

# **Carr Manor Community School**

## **EYFS Policy**

**This policy applies to staff, pupils, parents and governors**

**Reviewing Committee:**

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## **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

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## 1. Rationale

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.” (DfE 2024)

Underpinning all our work with children are our school values: know our children well; enjoy and achieve; partner’s in learning; character for learning. We aim to provide an environment built around strong relationships where all children feel safe, valued and supported. Our strong relationships extend to our families where we aim to have close connections between school and home to support each child’s development.

Across school, our approaches are restorative and teach children to become independent problem solvers who develop empathy and understanding of others. Our children make good progress from their starting points. We aim to create independent, confident and self-aware learners who have a solid foundation for the rest of their time at school with us and feel very much part of our school community.

### Aims

- To promote and nurture the whole child’s development including their social, emotional, physical, spiritual, character for learning and intellectual development so that each child can achieve their full potential.
- To offer an enriched curriculum which is underpinned by our school values and is relevant to our children’s needs.
- To provide a stimulating, inclusive and safe environment for learning where children can engage in first-hand experiences and feel confident and supported in taking risks.
- To support and extend children’s learning through purposeful observation, questioning, teaching, evaluation and interaction.

## 2. Curriculum

The EYFS is guided by four main principles:

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

It is every child’s right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being. We greatly value the important role that the

Early Years Foundation Stage plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. Play underpins the delivery of the EYFS curriculum. We use the document *Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage* to inform planning across Pre-School and Reception. Our curriculum for the EYFS reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals from the *Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Handbook* (Standards and Testing Agency, 2024). Our pupils' learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across all the learning areas.

The Early Learning Goals are organised into seven areas and provide the basis for planning throughout the EYFS, so layering secure foundations for future learning. We support the Characteristics of Effective Learning – Playing and Exploring, Active Learning, Creating and Thinking Critically – which enable the child to be an effective and motivated learner. We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment that encourages children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experiences. Activities are planned for both indoor and outdoor learning. Continuous provision in the EYFS includes water, tactile, sand and creative areas, maths area, drawing, mark making, writing areas, reading and role-play areas.

The EYFS curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning – three prime areas and four specific areas.

### **Three Prime Areas**

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

### **Four Specific Areas**

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts

We believe that learning is holistic and none of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. One experience may provide children with opportunities to develop a range of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning. Each area of learning works towards relevant Early Learning Goals, which most children are expected to achieve by the end of the EYFS.

Areas of provision are set up to be accessible and support the independence of pupils. The expectation at the start of the year is for them to learn how to use these properly and to explore the areas. As the year progresses, the expectation is that they use these to independently support their own learning and development. Staff will extend the challenge in the areas by enhancing them and setting tasks for pupils to complete. The provision is

number and language rich but also supports learning across all seven areas of the EYFS curriculum.

### **3. Coaching and Restorative Practice**

In Carr Manor Community School EYFS we work alongside the rest of the school by taking a restorative approach. We build strong relationships and work around a high challenge, high support approach. One of the ways we build good relationships with our children is through our coaching system. Children in our care are introduced to our coaching system from the autumn term in Reception. They are placed within coaching groups with children from Reception to Year 5. Children take part in coaching three times a week: a Monday check-in, a Wednesday PSHCE lesson and a Friday check-out. This provides an extra layer of peer support for our children and helps create relationships which stretch across different year groups. Children remain, where possible, with the same coaching group throughout their time in the Primary Phase.

Coaching is our golden thread running through our school and underpins all of our restorative work at Carr Manor Community School. Through coaching and circle time activities in coaching children can develop social skills, acquire interpersonal relationship skills, increase awareness of their feelings and become more responsible for their behaviour. It is a time to foster a caring group feeling where each member is valued and valuable, where each child gets a chance to speak and to be listened to. For those children not yet able to express themselves parents are encouraged to share events and social occasions with us. This enables staff to talk, if necessary, for the child, identifying an occasion and allowing the individual to be part of the group.

Creating a culture of strong relationships is at the core of working restoratively. When we work restoratively staff and children learn to solve problems by expressing their feelings towards the actions of others. Children are taught an key communication skills to become independent problem solvers who resolve their conflicts in calm and empathetic way.

### **4. Phonics**

We understand the importance of teaching children to read fluently early in their school career as a key to unlocking learning. This is why teaching reading is a priority across school. In Reception, there is a rigorous and systematic approach to the teaching of synthetic phonics from the beginning of Reception continuing throughout Year 1. All of our staff are equipped and well-trained in teaching early phonics. Children are sent home with reading books as early

as is appropriate and the sequence of books shows a cumulative progression in phonics knowledge.

There is frequent and detailed assessment used to identify any pupil that is falling behind the ambitious pace of the phonics programme, so that they can be offered targeted support to address any gaps. Phonics is taught daily following Twinkl Phonics. In Reception this is delivered during a carpet time input and supported through our provision. In phonics we focus on letter name and sound, letter formation, segmenting, blending, reading and writing. We ensure that we link these to reading and writing around the classrooms so that pupils do not see this as a discrete subject.

## **5. Assessment and the EYFS profile**

When Pre-School children enter Carr Manor Community School they are baselined on a 1:1 basis with a trained adult to assess their starting point. If a child enters at two-years-old, they also will have their two-year-old check. When Reception children enter Carr Manor Community School they are baselined on a 1:1 basis with a trained adult within two weeks of entering the setting using the National Baseline Assessment and our own baselining format observing children within provision.

We adhere to the Childcare Act Section 39(1)(a) 2006, which stipulates that Early Years providers must ensure that their provision meets the learning and development requirements as specified in the EYFS (Learning and Development Requirements) Order 2007 (amended 2012). We therefore assess each child at the end of the Reception year against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) as set out in the Foundation Stage Profile Handbook 2021 (Standards & Testing Agency, 2021). Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage is on-going and is an integral part of the learning and development process.

We collect evidence and knowledge throughout the year to enable us to be able to assess each child against the ELGs at the end of the year. This evidence is used to produce an Early Years Profile for each child in the summer term. EYFS profiles are subjected to regular team moderations and external moderations within the cluster. The information in the EYFS profile is passed on to the Year 1 teacher at the end of the year to allow them to provide an easy transition into Key Stage One. It is also shared with the parents/carers throughout the year, at our formal parents' evenings in October and March and also in our end of year reports.

All assessment in EYFS is on-going: we collect evidence throughout the year and use the descriptors listed in the document *Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage* (British Association for Early Childhood Education, 2021) to enable us to monitor and assess children's progress continuously throughout the year and best plan for the future learning and development of the children in our care.

We use a range of methods to assess. We capture spontaneous moments of learning using informal methods such as observations, photos and work samples. We also plan to observe

children using running observations, and complete more formal assessments which are completed on a 1:1 basis with each child on entry and at the end of Reception. Our assessments are always based on our knowledge of the children in our care.

We are mindful of the fact that the EYFS profile should not be completed solely with the knowledge of a single practitioner. As such we consider a range of viewpoints when making our final judgments for the EYFS profile in order to build a more holistic view of each child's skills and achievements. This will include information from other adults who are in contact with the children: learning support workers and support staff (e.g. speech therapists) where applicable.

## 6. Transition

For children to learn well they need to feel safe, confident and secure within our unit from their first day. At Carr Manor Community School we work hard to ensure that transition is as smooth as possible. We begin building strong relationships with our families before our children start in our care. We aim to know our children and families well from the moment they accept a place with us. We do this by:

- Open evenings and tours
- Home visits for each child from an adult working with Reception class
- Teddy Bears Picnic
- Stay and play events in school
- Communications with nursery and childcare settings and visits where appropriate

Those who present concerns or are considered vulnerable are invited for extra morning sessions in the unit in the summer term.

Once our children start with us in September, they have a phased entry starting just with mornings. Parents are always welcomed into the unit on a Monday and Friday morning for EMA throughout their children's time in Reception and Key Stage One and are invited to complete the signing in and EMA task with their child. In Pre-School parents are invited in every morning to support with the transition process and guide their child into a provision area.

As children move into Year 1, we prepare our children for learning within the National Curriculum and their new classroom environment. This is achieved through transition mornings starting in the summer term with their new members of staff and staff visits into the Reception units. The Reception team communicate closely with the Year 1 staff team to ensure they are aware of each child's needs and their next steps in learning.

## 7. SEND and inclusion

At Carr Manor Community School we give our children every opportunity to achieve their full potential by knowing our children well and taking account our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the EYFS we set ambitious and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Some children progress beyond this point. For these children we differentiate within the classroom in order to stretch and challenge where necessary, planning activities which deepen understanding.

We have high aspirations for all of the children in our care. We are aware that some children may not progress at the expected rate as outlined in the document *Development Matters in the EYFS* (Early Education, 2021). We identify those children who do not meet these developmental milestones early on through a range of methods, including:

- Information from parents
- Information/records from playgroups/nurseries/pre-schools
- Information from outside agencies
- On-going teacher observations
- Foundation Stage profile
- Annual school reports

Those children who may need additional help to achieve their potential receive carefully planned, tailored support which is planned in conjunction with our SENDCo. Staff are well trained in various aspects of SEND such as autism and dyslexia, to spot signs indicating there may be underlying learning problems.

Support may include:

- 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 extra time/1:1 activities with the class teacher or learning support worker that focus on key areas for development;
- Careful observation and monitoring of children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary. This may involve outside agencies for some of our children;
- Regular reviews and meetings with parents and carers with the class teacher, achievement support officer, the coach and the SENDCo.

## **8. Safeguarding in the EYFS**

Our children's safety is of the utmost importance to us at Carr Manor Community School. Knowing our children well means that we are able to provide the necessary care and support for all our children. Structures within school mean that staff are well trained in spotting safeguarding concerns. The coaching system provides an extra layer of support and close communications between staff which means concerns are passed onto the appropriate adults (such as the safeguarding officer) quickly and followed up where necessary. Working restoratively means high challenge and high support for our families and staff.