

OAKDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL



EYFS POLICY

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1. Aims

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential.”

(EYFS Framework, 2021)

This policy aims to ensure:

All children in EYFS access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the varied range of knowledge and skills needed for their journey through school.

Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.

Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers

Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is crucial in securing solid foundations that our children continue to build upon. In the EYFS at Oakdale, we strongly believe that we are at the beginning of our children’s educational journey. By igniting the flame, we are developing a love of learning and a determination to want to be the best they can be. We believe that all children deserve to be valued as an individual and we are passionate in allowing all children to achieve their full, unique potential.

“At Oakdale Primary School we want each child in Early Years to develop a love of learning so they can reach their full potential in an engaging, safe and nurturing environment.”

We begin each new year by looking at the individual needs of our children and, taking into account their different starting points, we carefully develop our EYFS provision to ensure that it is suitable for the unique needs and stages of development of all our children. We use a selection of open-ended resources to ensure the children can capture their imagination, as well as develop their language skills as early as possible. Our topics are engaging, ensuring as many learning opportunities are achieved as possible.

Our curriculum is enriched by the children and their interests taking account of the needs of the cohort. The characteristics of effective learning are crucial so are threaded through the whole curriculum ensuring the children are prepared in all ways for future learning. Our Oakdale core values are Challenge, Care, Respect, Aspiration and Collaboration. Our curriculum will allow us to embed these values in a nurturing and inclusive way.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [‘Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)’](#) (September 2021).

3. Structure of the EYFS

Our Early Years provision is spread out across both classrooms as well as outside. Each area enables the children to explore, use their imagination as well as apply their critical thinking. The progressive curriculum allows all children to develop their characteristics of effective learning, building on these crucial skills to further develop as they move through school. The adults play an important role by developing the prime areas and enabling quality interactions.

In the EYFS setting at Oakdale Primary School we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start to their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential. We understand that each child is unique and learn at their own pace. Our aim to provide a safe and nurturing environment to allow everyone feels valued and important.

4. Curriculum

Practice in the EYFS is led by the four guiding principles that shape our approach in early years settings.

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and is 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 and/or carers.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

There are seven areas of learning and development that are taught in early years. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. 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 three areas, the prime areas, are:

- **Communication and Language** (Listening, Attention and Understanding and Speaking).
- **Personal, Social and Emotional development** (Self Regulation, Managing Self and Building Relationships)
- **Physical Development** (Gross Motor Skills and Fine Motor Skills)

Children are also taught in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- **Literacy** (Comprehension, Word Reading and Writing)
- **Mathematics** (Number and Numerical Patterns)
- **Understanding the world** (Past and Present, People, Culture and Communities and The Natural World)
- **Expressive arts and design** (Creating with Materials and Being Imaginative and Expressive)

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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.

Our curriculum is ambitious and aims to teach all children the skills and knowledge in order that they reach the seventeen Early Learning Goals.

As each cohort of children will vary, our progressive curriculum will adjust to these specific needs. We believe that EYFS is the building blocks of all learning therefore put the foundational knowledge that the children need to be successful at school at the heart of all we do.

Through the year these skills develop and the children naturally explore the provision in different ways. All the crucial skills, knowledge and vocabulary that we teach are presented to the children throughout the year in a range of topics, which are designed with their interests in mind. This is taught through a mix of structured and independent learning, allowing children to guide their own learning but also building concentration and perseverance through the year.

We understand that learning across **all** the areas of learning and development is highly dependent on language development. Good communication skills are crucial to be able to talk, listen and build relationships. At Oakdale, we have a huge focus on oracy throughout the year, ensuring this is entwined into all of our learning, in order to become good communicators. We use a range of ways to develop oracy such as sentence stems in Maths, Drawing Club in Literacy and modelling full sentences at every opportunity.

A high priority is also given to the teaching of **reading**. We aim to teach children to read and develop a love of books as soon as they arrive at School, and books are used to teach topics and to enhance our whole curriculum

Our inclusive approach allows all children to learn together, with adaptations being made to ensure all can access the learning. This includes speech and language, sessions for children with autism and finding ways that suit the children's needs to be able to join in activities.

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

Educational visits within the local community and further afield are also planned to support children's learning within the classroom.

4.2 Teaching

We understand that both play-based learning and direct instruction have value for teaching young children, but considering which is better suited to a particular form of knowledge is crucial. We ensure that our play-based learning challenges their thinking, problem-solving, persistence and collaboration.

We teach through a range of teaching methods including child-initiated learning, whole class teaching, group teaching, investigations and problem solving together, and independently. As many activities as possible are play-based; however, there is also a need for direct teacher-led activities to ensure children gain essential knowledge and skills from their teacher. All activities are expertly modelled and children are given sufficient time, support and resources to repeat and practise them. If a child is happy at school they will learn better therefore we ensure all children can reach their full potential and are able to feel proud of themselves.

In addition to learning through play, practitioners within the setting will plan a series of targeted sessions to develop basic early skills in reading, writing and maths. As part of this the children will be taught phonics through a synthetic approach of Little Wandle which begins in the first half of the autumn term. This scheme allows the children to be regularly assessed and for the teaching to be adapted to suit their needs. Daily handwriting is also a priority to allow children to see themselves as writers and letter formation becomes automatic from the earliest stage. Maths is taught through NCETM developing fluency and oracy within these sessions.

We offer a free flow approach between both EYFS classes at times of free play this promotes one of our school values of collaboration across the year group. Although all children have a class as a base, we encourage interactions with all adults across the unit as well as chance to communicate with all children. Snack time is utilised as a time to share and enjoy being together, learning those crucial skills of sharing, taking turns and listening.

5. Assessment

At Oakdale Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to

shape future planning. The practitioners will use the knowledge of the children to help shape the pace and progression of the curriculum.

A baseline on entry assessment is made and together with Summary 2 information received from preschool settings is used to ensure that each child has a clear starting point and areas for development are quickly identified. Little Wandle assessments are used every half term to ensure the children are able to access the lessons at the right lessons or adaptations can be made.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

Meeting expected levels of development

Or Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

Staff are required to consider the whole description of each early learning goal when making judgements and use the best fit model.

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers in their school reports. This information is shared with their next teacher to aid transition.

6. Working with parents

At Oakdale Primary School we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the EYFS framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. Practitioners encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes).

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through weekly topic leaflets and informal chatting at the beginning and end of the day. This also gives suggestions of how parents can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been covered in the setting.

Parents are invited to attend parents' evenings during the course of the academic year.

Other opportunities for practitioners to share children's learning, development and well-being with parents include floor books, end of year reports and celebration assemblies where children's achievements are recognised. The children showcase their learning through Christmas singing as well as a class assembly throughout the year.

Parents are also invited to get involved with school life. There are opportunities for them to help with activities such as educational visits and reading, as well as offering their particular skills (e.g. cooking, art, music) to support children's learning. Parents may be invited into the setting on other occasions such as open afternoons where children show them their work and special events. The setting has a friendly, open ethos and practitioners are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day. We feel it is important to share how children in EYFS learn so invite parents to watch "teaching" lessons which are very useful for all.

7. Admissions and Induction

Oakdale Primary School provides full-time Early Years education for children in the Reception Year. This is for children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old.

Before they start in the setting, all children are offered a visit during the summer term. The purpose of these initial visits is for the children to meet their new practitioners and start to become familiar with the setting environment. Where possible nursery visits are conducted. Packs are given up with activities and tools to help children get ready for their school journey.

In the summer term parents are invited into school to meet the setting practitioners. At this meeting information regarding the induction process is shared. There is also time for informal chat and parents' questions. School information packs will be distributed to parents at this meeting, detailing school routines and expectations.

From September, the majority of children attend the setting full-time. There is a relaxed and open ethos in the setting. Established routines, a calm atmosphere and encouraging talk are some of the strategies practitioners use to maintain children's positive feelings about school.

See school and LA Admissions Policy for more information, available via the school's website.

8. Supervisions

Oakdale Primary School aims to support staff to undertake appropriate training and professional development to ensure they can continually improve the quality learning and development experiences they offer for children.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Welfare Requirements, April 2017 states:

Supervision should provide opportunities for staff to:

- discuss any issues – particularly concerning children's development or well-being;
- identify solutions to address issues as they arise; and receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness.

Supervision is an individual meeting between the line manager and each staff member, in order to support their role and support where required. The supervision process is in addition to regular staff appraisals and other opportunities for staff training. Supervision is a formal and recorded process through which the professional actions of staff are examined and regularly reviewed. It provides a recorded system of decision-making that is regularly audited to improve practice and to improve outcomes for those with whom we are working. Supervision also enhances and supports individual practice, acting as a means for ensuring that members of staff have access to the support, training and procedures they require for professional growth and development.

Supervisions are offered once a term on a 1:1 basis carried out by the EYFS Lead. Half termly team meetings are also in place for training. Supervision sessions are clearly focused with chance to discuss and feedback on previous discussions. These take place in a private place without interruptions, allowing for an open discussion.

9. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Headteacher every three years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according the EYFS statutory framework.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy