



# Early Years Policy

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## 1. The EYFS Statement of intent

*‘Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.’*

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile  
Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012

At CPS, we greatly value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children’s readiness for the next stage of their education and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We seek to provide:

- Quality and consistency - 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 child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- Partnership working between practitioners and parents.
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

At CPS, we know excellent education in the early years is crucial to achieving our mission. Research shows, gaps in development between disadvantaged children and their peers begin before school age. We are committed to closing this gap and ensuring equal life chances for all, right from the start.

Early year’s providers currently have a legal requirement to meet the standards set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. This framework sets out:

- The legal welfare requirements that everyone registered to look after children must follow to keep children safe and promote their welfare.
- The areas of learning and development.
- An assessment framework that will include parents in conversation about their child’s progress.
- Expected levels that children will attain by the end of the EYFS.

There are four principles which underpin the EYFS and shape practice:

1. Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
3. Children learn and develop well in enabling environments
4. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in EYFS including children with special educational needs and disabilities. CPS has a SEND Policy which is dedicated to supporting children throughout their time at CPS.

We are convinced that an Early Years curriculum which prioritises the 'Prime Areas' of learning can best prepare children for success throughout their life at school and beyond. According to the Development Matters document, the prime areas are 'fundamental, work together, and move through to support development in all other areas.' The document asserts that the specific areas of Literacy, Maths, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design 'grow out of the prime areas.'

Ofsted inspects and regulates children's services in the UK. Inspection of EYFS settings in schools are supported by the school inspection handbook, while separate EYFS settings are inspected according to the Early Years inspection handbook.

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

- 2.1. The Governing Body has the overall responsibility for ensuring there is a policy in place to safeguard children that includes an explanation of the action to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child, the use of mobile phones and cameras, and staff safeguarding training requirements. These issues are addressed in part in this policy and in further detail in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Photography Policy.
- 2.2. The Governing Body has the overall responsibility for ensuring there is a policy in place in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (including supply staff) or a volunteer. These issues are addressed in the school's Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.
- 2.3. The Governing Body has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- 2.4. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 2.5. The Governing Body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- 2.6. The EYFS lead, in conjunction with the head teacher, has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.

- 2.7. Staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers, are responsible for familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy.
- 2.8. Staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers, are responsible for remaining alert to any issues of concern in children.

### **3. Aims**

At CPS we aim to meet each child's needs by:

- understanding that each child is unique and so providing for the whole child, their health, both physical and mental, their feelings, thinking and spiritual development through excellent safeguarding and the prioritization of the prime areas of learning
- ensuring close communication and work with parents/careers to develop complete understanding of each child and to communicate progress and next steps with families clearly and effectively
- ensuring each child has the opportunity to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding to achieve success and to build a thirst for lifelong learning
- teaching the foundations of reading, writing and mathematics that will develop basic skills and also enable access to the wider curriculum
- providing a stimulating environment, indoors and out, providing many opportunities for children to be curious, ask questions and to be eager to discover and learn
- providing opportunities and time for children to pursue their own interests and time to interact and share with others
- providing opportunities for each child to make choices and decisions to develop their independence
- providing multi-cultural experiences including resources and stories which reflect different cultures and values and through teaching that is conscious of and promotes fundamental British values
- creating a purposeful atmosphere, where teachers can focus on teaching and pupils on learning

### **4. What children learn**

We are currently operating in a climate of national educational change. The CPS early years curriculum content for nursery and reception is currently planned to follow the guidance from the new EYFS Framework 2021. The curriculum, therefore, comprises seven main areas of learning and development.

### Three Prime Areas:

- **Communication and Language** – children develop skills and confidence in speaking and listening in a range of situations.
- **Physical Development** – children develop their co-ordination, control, and movement through being active.
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – within clear boundaries children form positive relationships, develop social skills and respect for others and understand appropriate behaviour.

### Four Specific Areas:

- **Literacy** – through the daily phonics lesson children link sounds and letters and begin to read and write. In addition, there is a daily literacy lesson and planned opportunities for guided reading. Fine motor skills development and handwriting are also formally taught and practised daily.
- **Mathematics** – through the daily maths lesson, this includes short chunks of whole class teaching and focused maths experiences, which include conversations about number, 'everyday' maths and oral rehearsal of number sequences and patterns. Focus number of the week in place during the morning routine.
- **Understanding the World** – through child-initiated and adult-led activities children are guided to make sense of their physical world and their community. Through the children's personal experiences, we facilitate and develop their knowledge and sense of the world around them. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. We aim to enrich and widen children's vocabulary that will support later reading comprehension.
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – Through daily opportunities children will engage with arts and creativity. Children will explore a wide range of media and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

## 5. How children learn

At CPS we promote the characteristics of effective learning and support children to learn through:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Where appropriate we link these skills to the school values.

Teachers make professional judgments about the balance between activities led or guided by adults and those initiated by children. This balance shifts towards more whole class teaching opportunities as children move towards Year 1.

**Adult directed activities** are those which are directed by the adult and can be useful in the teaching of specific skills such as demonstrating how to use tools or equipment. In Nursery, children are introduced to group sessions for phonics, maths, story and rhyme time.

In Reception classes, daily teaching of literacy and maths starts from the outset and is a key part of our curriculum.

**Adult guided activities** are those which the adult initiates. These activities are often playful or experiential. They are open ended and should motivate a keen interest in learning, following the children's interests.

**Child-initiated experiences** take place within an environment that both adults and children set up based on the child's own motivation and remains under the child's control. Adults facilitate children's learning and achieving of next steps through high quality interactions.

## 6. Enabling Environments

Children have daily access to well-planned stimulating learning environments, indoors and outdoors. These environments give children opportunities to be active and physical and also quiet and reflective.

**The Early Years environment (Nursery and Reception)** – inside and outside is viewed as a whole, providing different areas where resources, materials and activities are easily accessible and used independently.

The areas of learning in the environment should include:

- Role play
- Writing opportunities across the setting
- Creative area
- Small world
- Construction
- Fine motor opportunities
- Maths
- Gross motor opportunities
- Reading area
- Music and performance area
- Investigation area
- Water area
- Sand kitchen
- Mud kitchen
- Mini Woodland area

At CPS, we believe that outdoor activities are essential as they provide opportunities for the acquisition of gross motor skills, taking risks, fostering a love of nature and the environment, large play, which is not possible indoors, learning experiences suited to the outdoor environment and physical fitness.

In addition to this the children will have access to the Mini Woodland area on a weekly basis to:

- foster a relationship with nature through regular personal experiences in order to develop long-term, environmentally sustainable attitudes and practices in staff, children and the wider community.
- encourage the use natural resources for inspiration, to enable ideas and to encourage intrinsic motivation.
- develop, where appropriate, the physical, social, cognitive, linguistic, emotional, social and spiritual aspects of the child.

## **7. Target Setting**

At CPS we believe that progress and attainment matters. Teachers need to know what children's starting points are and should have a clear idea of where pupils need to be by the end of the year. Through the year teachers review each child's targets to support their attainment and progress and were appropriate identify intervention groups.

**Ensuring high expectations** - Teachers have high expectations to all children and make appropriate changes and adjustments to ensure that all pupils achieve their best.

**Recording and reporting** - Regular communication and reporting to parents is important. This goes hand in hand with the work both formal and informal that happens to create a relationship with parents.

- Parents will be encouraged to review and interact with each child's learning journal, which charts their learning and development submitting their own observations regularly.
- Parents receive a baseline report, and two reports of attainment based on the child's birthday month.
- Parents are invited to parents' evenings to add their views on the child's report and to discuss next steps; however, the school has an open-door policy and parents are welcome to talk to teachers at the start and end of the school day.

## **8. Assessment**

Assessment plays an important part in helping teachers recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process.

Assessment is based on ongoing observation which records the progress each child is making from a baseline on entry. All staff contribute to the observations and an individual child profile is built up which informs the EYFS Profile - the statutory assessment at the end of the reception year.



At CPS we use OPAL – Observation of Play and Learning to assess children in EYFS. Opal is a model of **effective**, **meaningful** and **principled** assessment of young children's learning.

By **effective**, we mean a method of assessment that ensures that all children are supported in reaching significant milestones.

By **meaningful**, we mean that the observations made inform our everyday practice and curriculum. By gaining an insight into children's thinking, feeling and needs we can plan our environment and actions to provide future possibilities for learning.

By **principled**, we mean that our focus is on observing to understand children.

Both in Nursery and Reception, children are assessed against the milestones for their age and depending on their birth month.

### **Nursery Assessment**

The Nursery Lead makes regular summative assessments throughout the Nursery Year across all aspects of learning and development appropriate for the child's age.

The Nursery Lead uses the following tools:

- **Baseline Assessment** – to be completed by 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2021 and shared with parents via Class Dojo. Baseline assessment is based on the child's age milestones. This will establish the starting point and areas of strength and weakness as well as identifying three individual targets.
- **Data assessment** – Assessment to be completed based on the child's birthday month on OPAL assessment spread sheet.
- **Learning Journals** – each child has a paper learning journal to record their learning and development. Short individual observations are added regularly.
- **Observations** – all Nursery staff contribute to each child's assessment by supporting the nursery lead to complete written reports and writing group observations of the children's play and learning. Group observations are shared with parents via Class Dojo.
- **2 Year Progress-Check** – to be completed before the child's third birthday and based on the child's milestones. Report is shared via Class Dojo.

### **Reception Assessment**

The class teacher makes regular summative assessments throughout the Reception Year across all aspects of learning and development and tracks children's progress in each aspect of the three prime areas and each aspect of the specific areas (17 aspects in all). The teacher uses the following tools:

- **Reception Baseline Assessment** – to be completed in the first three weeks of the term.
- **Teacher baseline assessment** – to be completed by 1st of October 2021 and shared with parents via Class Dojo. Baseline assessment is based on the child's age milestones. This will establish the starting point and areas of strength and weakness as well as identifying three individual targets.

- **Data assessment** – Assessment to be completed based on the child's birthday month on OPAL assessment spread sheet.
- **Learning Journals** – each child has a paper learning journal to record their learning and development. Short individual observations are added regularly.
- **Observations** – all Reception staff contribute to each child's assessment by supporting the nursery lead to complete written reports and writing group observations of the children's play and learning. Group observations are shared with parents via Class Dojo.

## 9. Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

The level of progress children are expected to attain by the end of the Reception Year is defined by 17 early learning goals.

- **Communication and Language**

ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding

ELG: Speaking

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

ELG: Self-Regulation

ELG: Managing Self

ELG: Building Relationships

- **Physical Development**

ELG: Gross Motor Skills

ELG: Fine Motor Skills

- **Literacy**

ELG: Comprehension

ELG: Word Reading

ELG: Writing

- **Mathematics**

ELG: Number

ELG: Numerical Patterns

- **Understanding the World**

ELG: Past and Present

ELG: People, Culture and Communities

ELG: The Natural World

- **Expressive Arts and Design**

ELG: Creating with Materials

ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive

Teachers indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). (See table)

Assessment Rating	EYFS Judgement
1	Emerging (anything below ELG)
2	Expected (attaining best fit ELG)
A	Not assessed <i>Long absence, late arrival in summer term etc.</i>

*Table – EYFS judgement and scores to assess the child's level of development*

There are 17 ELGs. A child can therefore score a minimum of 17 points, or a maximum of 34 points. The national measure will be the average of every child's total point score.

### **Proposed measure for 'Good Level of Development' (GLD):**

Children will be defined as having reached a good level of development at the end of the EYFS if they achieve at least the 'expected' (i.e. a score of '2') in the ELGs for:

- All three prime areas (PSED, PD and Communication and Language) – there are seven ELGs across the three prime areas.
- The specific areas of Literacy and Mathematics – there are five ELGs across these two areas.

## **10. Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework has clear guidance on the health and safety requirements including ratio and capacity arrangements for EYFS. In addition, we have whole school policies in place that meet EYFS requirements such as:

- Safeguarding
- Intimate care
- Health and safety
- Allergies and medical
- SEND
- Admissions

- Complaints
- ICT and technology
- E Online safety
- Educational Visits and Learning Beyond The Classroom
- Confidentiality, data protection and information sharing (including staff use of photographs and mobile devices)
- Late collection

## **11. Staffing**

A robust Recruitment Policy is in place, which aims to ensure that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable. Upon employment, all EYFS staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection and health and safety.

Staff will be supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience. All members of staff who have contact with children and families will be supervised by the EYFS lead. The supervision will provide opportunities for staff to:

- Discuss any issues, particularly concerning the development or wellbeing of children, including any child protection concerns.
- Identify solutions to address issues.
- Receive coaching to improve their effectiveness.

There will be at least one member of staff on the school premises at all times who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate. In the Nursery, one member of staff who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate is always on site. The school will organise PFA training to be renewed every three years. The list of staff who hold PFA certificates can be found in the school medical room.

The school provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'.

In the Nursery ratio is as follows:

- 2 Years old is 1:4
- 3 - 4 Years old is 1:8

## **12. Equality and Impact Statement**

We will do all we can to ensure that this policy does not discriminate, directly or indirectly. We shall do this through regular monitoring and evaluation of our policies. On review we shall assess and consult relevant stakeholders on the likely impact of our policies on the promotion of all aspects of equality, as laid down in the Equality Act (2010). This will include, but not necessarily be limited to: race; gender; sexual orientation; disability; ethnicity; religion; cultural

beliefs and pregnancy/maternity. We will use an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment to monitor the impact of all our policies and the policy may be amended as a result of this assessment.

### **13. Monitoring and review**

This policy is reviewed annually by the Governing Body and the head teacher. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff. All members of staff directly involved with the EYFS are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction. The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2023.