

Kaleidoscope Multi Academy Trust Early Years Policy

“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.”

Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education 2021

Our Intent and Aims:

This policy applies to all of the seven schools within Kaleidoscope Multi-Academy Trust (KMAT): Ashcombe Primary School, Becket Primary School, Christchurch Church of England Primary School, Crockerne Church of England Primary School, Hutton Church of England Primary School, St Martins Church of England Primary School and Worle Village Primary School. Becket and Crockerne have Nursery/pre-schools, which are part of the schools.

Within our Early Years at Kaleidoscope Multi Academy Trust we aim to:

- Give each child a happy, positive and enjoyable start to their school life within a safe and secure environment;
- Establish solid foundations and foster a deep love of learning;
- Enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually in order to thrive in a diverse and ever changing world;
- Offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development;
- Offer a broad and rich curriculum;
- Encourage children to develop independence within a nurturing and supportive atmosphere;
- Support children to build relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- Help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements by experiencing success and developing their confidence to work towards personal goals.

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

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. Our Early Years Foundation Stage accommodates children from the age of 2 to 5 years (in Becket Nursery and pre-school), 3-5 (in Crockerne) and 4 to 5 years in the other schools.

Christ Church Church of England Primary School:

In our school we have one full-time Reception class with 30 children. Our Reception class has a teacher and a teaching assistant. We have an enclosed outdoor area attached to our EYFS classroom.

The Curriculum

Our Reception classes follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document. This framework defines what we teach and we use the Development Matters guidance to support our curriculum. The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected. Three of the areas are referred to as the Prime areas. These are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving (Early Years Framework 2021).

The prime areas are:

Communication and language,	Listening, Attention and Understanding Speaking
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Self-regulation Managing Self Building Relationships
Physical Development	Fine Motor Gross Motor

The Prime areas are strengthened and applied through the further four areas which are referred to as the Specific areas.

Literacy	Comprehension Word Reading Writing
Mathematics	Numbers Numerical patterns
Understanding the World	Past and present People, culture and communities
Expressive Arts and Design	Creating with materials

We use Development Matters alongside the Early Years Framework to support our planning and as a tool for our Nursery/Pre-school classes. Our own school curriculums enrich the experiences and opportunities available to the children. This includes special events and celebrations, memorable experiences, themes selected to drive the curriculum and the PSHE Jigsaw or PSHE association scheme. Our teaching of music is based on Music Express/Charanga. All schools use validated synthetic phonics programmes and we use Number Blocks to enhance our maths teaching.

'It is the role of the setting to help children experience the awe and wonder of the world in which they live, through the seven areas of learning.'

Ofsted Early Years Inspection Handbook, May 2019

Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the foundation stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. At Kaleidoscope Schools we have enabling environments that provide both continuous and enhanced provision. Our Nursery and Reception classrooms and outdoors are set up with learning areas. Each learning area has cross-curricular resources, which children can access independently throughout the day. Continuous provision provides children with stimulating, active play to encourage creative and critical thinking alongside other children, as well as on their own. Children are able to practice skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interest, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling and questioning. They teach and extend play whilst developing skills and language. We understand that outdoor play is of equal importance as indoor play and that the outdoor classroom offers children 'bigger', 'louder' and 'messier' experiences. We therefore aim to offer free flow access to our outdoor learning areas throughout the school day.

Characteristic of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' which help practitioners identify a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play,

explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics are:

- Playing and Exploring- children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'
- Active Learning- children concentrate and keep trying if they encounter difficulties, they enjoy achievements
- Creating and Thinking Critically- children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things

Teaching

We ensure there is a balance of child- initiated learning through continuous and enhanced provision, and adult led activities, across the school day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential. The adults respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases, the adult will ask a child to complete a task with them; at other times, they will participate in the child's play, extending it where possible. There are set routines that we follow each day. There are designated times when the children come together to be taught and we focus on maths, literacy, phonics, stories and wider curriculum. These times provide the opportunity for children to develop their ability to work as a group to listen, to take turns, to answer and concentrate.

Whole class reading and story time are important parts of the day. We want our children to develop of lifelong love of reading. Children are exposed to a wide range of both fiction and non-fiction texts to provide them with opportunities to hear and use new vocabulary. We imitate, innovate and invent stories through 'Helicopter Stories' as we want our children to leave the EYFS knowing stories, both traditional and modern, well. We make sure there is always time for a number of whole class stories during the day, as well as opportunities to enjoy books within the continuous provision.

Planning

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum provides the basis for planning in our Nursery, pre-school and Reception classes (Foundation Stage). The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are supported by the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document.

Assessment (see Appendix 1)

At our Kaleidoscope schools, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Practitioners observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are then used to inform future planning.

At the start of Reception teachers undertake the Baseline Assessment (statutory requirement) and at the end of the EYFS (end of Reception), practitioners complete the EYFS profile (statutory requirement) for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 16 early learning goals, indicating whether they are;

- 'Expected' - meeting expected levels of development
- 'Emerging' - not yet reaching the expected levels of development

Children's development levels are assessed as the year progresses. If a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, practitioners will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Parent Partnership

We believe that education is a shared responsibility between school and home. We therefore work very closely to ensure that parents/carers are involved in their child's education, and provide them with information about what we are learning and how they can support their child at home. We ensure that parents/ carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development, through learning journeys and parents evenings. We understand the importance of parents/carers views, so provide opportunities for feedback throughout the school year. We offer workshops to provide parents with an insight into how we teach specific areas of the Early Years Curriculum, detailing ways in which they can support their child's learning at home. These sessions also give parents/carers the opportunity to work with their child in the school environment.

Safeguarding

It is important to us that all children in our schools are safe. 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. We educate children on the importance of boundaries, rules and limits and we encourage them to become responsible for their own behaviour by supporting them to make the right choices. We teach the children how to recognise and manage risks in a supervised learning environment.

Impact

We recognise that every child is unique and that they develop and learn in different ways and at varying rates. We want all of our children to develop a positive attitude to learning and therefore we strive for our children to become curious, resilient and self-assured in order to prepare them for the next stage of education, laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

Created: November 2021

Appendix 1- EYFS Assessment Policy

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners knowing children's level of achievement and interests, and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge. In their interactions with children, practitioners should respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share.

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) September 2021

- *Assessment is about noticing what children can do and what they know. It is not about lots of data and evidence.*
- *Effective assessment requires practitioners to understand child development. Practitioners also need to be clear about what they want children to know and be able to do.*
- *Accurate assessment can highlight whether a child has a special educational need and needs extra help.*
- *Before assessing children, it's a good idea to think about whether the assessments will be useful.*
- *Assessment should not take practitioners away from the children for long periods of time.*

Development Matters (September 2020)

At Kaleidoscope Multi Academy Trust Schools, we will ensure that we meet the requirements within the Statutory EYFS and follow the fifth key feature of effective practice in the EYFS, on assessment, from Development Matters. We will do this through being mindful of the following:

- Developing sensible assessment that ensures every child can thrive.
- Ensuring assessments help every child to learn more than they did before.
- Evidence of learning is when children know more, remember more and do more than before (an alteration to the long-term memory).
- Considering next steps for those children who really need it and planning further opportunities for them to revisit, practice and apply the learning in various contexts so that they are secure in their understanding.

We will achieve the above by showing that the curriculum in the Early Years is of good quality through:

- Having sequential planning that includes opportunities to record children's understanding that can be used to plan next steps for those children who need it.
- Setting ambitions for each area of learning. This will be based on those children who are identified as needing above and beyond everyday practice and provision so that they can keep up.
- Providing opportunities for practitioners to discuss how to remove any barriers to learning that children may have so that they can respond quickly.
- Providing opportunities for parents to be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development.
- Ensuring every family has a parental reading record so that communication between school and home is recorded effectively.
- Liaising with internal and external agencies e.g. SENDCo and Speech Therapists.
- Providing every child with a work book. This is where practitioners will document and significant observations of children's mathematical, communication, language or literacy development from adult guided sessions, adult guided play or freely engaged play.
- Using regular phonics assessment based on children's knowledge of sounds and words taught so far.
- Using Tapestry as an electronic learning journal for 'certain' areas of learning which will enable teachers to collate evidence and parents to see their child's learning journey and contribute to their successes.
- Completing the EYFS Profile in the final term on the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term.
- Arranging a date and time for a professional dialogue with the year 1 teacher(s) about each child's learning and development, to support a successful transition to key stage 1.