

**Charlton-on-Otmoor CofE Primary School**

**Early Years (FSU) Policy**

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| **Approved by:** | FGB | **Date:** 13.1.2025 |
| **Last reviewed on:** | 13.1.2025 | |
| **Next review due by:** | 13.1.2026 | |

**Aims**

This policy aims to ensure:

That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life

Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind

A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers

Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

**Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2) for 2023.

Introduction

At Charlton-on-Otmoor, we follow the **Early Years Foundation Stage Framework** (EYFS) believing that:

* Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
* Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships.**
* Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** with teaching and support from adults,who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time.
* Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

All of this being in the context of understanding the importance of **learning and development** knowing thatchildren develop and learn at different rates.

**Structure of the EYFS**

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.

The Nursery provision is a open to 3 and 4 year olds. The nursery is sessional, a morning session (08.45am – 11.45 am) and an afternoon session (1pm – 3:15pm). In addition, children can remain in school for the lunch hour too and for full day sessions.

The Reception children follow our main school timetable for arrival and departure. (8.45 a.m. - 3.15 p.m.)

**Curriculum**

We have designed a bespoke curriculum, based around our school vision, which is updated each year to build on the children’s Cultural Capital, introduce them to 21st Century Skills and develop their awareness of their place as Global Citizens.

It reflects **Development Matters** (The DfE Non statutory Curriculum Guidance for Early Years Foundation Stage); including breadth and ambition with high expectations of children to be the best they can be in what they achieve, and building on their baseline starting points.

Predominantly, the children in the FSU **learn through play** both indoors and out. In addition, the children are taught phonics, English and Maths in adult-led, whole-class and small group inputs. All adult-directed and child-initiated continuous provision activities are carefully planned for and differentiated, to cover all seven areas of learning outlined in the Early Years Framework (EYFS). Three 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.

**Prime areas:**

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

**Specific areas:**

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

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three **characteristics of effective 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.

**Planning**

Our staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children’s activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

**Teaching**

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

**Assessment**

At Charlton-on-Otmoor of your school, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks thata child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). Although formal assessment is no longer statutory in Early Years, all staff informally work with, and play alongside the children in their learning, to build up a picture of where each child is in their learning journey and what their next steps are. In line with the rest of the school this is monitored at three set data points a year. (Baseline in Autumn 1, progress point in Spring 1, and end of year/ELG in Summer 2.)

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child as part of the end of year report. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

* Meeting expected levels of development
* 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 (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/development-matters--2)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

**Working with parents and carers**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there’s a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Although all staff have contact and interact with all children in the class, on entry into the FSU, children are assigned a **key worker**. These named staff have special responsibilities to provide reassurance to their key children, so they feel safe and cared for. They also build a strong relationship with their parents. Staff meet parents once in the Autumn term to discuss how the children have settled and again in the Spring to discuss progress. At the end of each academic year a summative written report is sent home. This reflects the prime areas of learning for all children, and also the specific areas of maths and literacyfor Reception. Examples of children demonstrating the **characteristics of effective learning** and work they are proud of, are recorded using the Tapestry App and shared with parents.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child’s progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child’s knowledge, understanding and abilities.

At the end of Reception the EYFS profile is used to inform parents, and other stakeholders, about a child’s development. Pupils are defined as having reached a **Good Level Development** **(GLD)** at the end ofFSU if they have achieved the expected level for the **Early Learning Goals** **(ELGs)** in the prime areas of learning and the specific areas of maths and literacy.

There is a programme of activities to aid the smooth transition from FSU to Key Stage One. This is additionally tailored to particular needs as appropriate.

**Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

We recognise that children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff: child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. We determine ratios guided by all relevant ratio requirements and by the needs of the children within the group.

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by including specific oral health themes within our curriculum and promoting healthy choices during snack time and as appropriate when children are playing. We also ensure we talk to the children about the effects of eating too many sweet things and the importance of brushing your teeth.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school’s child protection and safeguarding policy.

**Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the FSU lead every year. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.