



LOWER PEOVER
CofE Primary School

EYFS Policy

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Chair of Governors:	Louise Lawton
Review:	December 2024

Vision

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to the learning and development of all children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Lower Peover CE Primary School we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just a preparation for the next stage but is vitally important in itself.

Learning for children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the Foundation Stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

Intent Aims

At Lower Peover CE Primary School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent learners. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and carers to help every child reach their full potential.

As outlined in the 'Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage':

'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.'

Implementation

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

We adhere to the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (Department for Education, 2023) and the guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers;
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.**

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring, and sharing environment, which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant, and coherently sequenced curriculum, using play as the vehicle for learning.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- Enable choice and decision-making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment and by the children's own ideas and interests.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers and value their contributions.
- Ensure that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home, language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender, or ability, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.

The Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of child development across the seven areas of learning and development to enable the children to achieve the Early Learning Goals.

All seven areas are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting the children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas are the **Prime Areas** of Learning:

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

We also support the children in four **Specific Areas** of Learning, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

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. In doing so, we can provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning and to help them make sense of the world. Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise 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 interests, 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, facilitating, teaching, and extending play, skills, and language.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

In planning, guiding, and facilitating the children's learning activities, we continually reflect on the different ways children learn. The characteristics of effective teaching and learning highlight the importance of 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 on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements.

Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively and be active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication, and physical development.

Planning

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied, and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can do. Our planning shows how Educational Programmes will be delivered and how the principles of the EYFS will be put into practice. It draws upon secure knowledge of child development and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning. All practitioners who work in reception are involved in this process.

We create loose long- and medium-term plans based on a series of topics, each of which offers experiences in all seven areas of learning. Throughout each topic the children are encouraged to share their ideas for learning experiences with us, which we record on Our Learning Journey display. These ideas are then used to inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations which identify areas to focus on.

We always remain flexible to allow for unplanned circumstances and children's responses. Our planning is continually evaluated by all staff to ensure that children's individual 'Next Steps in Learning' and personalised learning needs are met.

Children will engage in whole group and small group activities alongside their independent learning. There are also allocated times for whole class daily 'carpet learning sessions'. The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS framework: *'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'*.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those which are planned by adults. During children's play, the adults in class interact when appropriate to facilitate learning and skill development, or to stretch and challenge them further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and build these into our practice. We create a stimulating learning environment to encourage children to free flow between inside and outdoors.

Staffing and Organisation

At Lower Peover there is one reception class with an intake of 30 pupils. We maintain an adult/pupil ratio of 1:15 within the reception year: there is a teaching assistant in class throughout the day. The children have daily opportunities for Continuous Provision both in the classroom and in the outside area. The teacher liaises with the teaching assistant, involving them in planning, preparation, and assessment.

Observations & Assessment

All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process. Formative assessments inform everyday planning and are based on on-going observational assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. On-going assessments may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations, annotated examples of work, photographs, and information from parents.

Baseline Assessment

On entry to the Foundation Stage all children are assessed. Assessments are collected through observations and directed tasks which are used to plan next steps for individual and groups of children. Further termly assessments are used to track both individual progress, class progress and the progress of vulnerable groups both termly and at the end of reception.

In addition, we carry out the formal statutory Reception Baseline Assessment within the first 6 weeks of the term.

EYFS Profile

At the end of the year, the EYFS profile provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements including whether they have reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the class teacher - who uses the exemplification documents, and their knowledge of the children to make a 'best fit' judgement. This profile data is the statutory data that is sent to the Local Authority and used to help school benchmark and identify improvements.

SAFETY INCLUDING SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE REQUIREMENTS

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount at Lower Peover CE Primary School. We have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure their safety.

In Reception we provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to take risks, follow rules and stay safe. We comply with the welfare requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and understand that we must:

- Promote the welfare of all children;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately;
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the environment is safe, and all equipment and furniture is fit for purpose;
- Ensure all children have a challenging and enjoyable learning experience. We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious snacks, access to water throughout the day, allocating significant time for physical development and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Lower Peover CE Primary School has robust systems in place to ensure that all practitioners who have regular contact with children are suitable for their role. The EYFS staff hold the Paediatric First aid qualification, which is a statutory requirement of the EYFS.

The Child Protection Policy is in place to ensure the safety of all stakeholders at Lower Peover CE Primary School. Backing up this policy is a dedicated safeguarding team which includes Designated Safeguarding Leads and deputy. Staff have access to CPOMs safeguarding system to log any concerns regarding any aspects of safeguarding and behaviour. All staff are vigilant in reporting concerns.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability, or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets and supports the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve the Early Learning Goals.

We work closely with the parents/carers of our high achieving children to ensure that their individual needs are met, and their talents fostered. We ensure that these children are challenged appropriately to reach their full potential.

We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents/carers and outside agencies. We have a designated full time Inclusion Leader in school who supports us with any additional needs a child may have.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS

We recognise the central importance of parents/carers as children's first educators. We believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child. We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents/carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

- Holding information evenings before the children start school. Outlining the reception curriculum to parents/guardians during the new parents meeting in July, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home

- Talking to them about their child's interests and needs during our introductory sessions in school.
- Being welcoming and approachable and having an open-door approach for parents to voice concerns/ask questions;
- Inviting them to a parent consultation in the Autumn and Spring Terms to discuss how their child has settled and share progress and next steps for learning;
- Valuing parents' contributions;
- Inviting parents into school regularly for our 'Stay and Play sessions';
- Encouraging parents to read with their child at home and make comments in their reading record books;
- Providing reading and writing meetings, highlighting how they can support their child at home;
- Sharing information explaining how we teach phonics and help them support their child;
- Providing regular observations on each individual which can be viewed by parents electronically
- Explaining to parents how they can contribute to their child's online learning journey
- Half termly letters to inform Parents about appropriate information
- Welcoming parents as volunteers into our school;
- Providing parents with an annual end of year report and an end of year summary report detailing achievements and their child's EYFS profile;
- We also draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting to talk about their lives, work, and experiences.

Liaison with pre-school settings and induction

All children begin at Lower Peover with a variety of experiences and learning, from a wide range of pre-school and nursery settings.

The practitioners working in reception build upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through ensuring that Parents/Carers and the Early Years practitioners work together effectively to support children's learning and development, ensuring that each child's learning is a continuous journey.

Prospective parents can visit the school at any time. A new parents' meeting is held in June to introduce the school's expectations and routines, and to outline the transition process and Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents/guardians have the opportunity to meet the class teacher and to visit the classroom. Parents/guardians are given a new parent pack along with forms to be completed and returned to school.

Transfer records from preschool settings inform reception practitioners about the new intake. In the summer term the practitioners in reception aim to undertake a visit to each child in their home, preschool, or nursery setting. In summer term 2 children have the opportunity to visit the school, lunch with their parents in the hall, then stay for the afternoon in their new classroom and outdoor environment.

During the induction period in September the children are split into two groups. This induction period allows the children to feel secure in their new environment and for the practitioners to get to know the

children individually, begin baseline assessments and establish good relationships. More details about this will be shared by school, following the transition mornings in the summer term before starting.

Reception to Year 1 Transition

Reception and Year 1 teachers work together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible.

- Reception practitioners plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer terms
- An EYFS Profile end of year class summary sheet and assessment records are passed on to Year 1 teacher
- Reception and Year 1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July
- Reception children visit their Year 1 classroom and teacher for two afternoons in July
- Opportunities for children to become familiar with the Year 1 teacher and staff are utilised

For Equal Opportunities, Inclusion, Safeguarding and Health and Safety please refer to the appropriate school policies