Curwen Primary School

Together Everyone Achieves More

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Reviewed in Summer 2026 **Next review Summer 2028**

Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) constitutes a distinctive phase of education which integrates the care and education of young children from the age of 3 years old. For the majority of children attending Nursery, it is the first time they are separated from their parents and carers for substantial and regular periods of time which means the partnership between home and school is a crucial element in children's learning and needs to be formed at the outset. The setting follows the statutory framework for EYFS as seen here https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2

At Curwen, children come from a wide range of social and cultural groups. Each child is unique, with individual needs, and brings a diverse range of previous experiences and learning which should be acknowledged and built upon. In order to plan effectively for the EYFS, we need a clear view of the standards we want every child to reach and the ways that children learn most effectively. The EYFS team have devised their own EYFS vision for the team, children and parents/carers in line with Curwen's ethos and values alongside our aims of SHINE and Curwen Core Skills.

EYFS vision

At Curwen Primary School, in EYFS we provide the children with a sense of belonging in a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment.
By providing fun, hands-on experiences we develop the children's confidence, independence and positive attitudes to learning.
This is done through building effective partnerships with parents, carers, children and teachers enabling us to give the children the best possible start to their school life.

This policy can be read alongside other key school policies, such as: TTLT The Single Equality Plan, TTLT Inclusion Policy, TTLT SEN and Disability Policy, TTLT Health and Safety Policy, Admissions Arrangement, Safeguarding Policy, Intimate Care Agreement, EYFS Transition Policy, Our Curriculum Statement.

Aims

1. To value parents/carers as children's first educators.
2. To enable each unique child to feel secure, valued and respected.
3. To enable children to function as members of a socially inclusive group and to develop positive, cooperative and supportive relationships with peers and adults.
4. To motivate children to have a love of learning and enable them to approach learning with confidence.
5. To ensure that every child has access to a curriculum which: -
    - covers all areas of learning and development
    - is developmentally appropriate
    - recognises the importance of play

- provides opportunity for learning both indoors and outdoors
- enables children to achieve the Early Learning Goals and be ready for the next stage of their education

6. To enable children to make the transition from dependence to independence by supporting them to make choices, develop their own ideas and take responsibility for their own actions (referred to as the Characteristics of Effective Learning)
7. To prepare all children to confidently access the next phase of their education through an effective transition.

Organisation of Nursery

In Nursery we have AM and PM places for children aged 3 and above for the morning and afternoon sessions. We deliver government-funded early years entitlements in accordance with the Department for Education's statutory guidance and our Provider Agreement with the local authority. The staffing in Nursery consists of a Lead Nursery teacher, Nursery Nurses and Teaching Assistants. The Nursery starting times are flexible, allowing 3 hours per session. In the morning, the children arriving between 8:45 and 9:15 and in the afternoon, the children arrive between 12:15 and 12:45.

The children will have planned opportunities for Child Initiated Learning and Adult Focus Led Learning (AF) activities. The Nursery children receive whole class or smaller group teaching for the Adult Focus introduction, listening and attentions activities, phonics, and maths as well as daily story time. They will be able to work independently, in small groups, larger groups and as a whole class. These are built upon across the year. The children move around the classroom, accessing both the inside or outdoor learning environment throughout the session, including an opportunity for snack.

Organisation of Reception

In Reception there are classes of 30 children, each class has a teacher and a member of Support Staff. The Reception children receive whole class teaching for Maths, Adult Focus introductions, phonics, reading time, story time, P.E, Forest School, and a weekly library slot. Reception classes start promptly at 8.45am until 3.15pm in line with the rest of the school.

All other times children will be working together as one unit with children in all classes free to move indoors and outdoors, to integrate and play together unless they are working with an adult at a focused activity or intervention. Throughout the year the children will be able to explore other classrooms. Children are grouped across the cohort for phonics. The phonic scheme implemented at Curwen is Read Write Inc. The children receive a daily session varying from 30 minutes at the beginning of the year in the autumn term and increasing to 45 minutes towards the summer term.

Curwen Primary School is committed to inclusive education, supporting and promoting the development of the whole child with a learning journey that leads every child to be the best they can be, from all starting points, and ready for the next phase in their education. We want all children at Curwen to SHINE and in order to ensure progress, they work in a vibrant, inclusive and welcoming atmosphere. Provision at Curwen is tailored to meet the individual needs of the child with a ‘stage not age’ approach, making use of specially adapted classrooms as well as working alongside their mainstream peers, benefiting from a wide variety of learning styles and stimulating resources which are appropriate to their level of progress.

Please refer to website Curwen Primary School - SEND and our EYFS Transition Policy.
This allows us to individualise the curriculum and implement relevant interventions for these children across the week.

Key Workers
All children are allocated to a Key Worker adult in both the Nursery and Reception classes. This is the adult they form a close relationship with and who their parent/carer can go to initially for any queries. Nursery Key Workers will also meet with parent/carers during Parent evenings to discuss their child's progress. Whilst the Key Worker is responsible for their children's record keeping and welfare, it is important all members of staff are familiar with all children and have an input into planning for the cohort and liaising with parents/carers.

The Curriculum
There are seven areas of learning and development:

1. **Communication and Language**
2. **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
3. **Physical Development**
4. Literacy
5. Mathematics
6. Understanding the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Physical Development are the **Prime areas** of learning and development and the other four areas are called the specific areas of learning.

Child-initiated learning, 'play' is of central importance for the EYFS statutory framework, as are communication and first-hand experiences. Children learn best when they are engaged, active and talking about what they are doing rather than being told. Therefore, we refer the Characteristics of Effective Learning and the seven principles of effective early years practice. Whilst a few subjects are taught discretely, for example phonics, the majority of learning is cross-curricular, based on the theme that term. We plan from the year group overviews alongside the EYFS statutory framework, our own developed Curwen EYFS progress overview, Curwen's aims of SHINE and Curwen Core Skills. We ensure to encourage risk taking and challenge ensuring the children are continually deepening their learning and understanding.

Long Term Curriculum Overview is reviewed and adapted based on the children's needs and interests accordingly. It is linked to prior knowledge, big outcomes, core books, significant people and celebrations across the terms. The learning objectives ensure coverage of all areas of learning and development. If certain areas are delivered out of sequence, we highlight these to avoid repetition later on in the year.

Medium Term Plans for Literacy and Maths are sequenced developmentally to ensure progress each half term. They also allow scope to ensure a range of learning objectives are planned for. These plans cover the seven areas of learning and development (mentioned above) and are a range of developmental strands to ensure the children's progress. This includes the Curwen reading skills which have been adapted for EYFS.

Short Term Plans are completed on a weekly basis. Weekly planning discussions allow staff to reflect, adapt and plan for the next steps to ensure relevant progress for all children. Planning shows learning objectives for adult led focussed activities which are differentiated to what the children need. We also use assessment for learning based on previous weeks teaching. The plans target children in order to address individual needs and learning styles. A range of planned and open-ended activities are available to the children to encourage child-initiated learning. They relate to the themes but are also skill-based activities that promote Literacy and Numeracy skills.

In Reception the teachers plan personalised learning for individuals or groups of children to consolidate, deepen and extend the children's understanding and next steps.

Educational Visits
Educational visits are planned for all the children in the EYFS setting. Every term an educational visit is arranged which links to the theme. Visits range from watching a theatre show, visits to the local park, church, mosque, the local shops and many more. These opportunities allow the children to talk about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. We recognise the importance of offering the children a wealth of real-life experiences they can get involved with and talk about to give them the best chance in life. We also invite a range of professionals to talk about their jobs and how they play a part in the community. This gives the children a chance to ask questions relevant to the jobs and promotes speaking and listening skills.

Assemblies
Assemblies take place every week for the Reception children in the spring term through to summer. During the assembly, the Reception teachers select the 'Star That SHINES' and 'Reader of the Week' from their class and together everyone celebrates their achievements. The winning Author group are also praised in line with the rest of the school.

Environment
The importance of a well stimulated, resourced and accessible provision ensures consistent progress in all areas of learning and development for all learners. Expectations of environment and areas of learning and development is planned weekly and makes relevant links to the themes in the curriculum.

Outdoor Provision
Outdoor provision is seen as vitally important to the health and development of young children and they should be given the opportunity to release energy and explore their natural environment. In Nursery and Reception, the children have daily sustained opportunity to use the outdoors. Staff are timetabled to engage in teaching and learning of the outside area. Resources set up permanently outside and trolleys for the daily transportation of equipment.

Phonics
In line with whole school policy, we participate in the Read Write Inc. Scheme. All children receive a daily input of exploratory sound activities and/or phonics. We introduce phonics through a range of sound activities and games, beginning with the first 10 sounds. Then moving through the phase, the children are grouped according to their ability working through the scheme in order of their development.

In Nursery the children are exposed to initial sounds through every day play and story time sessions. In Reception we have a daily set time for phonic teaching and we have at least 8 groups which the children are regularly assessed and moved between the groups accordingly.

Maths
We have a carefully planned sequential maths curriculum which incorporates number and numerical patterns.

Assessment, Reporting and Record Keeping
The setting follows the 2021 early years foundation stage: assessment and reporting arrangements (ARA) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2021-early-years-foundation-stage-assessment-and-reporting-arrangements-ara

Reception Statutory Baseline
The NFER is a statutory baseline that has to be completed for all Reception children within the first full 2 weeks of school (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reception-baseline-assessment).

The teachers will complete Curwen baseline to track the children's progress through their time in Early Years. This enables the staff to build their knowledge of each child through observations, interactions and engaging with the children in everyday activities.

Every child has a record of progress which begins within their first few weeks of Nursery or Reception. This is an A4 plain pink book referred to as their Special Book. This contains evidence to show the individual child's progress during their time in Nursery and Reception. These books are used throughout the child's time in the EYFS and as the children move up into Year 1 they are used as an assessment tool for the class teacher.

An on-entry baseline assessment is completed on every child when they start Nursery and Reception immediately. The children are assessed using the objectives from the Curwen EYFS progress overview based on a range of EYFS documents and experienced staff input. The progress checker is updated accordingly, in line with the EYFS school's assessment procedures. In Nursery the Key Workers contribute to the progress checks made on their key worker children with the Nursery teacher. In Reception the support staff are each allocated a key worker group and will feedback to relevant class teacher.

Throughout the child's time in EYFS a range of observations based on the Characteristics of Effective Learning are completed. They involve a child being observed on how they are learning, how they access their learning environment as well as how they interact with others. These observations are collated for a report which is given to the parents at the end of the Nursery or Reception year.

Other forms of teacher assessments and judgments are carried out throughout the year. These are short quick observations which are then printed and stuck into their special books each half term. Additionally, staff record the children's progress on 'sticky labels' which are stuck into the children's Special books. Some photographs are also taken with a short summary of the progress the child has made. These are presented in their special books which are shared with parents/carers throughout the year. All staff will make these observations across all children in their class. Child initiated evidence which displays progress will also be referenced in their Special Book. Nursery and Reception staff are responsible for making assessments and teacher judgments on all children as well as their key worker children. These are ongoing and monitored throughout the year to ensure gaps are identified and targeted.

All forms of progress checks and assessments are moderated between the Nursery and Reception staff to assure that the numerical levels given and Early Learning Goals to the children are a fair and accurate judgement of the child's progress. It also allows for a robust tracking system which permits us to adjust our planning to support the needs of the children by targeting and supporting them. It also allows for the staff to have a good understanding of the expectations in each phase. At the end of the Reception year, we assess the children and award them a Good Level of Development (GLD). This can be 1 or 2 depending on the level of development of the child, 1

emerging and 2 expected. This is submitted to the local authority. This information is then shared and used in their Year 1 class so that teaching and learning can be planned accordingly.

Parental Involvement
We believe it is important to involve parents/carers with their children's learning. Parents/carers can meet with their key worker adult or teacher twice yearly during parents' evenings to discuss the progress made and targets set.

We welcome parents to arrange to meet their child's key worker or teacher whenever they feel the need, whether it is for a specific query or just an informal chat; all staff can make themselves available before or after school. For longer chats we ask parents/carers to make an appointment to see a specific member of staff. We have open ½ hour sessions in Nursery and open Monday mornings in Reception where parents can come and play, speak to the teacher and look at their child's Special Book. They have the opportunity to make comments if they wish, which are then glued into their books. We value and invite parental contribution throughout EYFS.

Reception teachers send guided reading books home and set weekly homework for parents to complete with their child. In Nursery we have optional weekly homework. Nursery and Reception children visit the school library once a week to choose a book to take home.

Parents and carers are encouraged to come in to volunteer. They are also invited in for whole school events such as during International Family Week, Easter Bonnet and Sports Day. We also have lots of activities they can watch such as; assemblies, stay and play sessions, carnival and performances.

Inclusion
At Curwen Nursery and Primary School, we share a commitment towards the provision of inclusive education as articulated in the TTLT SEN and Disability Policy, TTLT Inclusion Policy, TTLT The Single Equality Plan, and the school's Accessibility Plan, Equality Plan and the School Information Report and School Offer.

Pupil diversity is welcomed at Curwen Nursery and Primary School and differences in culture, religion and intellectual style are celebrated. The need for the spiritual, moral social and cultural development of children is evident in all areas of the school's function. All children are different and individual and at Curwen Nursery and Primary School are treated as such. Throughout this document, these children are referred to as having 'additional inclusion entitlement'.

Safeguarding
EYFS operates under the same safeguarding procedures as per the rest of the school by the Safeguarding Policy.

All staff and governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child. Though its emphasis on prevention and early intervention, this aims to minimise the risks of children being abused.

There are five aspects to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children:

- Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.

- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

Health and Safety Issues
An annual risk assessment for indoors and outdoors is shared with all EYFS staff at the beginning of the school year. Every class has a copy of this displayed on a board. The EYFS staff will check the outdoor area each morning for any hazards such as litter, broken equipment or animal faeces. Cleaning fluids and equipment used are kept in a locked cupboard.

New staff, volunteers and students are inducted on our safeguarding procedures, basic Health and Safety procedures, including the fire drill.

In Nursery a member of SMT is at the front gate. Children are only allowed to go with an adult known to staff.

In Reception the class teacher ensures the children are not dismissed without a known adult. If an unknown adult is collecting a child, parents are responsible for letting the school know. This information will be shared with the class teacher.

First Aid
Reception and Nursery have qualified first aiders. They have an allocated area to administer first aid. Any first aid given to a child is entered on to the school administrative system Arbor. Parents are notified at the end of day via this system. any head injuries occur parents are notified straight away via a phone call.

Starting Nursery and Settling in for parents
Before starting Nursery and any new to Curwen children starting in Reception, each child and their parent/carer are visited at home or via Zoom. The parent/carer is asked to complete administration forms and discuss their child, including any health problems and/or medical concerns. Staff will record any issues or any remarks the parent/carer contributes. A start date is then given. We strive to keep the length of time between a home visit and starting Nursery as short as possible.

On the first day of Nursery the parent/carer must stay with their child. While we strive for parents to leave their children as soon as possible, we are flexible and realise some children take longer than others to settle. If individuals are finding it difficult to leave their carers/ parents then the adults are asked to remain for longer periods of time, or sessions are shortened. Please refer to our EYFS Transition Policy.

Before beginning Reception, all the children and their parent/carers are asked to attend a meeting with Reception teachers, year group leader and the assistant head teacher. It is important that children and their parents not attending our Nursery are invited and try to come along, in order to find out about their new school and staff. It is an opportunity for them to ask questions and take a walk around the school and see their classroom. When children begin Reception there is a transition plan to support this process. If it is deemed a child is not ready for full time in a Reception class then a child may come for half days initially and start a staggered transition plan. Please refer to our EYFS Transition Policy.

Starting Reception and Settling in for children
Children going up to Reception will have an opportunity to explore the Reception provision and meet their class teacher before September. Children not in our Nursery are invited to stay and play sessions. Their new teacher will also visit them in Nursery to observe how they learn in familiar setting. On the first day in Reception the Nursery staff will be available to help settle the children in to their new environment. The children's Special Books are sent to their new class to continue.

The Reception areas are set up similarly to the Nursery environment and the first day is similar to Nursery routines. The teacher will build up the amount of directed class teaching sessions and adult led focused tasks over the first half term. By the end of the first half term children will be receiving a balance of directed teaching over the day, some in small groups and some as a whole class.

Children are prepared for going into Year 1 by using the Key Stage One playground the term before leaving Reception, having a later lunch time, attending whole school assemblies and having a chance to visit their new classrooms and Year 1 class teacher. The Reception teachers meet with Year 1 teachers to discuss the children moving into their class and the Characteristics of Effective Learning reports.

The Early Learning Goals (ELG) levels are shared with the Year 1 team to identify children still working towards the ELG's, and those exceeding them and those ready to cope with the National Curriculum. Staff will agree on a suitable topic to begin in September. The first term in Year 1 is very much based around settling and supporting the children with changes into this stage of their learning through some play-based activities.

Transition
In the summer term, we begin a programme of transition to support the children with their move to year 1. This involves visits to the new classrooms and opportunities to ask any questions about the next year, reception classes attending whole school assembly, and joining in playtime with KS1 children. Please refer to EYFS Transition Policy.

Monitoring and Reviewing of Policy
Unless there are any legal changes, this policy will be reviewed in three years.