

# Chantry Community Academy Early Years Policy

| Key Document Details: |                  |                       |                 |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Author:</b>        | Early Years Lead | <b>Department:</b>    | Education - CCA |
| <b>Reviewer:</b>      | Executive Team   | <b>Version No:</b>    | 1.0             |
| <b>Last Review:</b>   | January 2023     | <b>Next Review:</b>   | January 2024    |
| <b>Approver:</b>      | CEO/DCEO         | <b>Date Ratified:</b> | 16 January 2023 |

## Contents

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Document Change History .....                       | 2 |
| Mission Statement .....                             | 3 |
| Values .....  | 3 |
| Statement of Equality.....                          | 3 |
| Rationale .....                                     | 3 |
| Aims .....  | 3 |
| Legislation.....                                    | 4 |
| Structure of the Early Years Foundation Stage ..... | 4 |
| Curriculum .....                                    | 4 |
| The 3 Prime areas of learning.....                  | 5 |
| The 4 Specific Areas of learning.....               | 5 |
| Planning .....                                      | 5 |
| Teaching Early Years.....                           | 6 |
| English as a second language .....                  | 6 |
| SEN in the early years.....                         | 6 |
| Assessment .....                                    | 7 |
| Working with parents.....                           | 7 |
| Safeguarding and welfare procedures.....            | 7 |
| Monitoring and Review .....                         | 7 |

## Document Change History

| Date:      | Version: | Description of Changes:       |
|------------|----------|-------------------------------|
| 16.01.2023 | 1.0      | Updated version for agreement |
|            |          |                               |
|            |          |                               |
|            |          |                               |

## Mission Statement

*“To nurture and develop all people in our Trust so that they reach their full potential academically, vocationally, and personally, including being positive role models for future generations in the community. We will achieve this by providing high quality values-based education that cultivates employability and life skills making our schools the first choice for young people, parents, carers, staff and employers.”*

## Values

The values of Respect, Excellence, Collaboration, Independence, Perseverance, Enjoyment, Leadership, Integrity and Care are central to everything we do at the Skills for Life Trust.

## Statement of Equality

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

## Rationale

The focus within our Early Years practice and provision has been to develop effective methods which support communication and language as the vehicle for teaching and learning. Practitioners will develop their reflective practice to encourage spontaneous and ‘in the moment’ planning within the continuous and enhanced provision. In Reception classroom practitioners will strike the right balance between directed and undirected sessions. In Nursery classes practitioners predominately will support children’s learning through play.

**Aims** - This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- 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 carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

## Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2021 (revised version) of the non-statutory frameworks for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), 'Development Matters'. Although not a mandatory requirement from 2021, Chantry Community Academy will complete the EYFS profile that measures Reception children's end of year attainment on the ELGs to inform year 1 teachers and parents of their child's progress.

## Structure of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Our Early Years provision has the capacity to accommodate 60 Reception children across two classes and 26 AM/PM (52 capacity) preschool children in our Nursery preschool classroom. Each Reception class of 30 children are supported by a class teacher and two teaching assistants. At the end of the year, we may make changes to the classes if necessary for year one. In Nursery we operate the key person system. A key person is a member of staff who will be the main point of contact for parents and more importantly for the child. The Nursery is led by a qualified teacher and supported by support staff with relevant qualifications (as set out in the EYFS Handbook) to be included in the Nursery ratios.

## Curriculum

Our Early Years setting follows the curriculum non-statutory framework 'Development Matters' (revised 2021). The framework outlines the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning and the 7 areas of Development (CoETL). The CoETL are organised into three primary strands and are essential components towards children becoming self-regulated learners.

These 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
- There are 7 curriculum areas of development. These are divided into Prime and Specific areas of learning

## The 3 Prime areas of learning

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development Communication and language underpins all areas of learning within our Early Years curriculum and continues to be developed within our provision, teaching, learning and planning methods.
- The prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. Planned learning supports the progress and development of listening and speaking, enabling children to process information into thinking and understanding. Children practise their physical skills alongside developing social skills, which supports greater independence and higher levels of confidence.

## The 4 Specific Areas of learning

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

The 4 specific areas of learning provide a context for development and reflect cultural knowledge and accumulated understanding. They are dependent on learning in the Prime areas. Our continuous provision demonstrates a strong emphasis upon supporting children's understanding of the world along with enabling them to express themselves imaginatively and creatively, using art and design. New learning and topics are adapted to reflect the needs of the children and their interests.

## Planning

The 3 prime areas are at the core of early years planning. Staff carefully plan activities which enable children to link personal experiences with new learning, providing a wide range of contexts to revisit, practise, apply, and develop transferable skills and understanding.

Emphasis is placed upon the importance of using sensory play in the development of language skills, alongside enhancing provision for identified groups of children. Staff consider the individual needs, interests, and stages of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. Staff are reflective in their practice and systematically observe and evaluate the effectiveness and value of planned provision within the inside and outside learning

spaces. They respond to children's levels of interest and engagement, ensuring accurate pitch and pace for developing cognition and learning. Planning and interactions are supported by progressive sequences of questioning to develop thinking, understanding and language for reasoning.

## Teaching Early Years

Our practice demonstrates a balance between play and formal teaching. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1. Staff interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play, provides rich opportunities for communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges. Staff understand that play is about much more than content but helps to build flexible minds and an enquiring spirit. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. They consider the equipment provided and the attention to the physical environment as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations. Staff understand that teaching is in every activity provided within all of the learning environments. There are no activities that occur in the setting which adults do not consider to be opportunities for teaching. While staff do not always know where these opportunities will present themselves, it is the skill of the adults that enable them to readily recognise the 'teachable moments' when they arise and respond to them appropriately.

## English as a second language

Children whose home language is not English we provide opportunities for them to develop and use their home language in play and learning which will support their language development at home. We ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and use English and reach a good standard by the end of the EYFS to enable them to access the school curriculum in Year 1. If a child does not have a strong grasp of the English language, then they must explore the child's skills in the home language to establish whether there may be a cause for concern about a language delay.

## SEN in the early years

All early year's providers are required to have arrangements in place to identify and support children with SEN or disabilities and to promote equality of opportunity for children in their care. These requirements are set out in the EYFS Handbook. The EYFS Handbook also requires practitioners to review children's progress and share a summary with parents. (DFE SEND Code of practice 2014 5.12)

## **Assessment**

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of teaching, learning and development processes. Staff observe children to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, predominately through a system called Tapestry. These observations are used to identify developmental gaps, support differentiation, inform children's next steps in learning and monitor their progress. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. Where there is little or no progress or improvement, it may be necessary to involve more specialist professionals such as specialist teachers, health or social services for more detailed assessments. During the course of the year EYFS teachers will input 4 sets of summative data to track children's progress. At the beginning of Reception all children who can access the materials will take part in the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) which is a statutory requirement to be completed within the first 6 weeks of starting Reception.

## **Working with parents**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between Nursery practitioners, Class teachers, Teaching assistants and parents and/or carers. We send regular updates on Tapestry and encourage parental/carer involvement every term through celebrating children's achievements.

## **Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

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

## **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed by the Early Years Lead annually.