



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.
UNICEF Article 29 Convention on the Rights of the Child

Statutory Policy:	Yes
Source of policy e.g. AfC	Guided by The Key Model EYFS Policy
Date of review:	November 2023
Date of last review:	October 2021
Staff member responsible:	A Owens G Coombes
Governor name & committee responsibility:	A&F Committee
This policy was ratified by Full Governing Body (if applicable):	NA
Date next due for review:	November 2025
Changes in the policy should be highlighted in yellow	

Carlisle Infant School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

‘Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.’

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

At Carlisle Infant school we aim to ensure that all children are supported to achieve their potential and recognise that the EYFS is an important part of their learning journey.

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) for 2023 which:

- sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well
- ensures children are kept healthy and safe
- ensures that children have the knowledge and skills they need to start school

In line with the aims of the EYFS reforms, developing early language skills is key as this will support children’s learning across the curriculum. We are committed to making a difference to the outcomes of disadvantaged children by working to close any gaps in children’s learning.

Aims

At Carlisle we recognise every child’s right to grow up in a safe environment, to be healthy, enjoy and achieve what they set out to do, to make a positive contribution in their own community and develop the communication and social skills they will need throughout life. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively, and intellectually to their full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

At Carlisle Infant School, we aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating and nurturing environment which is sensitive and inclusive to the needs of all children.
- Create a broad, balanced and inspiring curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Enable choice and decision making; fostering independence, self-confidence and risk taking and thereby taking their views seriously (UNICEF Article 12)
- Work in partnership with families/ carers, valuing their contributions and ensuring all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability are valued (UNICEF Articles 2, 21,22,23,30)
- Understand progression in the skills needed across the Prime (Physical Development; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Communication and Language) and Specific areas (Mathematics, Literacy, Expressive Arts and Design and Understanding the World) and plan accordingly.

Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

A unique child

We recognise that every child is an individual learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. 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 empower a positive attitude to learning.

Positive relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent, developing secure relationships and we aim to establish caring, respectful, and professional relationships with the children and their families, right from the start.

Enabling environment

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development and we offer a wide range of learning opportunities. Through observations we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning. Children are encouraged to become independent by selecting their own resources and tidying up after themselves.

Learning and Development

The Foundation Stage is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. We ensure that there are opportunities for active, physical learning as well as quiet spaces for thinking.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Carlisle Infant School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS for children is from birth to five years of age. All children begin school with a wide variety of experiences and learning; it is the privilege of the adults working in the foundation stage to accept the task of building upon that prior learning experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents and carers, support staff and the Reception team work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children.

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:

Playing and exploring: - engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to have a go

Active learning: -motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping on trying

- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically: - thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

Learning and Development is categorised into three Prime Areas of Learning:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

Additionally there are four Specific Areas of Learning:

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

Planning and Observation

Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning is based around the curriculum guidance from Development Matters 2021. We believe in meticulous planning to utilise all opportunities, yet we also practise 'planning in the moment' where knowledgeable staff draw on their expertise to extend learning, and to support the child's next steps at that point of learning. We understand that reading, writing and early mathematics must be purposeful and connected to real-life situations for young children to learn. Revisiting and repetition are crucial for long-term memory. We believe that to enhance our literacy and maths skills, our Prime areas must be well taught and fostered. With this in mind, we plan for inspiring continuous provision and engaging adult-led sessions throughout the school day. Developing a love of reading and the ability to communicate clearly is at the heart of all we do. Planning within the EYFS is based around themes/ topics which create starting points for learning and are then enhanced by the children's interests, for example our 'People Who Help Us' topic was inspired and adapted by the parents/ professionals that visited us to share details about their jobs e.g. a doctor visited us with a cow's heart.

Assessment

Assessment is integral to our practice. We want to understand; what our children know, how effective is our teaching and what we need to do next. It is a constant process of observation and reflection. In September 2021, we introduced an online tool known as 'Tapestry' to record observations made of the children in our Reception Classes which enables EYFS practitioners to photograph, video and capture a commentary of children's current knowledge and understanding as well as demonstrating their progression. These observations help to inform teachers when assessing their attainment and progress.

During a child's first six weeks in school, they are assessed in Language, Communication and Literacy and in Mathematics using the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment.

At the end of the year children are assessed using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile 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 carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child. Parents and carers are given the opportunity to meet their child's class teacher each term, including a home visit before the children start. At the end of the summer term, we provide a written summary in relation to the children's Early Learning Goals to parents and carers at the end of the year. This also provides useful transition information to Year One.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

Outdoor Learning

At Carlisle we understand the value of children learning in the outdoor environment where they can be active and fully engage their senses. We are very proud of our stimulating and inviting outdoor classroom. Learning outdoors supports the development of healthy lifestyles by offering the children the opportunity for physical activity, freedom of movement and helps them to develop a sense of well-being. It also gives children direct exposure with nature and unique learning experiences such as contact with the weather and seasons. In Reception, children have daily opportunities to play and explore in our outdoor area. This provision includes some structured challenges set up by the EYFS team as well as lots of opportunities for child-initiated learning too. Children are encouraged to learn to manage risk in their activities safely negotiating spaces around them. We are always reviewing and adapting our provision based on the needs of the cohort. Our current YR cohort are requiring more opportunities for movement and to develop their physical strength, we have reviewed our provision accordingly and were lucky to receive training and a generous donation of resources to support the children with this.

The Induction Process

Children join Carlisle from over 25 different settings every year. During the summer term, staff start the transition process to ensure all our children and families have a positive start to life at Carlisle. The transition process involves:

Summer term (before starting)

- Children visit our YR area with their nursery key workers
- Where possible, members of the Reception team will visit nursery settings
- Lengthy handover of information from nursery practitioners and a member of the YR team, these notes help to inform our class mix
- All children and their parents/ carers are invited to a stay and play session in the outdoor area (choice of 2 dates – one in morning/ one in afternoon to accommodate working families)
- An information evening for new Reception parents/carers in June

Autumn term (before starting)

- In early September the class teacher and a teaching assistant will arrange a home visit so that they can meet each child and their parents and to establish a relationship with the child and their family. Building relationships with parents/ carers is fundamental.
- We invite all families to our final stay and play session to meet their peers and revisit the environment before starting

Home School Links

We recognise that parents/ carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we prioritise building a positive partnership with all families with a child – centred focus. We welcome parents in to help us with cooking, reading, talking to children in different languages, explaining their jobs and helping us take children on relevant trips. We operate an "open door" policy that allows parents/ carers to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner as well as two parent consultations. We offer coffee mornings and workshops for parents/carers , such as Phonics and Emotional Regulation Workshops, to support with how to help at home.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) will be supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. Children with specific learning difficulties and disabilities have Individual Education Plans which identify targets in specific areas of learning. The school's SENDco, Lorraine Blake, is responsible for providing additional information and advice to staff and parents and for arranging external intervention and support as necessary.

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

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 to child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils and in line with good practice we have a teaching assistant based with each reception class. 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 talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- Sharing healthy food and lifestyle information with parents
- Visit from a dentist to talk about caring for our teeth

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's safeguarding policy.