



## **Chase Side Primary School**

### **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy**

**REVIEWED AND ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNORS  
OF CHASE SIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL  
ON 19<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2025**

**Next Review: November 2026**

As with all of our School Policies, the Early Years Foundation Stage Policy reflects the ethos, values and vision of the school.

#### Our Ethos:

Our ethos encompasses being welcoming, inclusive, friendly, caring and ensuring that working together underpins everything we do.

Everyone has the right to expect and benefit from this ethos and these values are demonstrated in all aspects of school life. Everyone who is part of or who visits our learning community is asked to adhere to our values and ethos.

#### Our vision:

- Developing confident lifelong learners
- Embracing and valuing our diversity
- Making a positive impact in our community

#### Our Values:

The shared values of our school include:

- Kindness
- Respect
- Friendship
- Honesty
- Resilience

**Stronger Together!**

## **Chase Side Primary: Early Years Foundation Stage**

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Chase Side Primary School, children may join us in our school Nursery or Reception classes.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Chase Side Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

### **Aims & Objectives**

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

### **At Chase Side Primary School, we will:**

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and 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.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

### **The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:**

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

### **The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes:**

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

### **A Unique Child**

At Chase Side Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning:

## **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at Chase Side Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

As part of the Early Year Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations specific to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. We do this through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of more able children, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds;
- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.

## **Positive Relationships**

At Chase Side Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

## **Parents as Partners**

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at our induction meetings.
- Arranging, where possible, visits by the teacher to all children in their home setting or childcare provision prior to their starting school.
- Providing a handbook of information about commencing Nursery or Reception at Chase Side.
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home-School agreement.
- Inviting parents/carers and children to a stay and play session before starting Nursery and to Reception if the family is new to the school.
- Providing an induction meeting for Nursery and Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.
- Holding "book looks", which are informal opportunities for parents to visit their child's class and share their learning through looking at their Special Books with their child.
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.

- Giving parents access via the website or newsletter to the current theme/overview of the term or half-term.
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading.
- Offering parents formal consultation times during the year in each term.
- Sending an Annual written report on their child's attainment and progress in the Spring.
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, workshops, and sports day etc.
- Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers.

## **Enabling Environments**

At Chase Side Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

## **Learning Styles**

During the Early Years the children will be exposed to a range of teaching and learning styles from play based learning to directed group and whole class teaching, depending on the needs of the children, the point in the year and the aspects being taught.

During play-based learning children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff to enable next steps.

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

During direct teaching the children are exposed to new concepts in whole class carpet sessions and then given opportunities to apply these skills in small groups with a member of staff providing challenge and support.

## **Learning and Developing**

The EYFS Curriculum – Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years' settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.

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.

**The Three Prime areas are:**

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

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied;

**Specific Areas:**

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the world**
- **Expressive arts and design**

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Nursery pupils also participate in regular phonics session following the guidance in the "Little Wandle" and in line with school policy these increase in frequency during the summer, as well as regular Literacy and Maths carpet times which also increase in frequency during the summer term.

Reception pupils also participate in daily phonics sessions, following the guidance in the "Little Wandle" and in line with school policy, as well as regular Literacy and Maths carpet times. Over the week there may be a focus on other areas of development during carpet sessions.

In the Autumn/Spring term Reception will also start "Little Wandle" reading groups these will increase in frequency throughout the year. To begin with children all start with wordless books and work on their prosody skills and comprehension skills.

During the year the teaching style will shift from a majority play based learning in the autumn into a balance of direct teaching and play based learning in the spring with a greater emphasis on direct teaching in the summer term. So that by the end of the Summer Term they will have some experience of what the expectations will be in Year 1, and support a successful transition into key Stage 1.

**Characteristics of Effective Learning**

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- **Playing and exploring** - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

*'Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play, children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.'*

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

- **Active learning** - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

*‘Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.’*

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

- **Creating and thinking critically** - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

*“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they can discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions”.*

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

### **Long Term Planning**

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers use the national schemes of work, for example **Little Wandle** to support phonics teaching and White Rose to enhance maths where appropriate, to support their planning. The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document.

### **Medium Term planning**

Medium term planning is based upon themes with discrete phonics, maths and reading directed teaching. However, planning, which is based upon a different theme which is identified as vehicle of interest to deliver the children’s next steps in learning, also therefore responds to the needs, achievement and interest of the children. Our medium-term planning identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals. Medium term planning can be based upon a theme such as a particular story or popular children’s interests. During the year our EYFS may also be included in whole school learning themes such as Maths, Art or Science week.

### **Short term Planning**

This includes the specific learning for the week on weekly plans for Phonics, English, Maths and any of the other areas being covered that week. It also identifies any targeted small group teaching and where and who staff will be working with.

## **Focus Weeks**

These give the child an opportunity to bring a few of their favourite toys/objects from home and parents send pictures to give an opportunity for staff and children to learn more about each individual child. Also, this is a good opportunity for children to build on their self-confidence and communication skills.

## **Observations**

Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's special folders. All children are observed over each term on a cycle that makes sure every child is included. Other information is gathered via anecdotal notes and teacher's class records.

## **Assessment**

During the first six weeks, the staff assesses the ability of each child using the DFE Online Baseline assessments alongside observations and record where they are in their learning on our in-school assessment system (Scholarpack) as a Baseline. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

## **The Foundation Stage Profile**

This is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

We record each child's level of development against the 17 Early Learning Goals as Emerging, Expected or Exceeding. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

The EYFS staff, keep examples of each child's work in their special folders, there are also example in Literacy and Maths books. These special folders contain a wide range of evidence that we share with parents at each parental 'book look'. The children have supervised access to their folders and may add their own work. Staff will follow the marking and feedback guidelines to annotate work included and wherever possible parents are also welcome to contribute to the folders with photos and things made at home.

Tracking using Scholarpack is updated at key assessment points during the school year, along with the rest of the school. We record each child's level of development to be emerging into, developing within, or securely working within the Development Matters age-bands.

At the end of the final term in Reception we send a summary of these assessments to the LA for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for

the year ahead. We make sure we liaise with Year 1 so children have the best start in the next school year.

Parents receive an annual written report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and developmental needs, and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in the Spring and send them to parents in April each year.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school;
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the Foundation Stage.

### **Transition**

Starting Nursery or school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

Starting Nursery or Reception – Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an Induction Meeting in the Summer term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff and learn more about the Nursery and Reception curriculum. This is an opportunity for staff to:

- Go through the school handbook
- Explain about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals
- Explain about holidays and absences
- Explain arrangements for the gradual induction into Nursery / Reception.

Stay and play sessions - The children and parents/carers have the opportunity to come in to school to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class.

This means that before they join their new class the Nursery/Reception environment is already a familiar place to them.

Arrangements may also be made for the children's new class teacher to visit them in their current Nursery setting.

September Intake - When children join the school in September in Nursery, they start in small groups and gradually build up to 30 to allow parents to stay and settle their children and for staff to focus on new children.

In Reception children start for morning only and lunch for one week and then start full time, depending on their previous experience and ability to settle into their new school.

### **Good health**

All children are provided with a healthy snack each day, Nursery are offered breakfast and milk. As well as having access to water at all times.

### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of those working in the EYFS to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher and EYFS co-ordinator and other members of SLT will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

This Policy will be reviewed in November 2027.