

The EYFS is a statutory framework that sets standards for development, learning and care of children from birth through to the end of their Reception year at school. Therefore at Nanpean CP School, this governs how we work in the Reception class. All children start in some capacity in the September of the academic year they turn five.

At Nanpean CP School we believe that the Early Years are the most important stage in a child's development. Therefore we strive to provide quality opportunities and an environment conducive to learning and development, which will enable them to reach their full potential and provide the strong foundations upon which they can build throughout the rest of their education and beyond.

*"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance." (EYFS, Statutory Framework 2007, p.7)*

The EYFS is underpinned by the five 'Every Child Matters' outcomes; staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic wellbeing, and it is based upon the four following principles:

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

### A unique child:

Child development:

At Nanpean CP School we believe that every child is a competent learner, who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured, given the right environment. We also understand that every child is unique and different and they can only reach their full potential if their needs are met. Therefore, we endeavour to know children individually, to fully understand each one of them as 'a unique child', so that through observation, we can plan to meet their learning, developmental and care needs in a way that best suits them. Each child has their own learning journey book, in which we record their achievements and progress towards the early learning goals (ELGs). We also complete the e-profile for every individual; this helps us to plan for their unmet needs.

Inclusive Practice:

In addition this means that we accept each child for who they are and the background they come from, building an inclusive environment in which they feel safe and they can begin to understand the differences between themselves and others and value these differences. Resources and planning take into account gender, race, religion, ability, disabilities, language and special educational needs. All children in the EYFS have realistic, yet challenging expectations, as we believe in setting a standard that we know they can achieve if they are provided for appropriately, encouraged and praised for their achievements.

We meet individual needs by; planning learning opportunities that build upon what they already know and can do, and what interests them, to build their self-esteem and confidence, using a range of teaching strategies that we know meets their learning needs, providing a safe and secure environment where their input is valued, providing more challenging opportunities for the higher achievers, monitoring progress and

thus providing more support where needed and seeking specialist support from outside agencies, where specific needs are identified.

Please see our Special Educational Needs Policy for more information on inclusion at Nanpean.

## Keeping safe:

We are fully aware, from our own experiences that children can only learn and thrive when they feel happy, safe and secure, therefore at Nanpean CP School, we work very hard to ensure each child feels this way. We understand that the EYFS has many legal statutory welfare requirements to help us achieve this, which we adhere to. These cover the safeguarding and promotion of children's welfare, suitable people, suitable premises, environment and equipment, organisation and documentation and are laid out in the EYFS Statutory Framework booklet. We also consider children's safety at home, keeping pastoral records of things we see or hear from the children and others, it is our duty to ensure children are being cared for in every environment they experience.

## Health and well-being:

This is something we feel very strongly about at Nanpean CP School. We were re-accredited Healthy School status in September 2009 and work hard to ensure children's health and well-being is catered for at school, and that they understand how to be healthy and supported at home. With Personal, Social and Emotional development being one of the 3 prime and 4 specific areas of learning in the EYFS, we understand its significance and it receives equal measure of importance to the other areas of learning. In fact, we believe it deserves more, as we are so aware in the environment of our school, how important it is that these children feel secure, healthy and well in every sense of the word before anything else is possible.

## Positive relationships:

### Respecting each other:

*'Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and or a key person' (EYFS, Practice Guidance, 2007, p.5).*

At Nanpean CP School we take our legal role as *in loco parentis* very seriously. We are aware of child protection issues, so act professionally and appropriately, but we believe that whilst that child is at school, we are their parent, and so we treat them as our children. If they are sad or hurt we give them a hug, to make them feel better and loved, especially after taking into consideration our beliefs on children's well-being being crucial to learning. We listen to feelings, we interact according to these feelings and thus we respect each other.

### Parents as Partners:

*'Parents are children's first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have apposite impact on children's development and learning'*

We fully embrace parents as partners at Nanpean CP School, because we believe this quote to be true. In the EYFS, we start as we mean to go on by offering a home visit to every child in the term before they are due to start school. The child's new teacher and teaching assistant visit the home together, to gather valuable information from the parents about their child so that as soon as they start school their needs can be met. This helps us to get to know the family and for them to see that we value their input into their child's education and for the child to become more familiar with their new practitioners and to see the beginning of the respectful partnership between their teacher and their parent/s. The parents are also invited to a transition meeting led by the Head teacher and the EYFS Teacher, who informs them about all aspects of school life and expectations.

We continue to value the parent's input asking them to tell us about significant achievements at home, and having an open door policy, so that they know they can speak to us at any time about any concerns they may have. We have a display board for information for parents and in the EYFS we send home a half-termly newsletter to inform parents about topics, learning opportunities and other information about the child's time in school. We also have formal parents evening twice a year and a school report with their completed profile at the end of the school year. There are also various school events that the parents are invited to, such as assemblies, sports day, fayres and so on.

## Supporting learning:

We understand that the 'teacher' is the most valuable resource in any classroom and therefore, every child receives support in their learning from an adult, through a respectful and developing relationship. All children are listened to and valued, as we are aware children respond better to someone whom they have a positive relationship with. Through this strong relationship, children's needs can be specifically met.

## Key person:

At Nanpean CP School we feel that the class teacher is every child's key person. They are the one that needs to know each child individually and respond to their needs. The teaching assistant is the second key person and will also know every child well and help children to settle and become more independent. All the adults work together to help children feel safe and cared for and build relationships with their parents.

## **Enabling Environments:**

### Observation, assessment and planning:

As discussed earlier we acknowledge that every child is unique and learns in different ways and rates to each other. Therefore we observe each child in the setting individually to ascertain what they can do, what motivates and inspires them as learners and thus what their next steps are. This is the first step in the observation, assessment and planning cycle. At Nanpean CP school we do this through formal and informal observations. This includes observing them during child-initiated, teacher-initiated and teacher led activities and recording what they show they can do, be it on a formal observation sheet, a Post-it note, a photograph or a mental note. All the adults within the class are involved in this process, as are the parents. These observations are then placed in each child's 'Learning Journey'. From these observations, assessments are then made towards the ELGs, which are highlighted in their learning journey or directly onto the e-profile. It is a legal requirement for children to have a completed EYFS Profile by the end of their reception year, which is shared with their parents.

The final cog in the cycle is planning, as assessments are logged the missing links in every child's development is highlighted and thus these are used to provide exciting learning opportunities to enable the children to achieve their next steps in a way that suits them and motivates them to learn. At Nanpean CP School we have a long-term rolling programme of planning and topics. We then prepare medium term planning to show how we will meet the ELGs through the topics each term. Finally, in the EYFS, we use a weekly planning format that shows the learning opportunities provided across the seven areas of learning, the ELGs these meet, how we may support individual children and how we will observe and assess the children during these activities. We also plan for the use of the indoor and outdoor environment in the children's child-initiated play. However, we realise that opportunities arise daily, such as snow or something exciting that has happened in a child life. Therefore our planning is always flexible enough to cater towards the children's excitement and interests, as this is when true learning occurs. Weekly planning will show where topics may have changed from that of the rest of the class to follow these interests.

## Supporting every child:

At Nanpean CP School we ensure that our environment supports every child, in their learning needs and any other need they may have. We plan for a range of experiences through teaching and play, indoors and

outdoors, that excite all the children, boy or girl, more able or less able. We observe what each child needs to take their next step; we listen to each child's view and what they would like to learn about. We take everything into consideration and provide for each individual need as far as we are able.

The learning environment:

*'A rich and varied environment supports children's learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe, yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces.'*  
(EYFS, Principles into Practice card 3.3, 2007)

As mentioned previously we provide a secure and safe emotional environment by building strong relationships with all the children, this ensures the children feel confident to explore their environment. We plan exciting learning opportunities indoors and out, on our weekly planning formats. We value the importance of outdoor play and strive to have a free-flow classroom where children can access the immediate outdoor environment all of the time, which caters for all six areas of learning. This area is secure and within view of the classroom. It allows play on a larger scale than is possible indoors and ensures the children receive their 50% outdoor play. In addition, we also make use of the wider school environment, allowing the children to have first-hand experiences with the natural world and gaining a sense of freedom and an understanding of risk, with adult input on safety and behaviour. See our outdoor policy for more information.

Our indoor environment also has a wide range of learning opportunities for the seven areas of learning and all learning needs and it provides a safe place for all children. It contains appropriate resources for all children that are well maintained and accessible to encourage independence. The children are involved in the upkeep of the environment; they help to keep it tidy, they share their views on what things they would like to have access to, especially in the design of the role-play area.

The wider context:

At Nanpean CP School we have strong links with the pre-school to aid transition, the new intake attend school for a number of settling in sessions and the class teacher and head visit the pre-school. The pre-school attend a lot of school events and make use of school facilities. Finally, the pre-school pass on observations and assessments they have made of the children starting school. Where children attend the pre-school in the afternoons or after school, important information is passed on.

We also work together with outside agencies where necessary, such as speech and language therapists, health or social care professionals and so on. Effective communication is necessary to best meet the needs of the children and their families.

In Nanpean, there is a very strong community atmosphere, which we value highly and build strong links with. The children learn about their local community and we invite in visitors, such as the Vicar, the policeman, the elderly and so on. In the EYFS we also like to go for walks around the village, to the shop or the church, for children to gain an understanding of safety and to learn about their local environment.

## **Learning and development:**

Play and exploration:

*'Play is the highest expression of human development in childhood, for it alone is the free expression of what is in a child's soul'* Froebel, date unknown.

Play is so crucial for young children's learning and development; it is through play they learn best and at their highest level. We, at Nanpean, fully embrace play in the EYFS, all the planned learning opportunities are play based, as we know how much better first hand, hands-on experiences are for a young child to fulfil their full potential. The children may play alone, with their peers or supported by an adult. In their play they practice what they already can do and they are free to take risks and challenge themselves to do

more. They are creative, problem solvers, risk takers. Play meets all of the seven areas of learning and develops their language and communication skills effectively. We try to provide the resources, space and time they need for play. We observe their play, scaffold their play and intervene where necessary.

## Active learning:

In the EYFS we provide the children with physical and mental challenges. We provide active, personalised learning that involves people, objects, ideas and events, that meets the interests of our children, which helps them to engage with the learning and sustain concentration for longer. Active learning builds independence, confidence and self-esteem. It helps the children learn to make their own decisions. We achieve this through our observations and assessments of children, thus providing learning opportunities that meet their needs and their interests. We learn to stand back and let the children learn for themselves instead of being told.

## Creativity and critical thinking:

This involves allowing the children to play with ideas in different situations and with different resources, so like active learning they discover the connections for themselves. The sense of achievement is far greater and the understanding is far deeper, instead of knowing something, they understand it, as they have worked it out for themselves. The adults support this process by encouraging them to think critically and ask questions, we support them in what they are doing, working with them when necessary and challenging their thinking further. Creativity covers all areas of learning not just the arts. In our EYFS classroom, all resources are accessible and available to children at all times, they are allowed to things from 'specific areas' to where they are playing, as we understand this develops their creativity and develops their thinking. At Nanpean we try not to be prescriptive or restrictive, if the children understand how to look after our environment they are allowed to use it in the way they need to, to make those important links in their learning. We observe children's creativity and thinking to make judgements on their achievements towards the ELGs and record this in the 'learning journeys' through photo's and words. We also provide a balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities.

## Areas of learning and development:

Within the EYFS there are three prime areas and 4 specific areas of learning. We strongly believe, as is the ethos of the EYFS that the six areas are all interwoven and that they are all equally important. They are:

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

All areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, both indoors and outdoors. Each area also has requirements setting out what practitioners must provide in order to support children's learning and development.

## **Monitoring and review:**

All teachers are observed by the head teacher on a regular basis. The EY governor will also monitor the practice within the Reception class. It is the teacher's responsibility to follow the principles of this policy. The EY co-ordinator will also continually review the practice of the class that it meets the needs of the children.

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