



**Oxton St Saviours
C.E Aided Primary School**

**Early Years Policy
Miss Morton**

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Intent

At Oxton St Saviours, we believe in nurturing, celebrating and developing children's individual interests and skills. We aim to develop resilience in pupils and the confidence to always 'give it a try'.

Here at Oxton St Saviopurs, we understand that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays a pivotal part in this through the speed at which children develop and learn during their first 5 years. Because of this, we promote and hope to instill a love of learning within children that will inspire and challenge them through a balance of child-initiated, adult-guided and adult-led activities. Many of these activities are play-based and practical, and children can access them across both indoor and outdoor environments. Allowing children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, and explore independently, ensures that they know that thie brown ideas are valued. It also helps the children to become independent thinkers, problem solvers and risk-assessors. This helps to provide them with the best possible start to the rest of their journey through school, and beyond!

In developing our EYFS curriculum and practice, we are guided by the four main principles of:

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

This ensures that we are continuously providing activities, tasks, resources and interactions that are matched to the changing needs of our children. We approach all learning opportunities in this way to ensure we are providing an inclusive environment with open-ended opportunities.

Our main aim, throughout EYFS, is to provide children with the best possible start to school. For us, this means ensuring they make good progress against all areas of learning and development as well as enjoying coming to school. It is this enjoyment, which allows children to develop confidence and independence and helps them to continue being enthusiastic, curious learners as they move into Year 1 and beyond.

We believe in developing the 'whole child' and therefore recognize the importance of building skills, knowledge and confidence in each of the areas of learning. These are:

- **Communication and Language**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
- **Physical Development**
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Although we recognize the importance of all of these areas, we understand that reading is of paramount importance in order for children to continue to progress in all subjects, throughout EYFS and beyond. Because of this, we aim to provide a language-rich environment where reading is promoted and available in all environment areas, wherever possible. Sharing books, stories, songs and rhymes are a daily part of our practice. We also understand that the prime areas of learning (those above in bold) are so named because of their significance to children's development across all other areas and therefore must be prioritized in our day-to-day practice.

We also seek to provide:

- **Quality and consistency**, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and parents.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

Implementation

Teaching and Learning

The EYFS environment is play-based, with a variety of different areas that children access independently, which help to develop children's skills across the areas of learning. Continuous provision is provided which allows for open-ended learning opportunities. These areas are adapted and enhanced to meet the changing needs of children within the class, or to provide a new exciting stimulus to engage and interest children. These types of activities are referred to as child-initiated, meaning that they are activities that the child chooses independently and are led by their own interests. E.g. a child accessing art materials to make a picture/model based on their own interests.

Other activities within the Early Years environment are referred to as adult-guided. These activities, or games, may have been introduced or modelled by an adult and have a more specific outcome. E.g. a number board game or a writing template.

Children will also work on adult-led activities. These are activities that have a specific learning objective and will involve the direction or support of an adult. As the children become more confident in developing their skills, they may be able to work on adult-led

tasks independently but they are still classed as 'adult-led' because they have been set by an adult with a specific learning intention and outcome expected.

Organisation, Planning and Resources

Each day, children are shown a visual timetable which sets out our plan, including daily routines and the learning focus for the day.

There are specific directed-teaching sessions where the teacher will deliver the appropriate content and then children will either be directed to work with an adult on an adulted task, or engage in independent activity time through accessing the environment areas.

An adult will always be available to observe, support and enhance children's independent play, in order to assess embedded learning, provide further challenge and identify any gaps in learning which will inform future planning and next steps.

Planning across the EYFS involves different themes which run across each half-term. Please see 'Curriculum Overview'. These themes are based upon common popular interests and annual events, but are also broad and flexible to ensure there are opportunities to follow the children's interests. They are usually linked to a few key areas of learning but are planned in order to allow the development of skills across all of the different areas. Summaries of these themes are shared with parents and are available to be viewed on the school website.

The Reception Class Teacher plans in more detail on a weekly basis for all directed-teaching sessions and adult-led tasks, which are usually related to Literacy or Maths.

We recognise the importance of reading and sharing texts with children so we usually have a focus book that provides a stimulus for the learning that takes place each week. This also helps us to introduce and encourage the use of new vocabulary across the Early Years environment.

Weekly plans are also produced for Phonics. Our whole-school phonics scheme is Read, Write Inc. Children take part in daily phonics sessions with a Read, Write Inc. teacher, these groups are split depending on the child's level of reading. The children are assessed by the Reading Leader each half term and placed in the correct reading group for their daily lesson. We use Fred Talk, the Read, Write Inc. letter formation rhymes

and Fred Fingers throughout the week to support the children with their reading and writing.

Weekly evidence will be collected in children's individual online learning journals on Tapestry. This will provide a snapshot into the learning that has taken place each week, including information about our focus book, photographic evidence and quotes from children. Writing evidence is also collected in each child's paper book. Each week, the children complete a range of adult-led challenges linking to different areas of learning and where necessary, evidence will be added into Tapestry.

Parents/carers will also be encouraged to add their own evidence to children's online learning journals, so that we can be sure we are reflecting a true representation of each child.

Environment plans are produced on a weekly basis to show enhancements and changes to environment areas, alongside the continuous provision. They also show adult-led or adult-guided tasks within the environment. Sometimes, initials of certain children are added where tasks or learning opportunities have been planned in order to support them with specific next steps in their development.

The environment is continuously monitored to ensure it is being used productively and observations are used for future planning.

Assessment

On entry to Reception, we have a baseline assessment. This covers the first six weeks of the Reception Year. We use previous assessment data from other settings, alongside our own observations of children from child-initiated, adult-guided and adult-led activities. The children are also required to complete the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) within the first six weeks of starting Reception.

We use both the Development Matters and Birth to 5 Matters documents to support our ongoing assessment of children's progress throughout the EYFS. Assessments are recorded at the end of each half term. We use tracking documents for each area of learning to record which children are currently 'on track' and 'not on track'. This allows

us to plan for the needs of those who are 'not on track' to enable them to make more rapid progress.

The summer term assessment (EYFS Profile) will also be completed no later than 30 June. The Reception Class Teacher will make a best-fit judgement against each Early Learning Goal (ELG) as to whether the child is working at the 'expected' level or not. Children that are working below the ELG are described as 'emerging' in that area. ELG Profile data is submitted to the local authority and shared with parents in their child's end of year report.

To ensure we have evidence of each child's progress, we use online learning journals and writing books. However, the EYFS statutory framework says that 'assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork'. To this end, we will record only key moments in children's development which are representative of where they are working in each area of learning, rather than evidencing multiple observations.

- Read, Write Inc writing will be recorded in the children's individual writing book.
- Tapestry online learning journals will be used to reflect the main learning that has taken place each week and will include brief notes, photos, examples of work and quotes from the children. This will be monitored to ensure that all children are represented.
- Tapestry will also be used for individual observations, which may include photos and videos. These will be added to the child's learning journal to create a record of their progress across the areas of learning.

Impact

The success of our EYFS can be seen through the enjoyment and enthusiasm of our pupils. They are happy coming to school and develop positive relationships with both their peers and staff. Children make good progress across all areas of learning. This results in a big increase of children working at the expected level by the end of Reception and therefore ready to move onto the next stage of their journey through school. Those children with gaps in their learning or difficulties in some areas, are identified quickly and supported in school to address their needs. Where further intervention or support is needed this is acted upon before they leave the Early Years

Foundation Stage to ensure support plans are in place to help their transition into Key Stage One.

Equal Opportunities

Equality means giving everyone the opportunity to reach their full potential and an equal chance to live their life as they choose. In young children this means giving equal chances right from the very start of life and ensuring they are not denied opportunities because of their ethnicity, cultural background, social background, gender, religion or physical or emotional circumstances. Our Early Years Foundation Stage is well placed to provide a safe environment where children can learn about each other's' differences and similarities, and understand the importance of respect from an early stage in life.

Inclusion

Inclusive Early Years practice is the development of positive attitudes, clear strategies and constructive approaches to ensure all children are catered for within our environments. To develop positive attitudes, children with significant disabilities, or special educational needs, are nurtured in our settings and provision is adapted where needed to ensure it is accessible for all.

The differing needs of individuals is discussed with other children openly in a manner that is suitable for them to understand. This ensures that they can also play an active part in supporting their peers and develop a positive attitude and understanding of differences between people.

Clear strategies are implemented through creating support plans for children with special educational needs, in line with our SEN policy. These are updated termly with small, achievable targets to develop children's knowledge and skills at a level that is appropriate for them. We have a constructive approach through aiming to resource our environment in a way which provides openended opportunities for play and exploration. This means all children can be supported, or challenged, at a level appropriate for them.

Staff work together as a team and discuss the ongoing progress of children daily to ensure that all staff have a good understanding of every child's needs. During child-initiated play, staff consider the best time to intervene, support and challenge children through imaginative questioning and language modelling.

Resources are used, where needed, to support the learning of children with additional needs. This includes pictures and resources to encompass all different learning styles; visual, auditory and kinaesthetic. We also involve parents in discussions about their child's development and create targets based upon this information.

Role of the Subject Leader

The EYFS Lead must ensure that all aspects of this policy are being met. This means regularly assessing how the environment is being used and making changes where needed. Planning is ongoing and can be adapted and added to every year to meet the needs of each cohort. The EYFS Lead will discuss data to all staff at the end of each half term, to identify any gaps in learning or areas that need to be focused on. This then informs planning and the environment for the next half-term in order to address these issues. The EYFS Lead should attend relevant training annually to stay informed of current trends and changes in Early Years and to address any targets detailed in action plans. They should then disseminate the information to all staff and make any changes needed as a result. At the end of every school year, the EYFS Lead should analyse the main areas for improvement and detail these in an 'Action Plan'. These targets, for the next year, should come from observing in the Early Years Foundation Stage, responding to data and discussion with all staff members. The EYFS Lead will meet with the headteacher annually to ensure they have a clear picture of what is happening across the Early Years Foundation stage and to share progress in relation to targets from the current action plan.

Working with Parents/Carers

In line with the rest of the school, we have a 'Learning Links' meeting at the start of every year to provide the chance for parents/carers to chat with the class teacher and find out general information.

We also have parent's evenings in the autumn and spring terms to update parents/carers about their child's progress. However, because the Early Years Foundation Stage is the start of each child's journey through our school, we also have an additional meeting in the summer term before their child is due to start school. This allows both parents/carers and children the chance to familiarize themselves with the Early Years environment, to meet staff members and to find out key information about our school.

Early Reading, Writing and Maths workshops are held throughout the year to provide additional information about what the children are learning in school, what the expectations are for the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the kinds of activities that are used in school.

Staff are available on the door each morning to speak to parents/carers and again at the end of every school day.

We also use Tapestry to update parents about some of the activities and learning focuses that have been happening in school each week. Parents can send direct messages to the teacher, through this app, when needed and the teacher will always reply as soon as possible.

Reports are shared at the end of the school year to report on each child's attainment across all of the areas of learning.

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