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Coton-in-the-Elms C of E Primary School

EYFS Policy

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Reviewed by: Mrs J Smith and Miss Knowles

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1. Overview

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full 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. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.” Statutory Framework for the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, most children join Nursery when they are three. All our children join the Reception class in the September following their fourth birthday.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

The guidance in this policy is taken from:

- EYFS Development Matters
- Anglesey Primary Academy
- Firs Hill Primary School
- Measham Primary School

2. A Unique Child

At Coton-in-the-Elms Primary School we have the philosophy that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, 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/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children at Coton-in-the-Elms Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children

from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)

Welfare

"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."

At Coton-in-the-Elms Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

3. Positive Relationships

At Coton-in-the-Elms Primary School we understand that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.
- The children having the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school through visits to the setting during transition week.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Parents are invited to attend 'Fly on the Wall' sessions throughout the first term.
- Offering parents opportunities to talk about their child's progress and targets through assertive mentoring meetings with the parent, child and teacher at least once a term.
- Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress twice yearly. This includes a short report on the characteristics of learning.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: assemblies, Sports Day etc;
- Regular updates on Tapestry to keep parents abreast of what is happening in school. Parents are encouraged to note any observations of progress seen at home and to share these with the class teacher on Tapestry also.

Local Community and Understanding the World

Throughout the year the children will receive visits from members of the local community to support their learning within the topic. The children will also have the opportunity to go on several educational class trips and visits, also linking to their topic work. Children will be introduced to media (film clips, non fiction texts) which introduces new concepts into real life contexts. We aim to enhance and develop the children's awareness of other countries and cultures through exploring their celebrations throughout the year.

Effective Teaching

The children are encouraged to play an active role in their learning experiences. The adults in the classroom ask the children what they are interested in and what they would like to learn about. The children are supported when developing new skills and if they require additional resources to support their learning. The children take part in a 'WOW Day' at the start of each new topic which engages and excites them in each half term's learning focus. At the end of the topic the children have a day to celebrate all their learning and bring their new knowledge of the topic altogether.

4. Enabling Environments

At Coton-in-the-Elms Primary School, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS follows the schools creative curriculum which is based on topics. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning. However the teacher may alter these plans in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of formal and informal observations. Staff use iPads to complete 'snap shot' (short) observations and photographs to demonstrate children using skills independently in provision. The iPads are also used for photographic evidence of the children completing activities and for the staff to share with parents what their children have been doing via Tapestry throughout the week. Each child has a learning journey which is either online (Tapestry) or a book, all significant observations are recorded here along with examples of the children's work and parental contributions.

At the end of the Reception year in school, all children are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals and this is recorded onto the Early Years Profile. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's and a short report on the characteristics of learning. The results of the children's progress is shared with the Year 1 teacher with a short commentary of each child looking at their ELG'S and characteristics of effective learning to help create a smooth transition into the next year.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. This attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment has different areas where the children can be active, quiet or rest. The classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The adults in the classroom regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the learning zones and make adaptations where necessary. The EYFS classes have their own enclosed outdoor area. These have a very positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the chance to explore, use their senses, develop their language and be physically active. We plan activities and resources for the children to access both indoors and outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

Continuous Provision is set up around the classroom, which is full of multiple open-ended, practical learning opportunities. Children are encouraged and supported to think both creatively and imaginatively to explore how the resources can be used and adapted. The provision is enhanced with additional resources each week after making observations and basing the changes around what has been seen.

Adult led activities are aimed at being practical and based on real life circumstances where possible. In these activities children are supported to develop problem solving skills and encouraged to work alongside others as much as possible. These adult led activities increase throughout the year as the children's concentration develops.

Healthy Children

The children will have plenty of opportunity for physical activity throughout the school day, they have access to an outdoor area with multiple resources to suit all interests and needs. The children take part in two PE lessons a week as soon as they start school. There is a designated snack table that has fruit and vegetable snacks for the children to access throughout the day, these snacks are updated and changed each day. All children are encouraged to bring their own water bottle in, this is to be filled with water only and to be taken home with the children each afternoon so it can be cleaned and replenished. Children can access their water bottles throughout the day. Children can bring small amounts of change in to school to buy a healthy snack throughout the week (Monday-Thursday). As a healthy school we encourage all our children to make good food choices where possible. On Friday's children can bring their own snack from home, this can be more of a 'treat,' as a school we have Freedom Friday.

5. Learning and Development

At Coton-in-the-Elms Primary School, we know that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape the educational provision in Early Years Settings. These are divided into prime and specific areas. The three prime areas are important in developing children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.

Prime areas;

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

The other four areas are called specific areas. Through these the prime areas are strengthened further.

Specific areas;

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

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

6. Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy.

The Head of School and Foundation Stage Leader will be carrying out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. Copies of these scrutinies will be shared with the Governors.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the foundation stage leader and a member of the Governing body.

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