children are identified as finding transition more difficult and they undertake small tasks. For example, taking messages to their Year 1 teacher
- When possible, staff from Year 1/ 2 listen to individuals' read and read whole class stories.
- When possible and safe, reception children initially visit their new class with their current FSU teacher so they get used to their new environment with a familiar adult.
- Reception children go into Year ½ with the current year ½ children for 'Golden time' on a Friday afternoon, in the Summer term. This enables them to familiarise themselves with staff and their new environment in an informal way.
- Learning becomes more formal in the Summer term to reflect the expectations and routine in Year 1/ 2. For example, the children complete Literacy tasks as a whole class rather than small adult focused groups.
- When possible and safe, transition days are planned where children in the whole school spend time with their new teacher, in their new environment and new children into reception are invited in to school.
- FSU and Year 1 teacher meet to discuss individual children, their needs and characteristics of effective learning reports and attainment.
- Throughout the year, reception children take part in whole school assemblies. Nursery children also take part in assemblies when it is perceived to be of interest to them.

- Reception children are encouraged to share their worries about moving up to Key Stage 1. These are discussed with their current and new teacher.

### **The transition to FSU**

- **When possible and safe, home visits or nursery visits** are offered to new children to school so children can meet their new teacher in a familiar setting to them. This also gives parents or keyworkers a chance to chat to teachers informally and ask any questions they may have and discuss any concerns. (This is currently unable to happen but parents have been invited to come into school on INSET days, video calls have been arranged and email communication between staff and new parents enables concerns to be discussed)
- We offer **two pre-visits** for children starting in the FSU to enable them to settle in. We offer flexibility in building up the length of time children stay with us to ensure their transition to school is smooth.

### **Health & Safeguarding**

At Charlton-on-Otmoor C.E Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence
- Promote good health
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

All FSU staff undertook Safeguarding training at the beginning of academic year 2020

The Safeguarding officer at Charlton-on-Otmoor C.E Primary School is Ross Griffin (head teacher) and the deputy Safeguarding lead is Amanda Clarke.

### **Healthy Lifestyles**

Children in the FSU have access to water and fruit, every day. Staff use the snack time as an opportunity to discuss and promote healthy lifestyles. Reception children are also

encouraged to visit the salad bar at lunchtime. A healthy lifestyle is also promoted through adult-led sessions on the importance of exercise and healthy foods. Children have weekly PE lessons but also have access to sports equipment for example, balls, hoops, bats etc in their outside classroom and have a large play equipment to develop gross motor skills.

### **First aid**

All FSU staff hold a paediatric First aid certificates (displayed on wall in FSU)

The first aid kit is accessible and visible to staff in the FSU but is out of reach of children.

Procedures for recording accident and reporting accidents to parents are established and implemented successfully.

Zoe Wells

Foundation Stage Leader