



Cheshire Academies Trust
Inspiring hearts and minds

CAT Early Years and Foundation Stage Policy

Next Update: Autumn 2024

Quality of the Curriculum

Introduction

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their full potential. Our EYFS practitioners greatly value the importance of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development, and understand responsibilities in ensuring that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

Aims and Objectives

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation and seeks to provide:

- **Quality and consistency**, so that 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.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2016
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2021) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
- STA (2020) 'Early years foundation stage assessment and reporting arrangements (ARA)'
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018

Teaching and Learning

Planning the Curriculum

Educational provision and practice within the early years will be centred around the requirements of the DfE's '[Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage](#)'. The EYFS principles which guide our work are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults
- Learning and Development

The four principles enable teaching and learning to reflect the children's rich and personalised experiences. The curriculum is planned upon continual assessments of the children's differing needs and experiences. Short term plans are devised by the class teacher using the EYFS framework. The pupils are encouraged to initiate their own learning and the teachers draw upon the interests and achievements to plan an enriched and varied curriculum. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs and focuses on the children's next steps. Planning encompasses a range of child-initiated, adult-initiated and adult-led tasks both indoors and outdoors. The environment plays a key role in the children's learning. The areas are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment

and resources independently. The EYFS has its own enclosed outdoor areas. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors.

The EYFS is split into 2 areas of Learning and Development. These include the Prime Areas of learning and the Specific Areas of learning.

The Prime Areas of learning include:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development
Physical Development
Communication and Language

The Specific Areas of learning include:

Literacy
Mathematics
Understanding the World
Expressive Arts and Design

Prime areas are fundamental, work together, and move through to support development in all other areas. The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge. The Prime and Specific areas, together with the Characteristics of Effective Learning are equally important and depend on each other. These characteristics underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner. The Characteristics of effective Learning are:

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

Assessment and Recording

Assessment plays an important part in helping the school to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support.

The school will use three main forms of assessment:

- Ongoing formative assessment – to inform teaching on a day-to-day basis
- In-setting summative assessment – to understand a child's performance at the end of a period of teaching
- National statutory summative assessment – to understand a child's performance in relation to national expectations and comparisons

Ongoing formative assessments will be used to assess the day-to-day learning and development of children in the EYFS. EYFS Practitioners will interact and observe children to understand their achievements, interests and learning needs, and will use this information to shape the educational experiences for each child.

Parents will be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development, and EYFS practitioners will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents.

In line with statutory requirements, the school will undertake a summative assessment of each child's development at certain stages:

- Progress check at age two – a short written summary of children's development in the prime areas.
- Reception Baseline Assessment – a short assessment which is taken within the first six weeks of a child starting Reception.
- The EYFS Profile – a comprehensive assessment completed at the end of the EYFS to provide a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, attainment against the early learning goals (ELGs), and their readiness for Year 1.

Progress check at age two

Between the ages of two and three, children's progress will be reviewed, and teachers will provide a written summary to parents.

This progress check will identify children's strengths and any areas where their progress is less than expected.

If there are any significant emerging concerns, or a child is identified with SEND, the school will work with parents and relevant professionals to develop a targeted plan to support the child's future learning and development.

The written summary provided to parents will highlight:

- Areas in which the child is progressing well.
- Areas in which some additional support might be needed.
- Areas where there is a concern that a child may have a developmental delay.
- The activities and strategies the school intends to adopt to address any issues or concerns.

The school will encourage parents to share information from the progress check with other relevant professionals, e.g. health visitors.

If a child moves to a new provider between the ages of two and three, the setting where they have spent the most time will complete the progress check.

Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)

Within the first six weeks of children starting school, staff will conduct the RBA.

The RBA:

- Is an activity-based, age-appropriate assessment of children's ability in early mathematics, literacy, communication and language.
- Is expected to take approximately 20 minutes per child.
- Can be paused and completed in more than one sitting.
- Will be administered by a Reception teacher, Reception TA or suitably qualified practitioner, e.g. the SENCO.
- Will be used to create a baseline for school-level progress measures and will measure the progress children make from Reception until the end of Year 6.

When carrying out assessment and reporting functions, the school will administer the RBA in compliance with the provisions outlined within both the 'Reception baseline assessment and reporting arrangements (ARA)' document, and Annex B of the 'Early years foundation stage framework.'

After completion of the RBA, EYFS practitioners will receive a series of short, narrative statements that tell them how pupils performed in the assessment – the school will use these to inform their teaching approaches.

The school will ensure that confidentiality of assessment materials is maintained and follow guidance on how to keep materials secure when they are received. The RBS assessment materials will not be used for any other purpose.

For children with visual and hearing impairments the school will provide modified and adapted assessment materials. Where it is felt that the RBA is inaccessible to a child, the school will consider disapplying individual children who, despite the using access arrangements, are unable to participate. Parents will be involved in these discussions.

The headteacher will sign a 'Headteacher Declaration Form (HDF)' once each academic year and ensure that the RBA is being delivered in line with statutory requirements and the HDF.

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

To summarise and describe children's learning and development at the end of the EYFS the school must complete an EYFSP for each child, unless, in line with DfE guidance, an exemption in line with section 5 of this policy applies.

This assessment will take place in the Summer term (no later than 30 June of that term) of the academic year when a child reaches 5 years old.

When carrying out assessment and reporting functions, the school will complete the EYFSP in compliance with the provisions outlined within the 'EYFS assessment and reporting arrangements (ARA)' document, and the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage.'

The school will make staff aware of the need to ensure that the assessments provide a reliable, valid and accurate judgement of each child's progress at the end of the EYFS.

The school will assess each child against the ELGs and provide a commentary describing each child's skills and abilities against the three characteristics of effective learning:

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

Throughout the year EYFS practitioners will collect and collate materials, observational records and information within a child's Learning Journey. Profile judgements will be made on the basis of the cumulative evidence recorded over the course of the year. Evidence may include:

- Knowledge of the child.
- Photographs.
- Written and/or drawn evidence.
- Planned and un-planned observations of day-to-day interactions.
- Video, tape, audio or electronic recordings.
- The child's view of his or her own learning.
- Information from parents or other relevant adults.

EYFS Practitioners will use this evidence to judge whether a child's learning is:

- Not yet reaching expected levels (emerging).
- Meeting expected levels (expected).

Accurate assessment requires a two-way flow of information between settings and home, and the school will ensure that processes are in place to consult parents about their child's development and achievements at home.

Data collection and submission

The school will liaise with the LA to agree on a system to collect and submit profile data.

In accordance with the Childcare (Provision of Information About Young Children) (England) Regulations 2009, the school will provide the EYFS profile data to the LA upon request, unless the Secretary of State has granted an exemption from the EYFS learning and development requirements.

The school recognises its responsibility for submitting accurate, reliable and high quality EYFS profile data to the LA. To achieve this, the school will ensure that:

- Staff understand their setting's systems for recording children's profile outcomes and submitting data to their LA.
- EYFS Practitioners clearly record EYFS profile information.
- Staff responsible for data collection and submission understand the nature of EYFS profile data.
- Data is transcribed from their setting's records to electronic records accurately.
- Entered data is checked against what was originally provided by the practitioner.
- Information that accompanies EYFS profile data is accurate, for example postcode and unique pupil number.
- Headteachers check and sign off data before it is submitted to their LA.

Exemptions

The school will participate in the assessment arrangements within the EYFS ARA, unless:

- The Secretary of State has granted an exemption from the profile for the provision.
- The child is continuing in EYFS provision beyond the year in which they turn five.

- The child has attended the provision for an insufficient amount of time for an adequate judgement to be made before the profile submission deadline – professional judgements will be used to determine whether an accurate assessment can be made.

Where a child is exempt or an assessment is not appropriate, this will be recorded as 'A' (no assessment) for each ELG in the child's profile return.

Where a child remains in EYFS provision beyond the end of the academic year in which they turn five, the assessment will continue throughout the child's time at the school; however, the EYFS profile will only be completed once, at the end of the year before the child moves to KS1.

EYFSP Moderation

Moderation of EYFS profile assessments should be a collaborative process with colleagues. This supports the quality assurance of teacher assessment judgements and provides a valuable opportunity for professional development. Within each school, teachers can informally agree assessment judgements with others, for example discussing observations about a child's development with other EYFS teachers and practitioners or a year 1 teacher. This does not require collecting or recording unnecessary evidence, rather any internal or peer-to-peer moderation conversations should as far as possible, be based on the teacher's own knowledge of their children. It is important for teachers to build a shared understanding of the ELGs and the EYFS framework. Schools may wish to work together so that teachers can share experiences and develop their assessment skills but CAT will facilitate time for Trust schools to undertake a moderation process together as a collective or in small groups.

All records will be kept in accordance with our **Data Protection Policy**.

How the results are used

The main purpose of the EYFS profile is to provide a reliable, valid and accurate assessment of individual children at the end of the EYFS. The school will use the EYFS profile data to:

- Inform parents about their child's development against the ELGs and the characteristics of their learning.
- Support a smooth transition to KS1 by informing the professional dialogue between EYFS and KS1 teachers.
- Help Year 1 teachers plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.
- Monitor and evaluate school performance by comparing our results against local and national results.
- Analyse the attainment and achievement of individuals and groups of children, for example boys and girls and summer born children.

The DfE uses the EYFS profiles to provide an accurate national data set relating to levels of child development at the end of the EYFS.

Reporting to Parents (Parent/Carers 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, as well as their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Meeting with parents prior to the child starting school.
- Creating an 'open door policy' and encouraging parents to talk to staff about any concerns that they have or to discuss their child's progress;
- Using the child's learning journey to inform parents of what the children are learning and the progress they are making.
- Encouraging parents to contribute to the child's learning journey by including observations from home and family life.

- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents for example: Open afternoons, Subject workshops, Class assemblies, Sports Day, Coffee mornings etc;

An end of year report is written informing parents of progress at the end of their Nursery year. This is to ensure a smooth transition into Reception. At the end of the Reception year, a report is written informing parents of progress and attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This documents whether children have reached an emerging or expected level of attainment against the early learning goals. Children are also assessed against the characteristics of effective learning.

Inclusion

We believe in creating and nurturing an inclusive environment where every child is valued, respected, and provided with equal opportunities to thrive. We are fully committed to promoting inclusion of all children, whatever their age, ability, gender, race, culture, religious beliefs or background. In our setting, we value differences and children will be encouraged to learn about different cultures, languages and abilities. Staff receive professional development on inclusive practices to ensure that they are well equipped to support the diverse needs of children in our care.

SEND

SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the school's SENCO. The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.

We meet the needs of all children by:

- providing resources that reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- using a range of teaching strategies based on their individual needs
- ensuring access to every activity is safe
- using Teaching Assistants to provide 1:1 or small group support to targeted individuals

Further details can be found in our Special Educational Needs Policy.

Transition

Into Nursery

When a child begins nursery, transition is tailored around their needs. In September the children begin settling in sessions in their room. The children are allocated a Key Person who is the family point of contact.

From Pre-school / Feeder settings

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition.

Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express.

The children are invited to play sessions in the Reception class where staff can begin to build relationships with children. ~~speech and language judgements and assessments.~~

Members of staff make contact with feeder settings, including childminders, to ensure continuity and coherence by sharing information about the children's interests and achievements.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

The Reception and Year 1 staff work closely to ensure children have a positive transition into Year 1.

Reception staff share information including the Early Years Profile and Characteristics of Learning with the Year 1 teachers. This informs Year 1 about each child's stage of development and learning needs, and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Move up session – the children visit the Year 1 class for the morning and complete 'get to know you' activities.

Meet the Teacher-parents and careers are encouraged to meet the Year 1 teacher.

Health and Safety

Teachers ensure that all materials are appropriate for the age group. Risk assessments are in place for the indoor and outdoor learning environments.

Safeguarding

All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well.

Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the CAT Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training. Staff will receive regular safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures and have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues.

Achievement and Standards

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Foundation stage leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of provision in the Foundation Stage.

Leadership and Management

Continuous Professional Development

All subject leaders are given the opportunity to attend LA INSET specifically related to developing their role in leadership and management. Whole school and individual INSET will be planned in line with the priorities in the SSDP.

CAT EYFS Cluster meetings

EYFS Reception staff from CAT schools meet half termly to share outstanding practise, share information, update policies and moderate.

Role of the Subject Leader

The role of the Foundation Stage Leader is undertaken in line with school policy.

Role of the Trust Board and LGBs

The Trust Board will be responsible for approving the policy while the Local Governing Bodies will monitor its effectiveness and impact on practice.