



Kennett Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Introduction

Kennett Primary School is a fantastic place to learn and grow. As a community, we pride ourselves on our reputation as a friendly, family orientated school. Staff and families work hard to build strong relationships so that all children are well placed to experience success. Our Early Years staff show incredible enthusiasm and prioritise building fabulous relationships with the children in their care, allowing them to form a secure base from which to explore and learn. Our practitioners offer an outstanding variety of activities, designed to support all areas of learning, allowing all our children to flourish in their own time.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- Children access a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Quality and consistency in teaching, planning and learning.
- Strong, close partnerships between school and home.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practise.

At Kennett Primary School, we aim to:

- Develop happy, engaged and motivated children who leave our unit with positive learning behaviours and a strong foundation in reading, writing and maths.
- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating and caring environment that is sensitive to the needs of all our children.
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum which gives our children the knowledge, skills and confidence to flourish as they progress through their school life and beyond.
- Value each child's achievements, using this knowledge to identify, plan and support children's next steps.
- Work with parents and carers to ensure that each child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Principles of learning

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is based on four principles which shape the practice in early years settings. These are outlined in the statutory framework for EYFS:

- **The unique child:** At Kennett Primary 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 and we value each child's individual approach to learning. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by those around them; we use praise, encouragement and rewards inline with our school's behaviour policy to nurture and develop positive learning attitudes, self-esteem and resilience
- **Positive relationships:** At Kennett Primary School we know that children need secure, safe relationships in order to become strong, confident, independent individuals. Our staff work extremely hard to promote and develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children in our care and their families.
- **Enabling environments:** At Kennett Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development. Our staff continuously offer an outstanding variety of stimulating activities both indoors and outdoors to support all areas of learning. We offer topic related activities alongside child-initiated activities which are then extended and developed through careful questioning and planning. The role of our 'discovery time' is to allow children the opportunity to explore their environment, choosing for themselves where and how they wish to learn.
- **Learning and development:** At Kennett Primary School we understand and appreciate that children learn in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development and we understand that they are interconnected. Our foundation stage unit is designed to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely at their own pace. We recognise that all children begin school with a wide variety of prior experiences. Our staff work hard to build on each child's starting point. Using a

holistic approach which values the children's interests, skills, abilities and parental support, we are able to successfully support every child's learning and development.

Characteristics of Learning

In planning and implementing the EYFS curriculum, we ensure that our environment offers a broad range of activities and experiences that reflect the three characteristics of effective learning. The characteristics of effective learning represent the active role children adopt as they follow their natural curiosity and push themselves to become more competent and understand more. These are: *playing and exploring*; *active learning* and *thinking creatively and critically*.

EYFS Curriculum

Our school follows the curriculum outlined in *Birth to 5 Matters 2021* and the *EYFS Statutory Framework 2021*.

The EYFS curriculum is currently made up of seven areas of learning and development. These areas are all important and are inter-connecting. The seven areas are further split into three prime and four specific areas.

Prime Areas

The three prime areas are particularly important for building a foundation for knowledge, igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning as well as forming relationships. These areas are:

- *Communication Language (CL)*
- *Physical Development (PD)*
- *Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)*

The prime areas are essential for developing early learning skills. Being successful in the prime areas supports children to achieve success in the specific areas.

Specific Areas

The four specific areas through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied are:

- *Literacy*
- *Mathematics*
- *Understanding the World (UTW)*
- *Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)*

Planning

Our planning incorporates the principles of the EYFS and is informed by quality observations, discussion and questioning. Input from all EYFS staff and children's families are valued to ensure that we consider individual interests, needs and levels of development within the cohort. We use a combination of planned topics alongside child-initiated learning to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which inspires and motivates our children. We use long term plans alongside weekly planning to ensure that there is breadth and depth in the curriculum. At Kennett Primary School we use *Birth to 5 Matters* alongside the *EYFS Statutory Framework 2021* to inform our topic planning and the children's next steps. All plans are a guide and can be altered in response to the needs and interests of our children.

Observations and Assessments

The Revised Statutory Framework for EYFS no longer requires practitioners to record observations in order to track children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals at the end of the reception year. Staff are now able to form judgements based on their knowledge of the children and on their expert professional judgement. However, quality observations for each child are conducted by all EYFS staff. We value observations from parents and carers as these help us to make a more rounded assessment of each child. Observations are recorded and assessed using the online learning journey *Early Essence*. They are a vital tool in helping adults to understand children's skills and identify areas for future development and support. Via effective,

well-timed observations, we are able to learn about children's interests, knowledge, needs, skills and the way in which they learn, allowing us to plan an aspirational curriculum to best support each individual child.

During the first half term in reception, children will now be required to complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment. This assessment alongside our own observations, form the child's starting point from which we then plan and create individual next steps. Assessments for each child are completed half termly throughout the year and involve observations and discussions with all EYFS staff. The data is then shared with the Senior Leadership Team. In the second half of the summer term, each child will be assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs). These detail the level of development a child is expected to have when moving into key stage one. This data will be shared with the child's next teacher and with parents in an end of term report. Parents will then be given the opportunity to discuss further with the class teacher should they wish to.

Our Environment

We currently have one classroom with a pre-school room attached. Our indoor area is organised with a number of defined learning areas where children are able to locate equipment and resources independently. Our main classroom leads out into a designated outdoor area which is an extension of our indoor space. We offer a selection of small group inputs and child initiated 'discovery time' throughout the day. During group input time, pre-school and reception children are separated so that we can offer learning at a level best suited for the age of the children. During discovery time, all children are free to explore activities throughout the EYFS unit. In early years, outdoor learning is as important as indoors. Being outdoors promotes physical activity and mental well-being. Through both adult-led and child-initiated activities, children are provided with the opportunity to do things in different ways and on different scales. The children also have access to the main school playground and the school's library area.

Play

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play, children can be inquisitive, creative, questioning and experimental and will learn at their highest level. Playing with their peers is important for children's development. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. The adults model play and children are encouraged to try new activities and judge risks for themselves. We talk to them about how we get better at things through effort and practice and that we can all learn when things go wrong. They practice and build up ideas learning 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.

Starting School

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of their reception year. At Kennett Primary School, we offer a small foundation stage unit comprising of pre-school and reception children. Children can join us for pre-school in the term after they turn three. Applications are made directly through the school office. Our reception children enter via the local authority's admission department the year they turn four.

Transitions

Transitions are key to a high-quality experience for all children. They ensure that there is continuity between all the settings that make up a child's individual learning journey.

Transition into Reception

We understand that transition into reception can be a daunting time for both children and their parents. As such, we offer our families a number of opportunities to meet with us prior to September. These include:

- New reception children and their parents will be invited to attend a 'stay and play' session in the summer term. This is an opportunity for children and families to familiarise themselves with our learning environment, meet with EYFS staff, members of the Senior Leadership Team and new classmates.
- Information packs providing essential information for the next academic year are available on our website and will also be emailed to parents prior to the summer holidays.
- All families will receive an 'all about me' pack to complete before children start in September. The pack helps staff to learn about the children, their homes, hobbies, families, likes and dislikes. It forms an important basis from which staff can build safe, supportive, professional relationships with both the children and their families.
- In the summer term, prior to starting in September, the EYFS teacher will visit children in their pre-school setting. Where this is not possible, contact will be made with a child's key worker to discuss individual needs and support transition.
- There may also be meetings or phone calls between pre-school/nursery settings and any relevant outside agencies to support a child's transition.
- Before children start in September, parents and children will have the opportunity for an individual meeting with our EYFS staff to discuss their child and any further questions they may have.
- There will also be a short, staggered start to the September term before the children start full-time.

Transition into Year One

During the second half of the summer term, we will support our children in preparation for their transition into key stage one. We provide a number of opportunities for our children to become familiar and confident with the changes. These include:

- Meetings held between the EYFS teacher and year one teacher to discuss each child, their strengths and areas for support.
- A story session(s) held by the year one teacher
- A 'move up' session where the children will spend time in their new classroom with the year two children.
- Playtimes in the main playground with key stage one children.
- Further transitions can be planned for any child who may need extra support

Home and School Links

We recognise that children learn best when there is a strong partnership between school and home. Parental support is a vital aspect of a child's education. We aim to develop a strong and lasting partnership between school and home by:

- Offering opportunities for parents to meet with staff and discuss their child prior to starting reception, as stated in the transition section of this policy.
- Maintaining strong lines of communication with parents and carers through the use of ClassDojo and Early Essence.
- Holding parents' consultations during the autumn and spring terms to discuss children's progress.
- Encouraging parents to contribute to their child's online learning journey.
- Posting fortnightly ClassDojo messages, sharing our learning with parents.
- Providing half termly homework learning activities as well as further learning opportunities specific to a child's individual needs.
- Operating an open-door policy for parents to discuss any concerns they may have in an informal manner.
- Provide class cafes each term for the parents to come and join in with their child's learning.

Safeguarding

Our safeguarding and child protection policy is available to view via our website.

Intimate Care

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out for themselves. Some children are unable to do this because of their age, physical difficulties or other special needs. Prior to a child starting, parents will be asked to complete an intimate care declaration and go through a care plan stating if they wish for staff to support with intimate care if necessary. Intimate and personal care is only carried out by an adult that the child knows. The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned to support a child's health, safety and independence alongside respecting their dignity and privacy at all times. Intimate or personal care procedures do not involve more than one member of staff unless the pupil's intimate care plan specifies the reasons for this, however, another appropriate adult will be in the vicinity and is made aware of the task that is being undertaken. This other member of staff will also be visible and/or audible. Staff follow guidance for a child's intimate care as defined in our intimate care policy which is available on our website.

Physical Contact

Children in the early years are encouraged to develop meaningful relationships with members of staff who work with them daily. This may involve physical contact. At Kennett Primary School, we recognise that there are times when physical contact such as a comforting hug or supporting a child to develop the gross motor skills on a balance beam may be needed. All children are encouraged to be as independent as possible and any physical contact is kept to a minimum. Any contact required should always be in clear view of others present wherever possible and will remain in line with our trust and school's policies, intimate care guidelines and Cambridgeshire STEPS training.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

At Kennett Primary School, we are committed to equal opportunities and diversity. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or academic ability. Children with special needs will be supported as appropriate so that they are able to access the curriculum fully. Individual provision plans (APDRs or EHCPs) will be used to target specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support. Further information can be found in the SEN and Equality policies on our website.

Policy Review Period

This policy will be reviewed annually. The review may be brought forward as required by the Trust to reflect changes in supporting advice and guidance.