



Kernow Learning
Building Excellent Schools Together

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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| Version number: | V1 |
| Date adopted by Governors: | 9 th May 2023 |
| Scheduled review date: | May 2024 |
| Statutory or Best Practice policy: | Statutory |
| Appendices: | No |
| School or Trust policy: | School |

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Introduction

During their time at Charlestown School every child will be given the best possible start to their education. Our school's vision statement is "*Inspire, Enrich and Enlighten*". We aim to provide all pupils with opportunities that inspire, enrich and encourage the development of skills that will enable them to become independent and successful learners.

EYFS Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.



- To provide opportunities for children to make choices and become independent in their learning in a variety of safe and secure environments both indoors and outdoors.
- To ensure a smooth and well-planned transition into Year One at the end of the EYFS.

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the **statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021**.

Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage has four specific themes:

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

This policy explains how our curriculum practice is underpinned by these four themes.

A Unique Child

At Charlestown School we recognise that every child is a competent 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 encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

The Unique Child and Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals. All children and their families at Charlestown School are valued and treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or ability. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of their life experiences when planning for learning.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage 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 of 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.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Positive Relationships

At Charlestown School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. This centres on developing good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

Positive Relationships and Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Offering both parents and children the opportunity to spend time in the Early Years Foundation Stage before starting at school.
- Operating an open-door policy for parents with any queries/ concerns about their child.
- Regularly sharing the class 'Learning Journey' via Tapestry and valuing the on-going contributions to these from parents through their Tapestry uploads.
- Inviting parents and families in regularly to share in their child's learning through 'Sharing' afternoons.
- Offering at two parent/teacher consultation evenings per year.
- Sending a more detailed report on their child's attainment and progress early in the Spring term which is then followed by an opportunity for parents to meet teachers to discuss targets and areas for development.

Enabling Environments

At Charlestown School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development. Through observation of learning and interactions with others, we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. The planning in EYFS is shaped by the educational programs of the statutory EYFS framework. These plans are flexible so that teachers can respond to the needs, achievements and interests of the children and this is indicated on weekly planning. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning.



The Learning Environment

The Early Years Foundation Stage classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely, safely and independently. Each classroom has defined learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Early Years Foundation Stage has outdoor areas and children are able to free-flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Being outdoors offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. They are able to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities, learning opportunities and resources for both the inside and outside environments to enable the children to develop in all of the areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At Charlestown School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These are:

• Prime Areas:

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

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These are:

Specific Areas:

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

There are three characteristics of effective teaching and learning which help us to focus on and understand how children learn. These are:



- **Playing and exploring – Observing how children engage with their learning**
 - Finding out and exploring
 - Using what they already know in their play
 - Being willing to have a go

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. We deliver learning for all of the areas of learning through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

- **Active Learning - Observing how children are motivated to learn**
 - Being involved and concentrating
 - Keep trying
 - Enjoying and achieving what they set out to do

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

- **Creating and Thinking Critically– Observing how children are thinking**
 - Having their own ideas
 - Using what they already know to learn new things
 - Choosing ways to do things and finding new way

Creating and thinking critically relates to how young children make sense of the world around them by looking for patterns and gradually developing their understanding by processing repeated experiences.

Children are given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. The adults working in the Early Years Foundation Stage support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are encouraged to use the indoors and the outdoors to extend their learning.

From a very early age, our children are encouraged to learn the skills they need to take on the challenges they will encounter in their life. They are taught and learn important life skills. They are encouraged to investigate, to take risks and to be creative and critical with their learning.





Resources

We review our resources termly to ensure that they are:

- Suitable to meet the needs of the children
- In a safe and clean condition for use
- Appropriate for all areas of learning

At Charlestown School we place great emphasis on the importance of keeping our practice up to date. We ensure that **all** staff are kept up to date with changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage as well as current practice and pedagogy. We regularly attend external and in-house training updates. Our Teaching Assistants attend training that is held within school and led by a member of the Senior Management Team. The teachers within the Early Years Foundation Stage attend courses, updates and conferences relevant to the Early Years. EYFS work is moderated through Trust moderation. In addition to this they meet regularly as a team to share practice through professional dialogue that is focused on the practice and development of the Foundation Stage.

Teaching and Learning

At Charlestown Primary School we recognise and are guided by the Ofsted definition of teaching. This definition includes; modelling language; explaining and demonstrating; encouraging and questioning; facilitating; setting up the environment and providing resources, taking account of children's interests, setting boundaries and routines; assessing what children know, understand and can do; and monitoring progress.

Charlestown Primary School is a two-form entry school. Each Early Years class has a full-time teacher and Teaching Assistant. In addition, both classes have a full time Teaching Assistant. We also have a Teaching Assistant designated for Speech and Language. This Teaching Assistant follows guidance from Speech Therapists to support children's speech needs. All EYFS children are screened through the program Language link and the designated Teaching Assistant delivers the Language Link interventions to the identified children across the cohort.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more/longer adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

Play

We believe that all children have the right to play and that play is important and fundamental to their development. Through play, children need to feel safe to make mistakes and have the confidence to try out and test their ideas in order to develop confidence and self-esteem. We understand that it is vital to



treat all children with equal respect. Each child has his/her individual needs and practitioners aim to meet the needs of all children in an inclusive way. We encourage a culture of listening to children, respecting and valuing their needs and interests. Children are given time and space to become engrossed, work in depth and complete activities. We use risk assessments on a daily basis as a positive tool to enable children to develop their responses and understanding of the world around them.

Providing Appropriate Opportunities For Play

We ensure that children have plenty of opportunities to play in a secure environment with effective support from caring adults. We use the classroom and our outdoor area to enable children to access both planned, structured play activities and self-initiated, spontaneous play activities. We achieve this through the following:

- Children are engaged in relevant, exciting and absorbing play opportunities which promote meaningful learning experiences.
- Observing and planning is used to continually consider the interests of the children and their individual developmental needs.
- In response to the EYFS reforms September 2021 adults engage, play and interact with children, modelling language and vocabulary.
- We provide challenging and stimulating play experiences inside and outside the setting and value these environments equally.
- We provide and value an equal balance of adult led and child initiated opportunities in all seven areas of learning. Children do not make a distinction between play and learning and neither do the practitioners.

Assessment

Our assessment of pupil progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage is based on observations as well as questioning, listening and discussion with individual children. In this way, we are able to make professional judgments about what children have learnt and what their next steps need to be. Teachers and Teaching Assistants meet to discuss children's learning and any concerns.

Assessments are recorded formally four times a year: on entry/Baseline, Autumn 2, Spring 2 and the End of year Statutory Assessments. On entry to school we make initial assessments of what children already know, understand and can do. Each term we track each child's progress using

Development Matters as a guide. In addition to this, since September 2021 all EYFS children complete the Reception Baseline assessment, this needs to be completed and sent off in the first 6 weeks.

At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the child's progress is recorded on to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG). Teachers identify whether the child is '**emerging**' in an area or has made the '**expected**' level of



development. Parents and Carers receive a report in the Summer term which indicates if the child has met the ELG. During the summer term each child's achievements within the EYFS are summarised and data submitted to the LA as part of the statutory assessment.

Parents are encouraged to upload their own proud moments onto Tapestry so that staff build up a clear picture of each child's talents and abilities. This showcases any learning and achievements that their child has done at home. This could be swimming, getting dressed by themselves, writing their name or reading their new book. Under the new EYFS reforms staff only make observations of WOW moments and when progress is made. Staff spend more time interacting and playing with the children. Weekly highlights are sent via Tapestry to all parents on a Friday. The highlights show photographs and give a brief description of the weeks learning and the new vocabulary the children have learnt.

Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. Risk assessments are in place and shared with all members of staff. Staff assess risks daily and monitor the environment and resources to ensure the safety of the children.

In most instances it is the Class Teachers who are key workers for all children. Although this is flexible to meet the needs of the individual children and families.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of a nutritious snack and lunch. We follow set procedures when children become ill or have an accident and keep an intimate care log of children who cannot manage their own personal hygiene. Children who wear nappies have an Intimate Care Plan which is shared with and signed by parents.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the Early Years by talking to children about:

- The importance of brushing your teeth
- Encouraging children to drink water at school

We also teach the children about different factors that support their health and wellbeing including regular physical activity sensible amounts of screen time, a good sleep routine and being a safe pedestrian.

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. The safeguarding of children is everyone's responsibly and all staff take the necessary steps to keep children safe and well. Any concerns are logged and shared with the EYFS lead who is one of the Deputy Safeguarding leads within the school.

Please see our separate policies and procedures on Health and Safety and Child Protection.



Admission

Our school follows the Cornwall Primary School Admission Arrangements as set out in the annual admissions booklet given to the parents of prospective pupils in the Autumn Term. In our Academy we have an agreed admission number of 60 children in Foundation Stage. We offer a full time place to all children.

Parent Partnerships

At Charlestown School we believe that parents should be seen as vital partners in a child's education, and we feel that engaging and working with parents is essential in order for children to succeed at learning. We aim to make contact with all parents during the year prior to admission through prearranged meetings, information evenings, and the 'Welcome' sessions. Parents are given clear information about all events and children's learning through the School Prospectus, regular newsletters, the school website, schools coms service and regular letters from the teacher. We provide parents with Topic newsletters. Parents are also able to communicate with staff on a daily basis either face to face at drop off, via Class dojo or by ringing the office to make an appointment.

Parental involvement is valued and welcomed with plenty of opportunities for co-operation and collaboration, such as helping out in our classrooms and on trips. We provide a full induction and training and ensure that all our staff are DBS checked before volunteering in our school.

We encourage parents to become actively involved in their children's learning by sharing curriculum information with them, and giving them plenty of opportunities to share information, experiences, thoughts, concerns and resources with us.

Community Partnerships

Our school has close links with the local pre-school/playgroup/nurseries. They are:

- Naturally Learning Nursery
- Happy Days Nursery
- Baby Bugs Nursery
- Local small pre schools
- Local Childminders



We foster positive links with all providers by visiting them on a regular basis, particularly during the Summer Term, where the Foundation Stage teachers read stories and play games with the children. We also invite these settings into the Academy to share key events across the year such as the Foundation Stage Christmas Play and sports day.

Starting at the Academy

During the Autumn Term there are regular Tours of the School held to showcase our school. In the autumn term Stay and Play sessions are held for pre-schoolers. Our 'Welcome' sessions begin in the Summer Term. These provide opportunities for the children to visit the Foundation Stage classrooms with their parents and to spend time playing and getting to know the Foundation Stage staff.

Many factors are taken into consideration when allocating children to individual classes: the ratio of boys and girls, ratio of Autumn, Spring and Summer birthdays and friendship groups.

In July the parents are invited to an information session when they meet with all the staff who will be with their child. They are given information about routines, are able to discuss any concerns they may have, and are given information about what the forthcoming year will involve for their child.

In the summer term EYFS staff make home visits to the new families to get the children and start parent partnerships.

Transition to Year One

The EYFS aims to provide Year One teachers and parents with reliable and accurate information about each child's level of development as they reach the end of the EYFS. This will enable the teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet all children's needs, to support their continued achievement more fully.

At Charlestown School we ensure that our children are well prepared for transition between all classes. The transition from the Foundation Stage to Year One is part of a broader whole-school approach to achieving good curricular continuity and progression in pupil's learning. In addition to the transition mornings, where the children spend sessions with their new teacher, Foundation stage children spend time with the Year One teachers during outdoor play opportunities throughout the Summer Term. This enables Year One teachers to build in strategies that will help and support the children and provides an opportunity for the children to familiarise themselves with the Year One staff and to prepare themselves for the next stage in their learning. Children with additional needs receive a more personalised transition package to support their transition into Year 1.