



Cabot
Learning
Federation



EYFS Policy

July 2023

History of most recent Policy changes

| Date | Page | Change | Origin of Change e.g. TU request, Change in legislation |
|---------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Date | E.g. Whole Document | Detail of change | Reason for change |
| November 2017 | Whole document | No change | Adopted |
| October 2018 | Whole document | No change | |
| November 2020 | Page 3-6 | Added Seesaw engagement section. Rights and responsibility changed to Gem Power Changes to induction process – due to Covid-19 / parental feedback | New home/school communication New primary phase initiative In response to pandemic |
| March 2021 | 1 | Table of contents added | Annual policy review prior to Academy Council |
| June 2022 | Whole document | Amended section 5. Change to Induction. Added section 6 – Staff Supervision | Reviewed |
| July 2023 | Whole document | Review of whole document. Addition of the EYFS 3I statements | Update of document |

Contents

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Rationale..... | 4 |
| 2. Intent | 4 |
| 3. The Implementation of the EYFS curriculum..... | 4 |
| 4. Safeguarding..... | 7 |
| 5. Induction..... | 7 |
| 6. Staff Supervision | 7 |

Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At King's Oak Academy, children join Reception class in the September of the year that they turn five. A child's early education lasts a lifetime; it's the foundation for lifelong learning. At King's Oak Academy we value the important role EYFS plays in laying a secure foundation for future learning and development.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive Relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling Environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Learning and Development – an acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

Intent

At King's Oak Academy, we are passionate and supportive of the development of children as unique individuals and we are determined to provide all children with a secure foundation for future learning in Key Stage One and beyond. We provide engaging and well-sequenced learning experiences which enable children to learn more and remember more over time. **We work in partnership with parents and carers** to ensure that parents understand what their child can do now, what they need to do next and how they can best support them at home. Our ambitious curriculum is the cultural capital we know our pupils need so that they can gain the skills, knowledge and understanding they require for success. We embed the right **habits for learning through the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning** – Play and Exploration, Active Learning and Creative and Critical Thinking. Many of our pupils arrive below national expectations for their age and a proportion come from disadvantaged backgrounds and with complex needs. **We prioritise teaching them how to listen, speak and meet the high expectations for behaviour** by working hard and being kind. There is a focus on **securing all children's personal, social and emotional development and communication and language skills so that all children develop a sense of self, place and belonging.** Our enabling environment and high-quality adult interactions support the children as they begin to link learning to their play and exploration. Development in these prime areas is supported by **high quality and well-planned continuous and enhanced provision.**

The Implementation of the EYFS Curriculum

Pupils learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed learning opportunities. The timetable is carefully structured so that children have rigorous directed teaching in Authors, Maths and Phonics with daily review time sessions to focus on children's self-reflection against the Characteristics of Effective Learning. The Characteristics of Effective Learning are understood by the children using our whole-school Learning Gems approach. Whole-class sessions are followed by group work where children work with a member of staff to develop their individual next steps. This focused group time means the teacher can systematically check for understanding, identify and respond to misconceptions quickly and provide verbal feedback which results in a strong impact on learning.

Children are provided with time to initiate their own ideas through 'Discovery Time' where carefully planned enhancements are used to engage and challenge them in the provision. The curriculum is planned for the inside and outside classroom in a cross-curricular way so that children can use play to further explore the curriculum content that they are learning and rehearse, embed skills and promote active learning. The Early Years curriculum has been crafted to support children to acquire a strong foundation on which to build upon their learning as they move into Year 1 and access the Trust-wide CLF states of being-based curriculum. Our curriculum enables children to learn and develop skills, attitudes and understanding in these areas of learning:

The Prime Areas

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, social and Emotional Development

The Specific areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive Arts and Design

These prime and specific areas of learning are achieved through:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Staff consider the best use of classroom areas for learning – for example, physical development and understanding of the world is prioritised when children are learning in the outside areas. Children access a balance of child-initiated, adult-guided play and adult-led learning throughout the day. In this way, we ensure that the children have agency over their environment whilst also encouraging children to access areas of learning outside of their immediate interests and therefore enabling a breadth of learning across the curriculum. We value imagination and creativity and seek to create a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning through a vibrant continuous indoor and outdoor provision, alongside trips, visits and regular weekly forest school sessions. Our investment in specialist teachers for forest school mean that children continually receive high quality enrichment.

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum. Children follow the rigorous Unlocking Letters and Sounds program faithfully so that they achieve good outcomes for reading. Children in Reception start phonics as soon as they start school and reading books are well-matched to the children's phonic knowledge and to the Unlocking Letters & Sounds scheme. Children participate in a daily phonics session, weekly group reading and read 1:1 with a class teacher every fortnight. In addition, partnership with parents is prioritised – parents are invited to participate in phonics sessions at least 3 times a year and teachers communicate well with parents about their child's reading abilities and next steps. We place great value on story time in Reception as a vehicle for inspiring reading for pleasure, a love of literature and as a way of developing children's vocabulary and comprehension. **Core Treasure Texts** are brought alive through WOW sessions such as a moon picnic while sharing the story *Whatever Next!* Some other key aspects of the implementation of reading include:

- High quality, engaging book corners
- Developing parent links – Bedtime Bear, Books & Biscuits, Lending Library & Phonics Sessions

Developing children’s communication and language skills is a priority for our setting. Through our daily Author sessions, we provide children with high quality examples of story language, sentence structures and explicitly teach text-specific vocabulary. Our continuous provision provides further opportunities for children to practise using new words and adults model good speaking and listening skills when interacting with children. We map vocabulary that the children will encounter as they move into Year 1 into our planning so that adults are able to model and teach those words whilst children are engaging in practical and hands-on experiences in order to well-prepare them for the next stage in their education. Speaking and listening skills are woven into all areas of learning. Some key examples are:

- Use of stem sentences to support a full response.
- Recapping on vocabulary throughout the week and terms so children “bump” into prior learning again.
- Provocations, such as the Curiosity Cube, to encourage children to speculate and ask questions.

We follow the Maths Mastering Number approach in Reception with an emphasis on studying key skills of number, calculation and shape so that pupils develop deep understanding and the acquisition of mathematical language. Pupils learn through games and guided teacher tasks using concrete manipulatives which are then rehearsed and applied to their own learning during Discovery Time.

Our inclusive approach means that all children learn together but we have a range of additional intervention and support to enhance and scaffold children who may not be reaching their potential or moving on children who are doing very well. This includes, for example, Talk Boost; our nurture group with some of our vulnerable children or additional ‘catch-up’ provision in Maths. Staff also use ‘SMART MOVES’ which is an intervention focused on physical development. Termly phonics assessments are used to identify children who require additional teaching to keep up with their peers. This is delivered daily by well-trained teachers and teaching partners.

Our regular monitoring of teaching and learning includes coaching and feedback from the phase leader so that teachers develop a good subject knowledge and are effectively supported. We tailor our staff PD to be early years specific where appropriate and are focused on moderating outcomes across the phase and across the CLF Trust so that every member of our team feels confident in making accurate judgements about where individual pupils are and their next steps for learning. We work with the Early Years Federation Network and South Gloucestershire Early Years Team to keep up to date with developments in practice within the EYFS.

Impact

Our curriculum meets the needs of our children, including our disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. We spend time looking at and evaluating how children are learning. This is achieved through talking to children, looking at their work, observing their learning experiences and analysing data and progress by year group, class, groups and individuals.

Every member of staff uses **ongoing observational assessment** to identify children's starting points and plan experiences which ensure progress and some **summative assessments** such as termly phonics and maths assessments to track progress. We use this information on a weekly basis to plan learning experiences and next steps so that knowledge and skills are built cumulatively. During each assessment window, three times a year, teachers update the progress children have made which allows us to assess the impact of teaching and evaluate whether it has been enough. We will also carry out the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) which is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts in reception. In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile will be completed for each child in line with the Statutory Framework.

Our curriculum and its delivery ensure that children make good progress. Children in our early years, on average, arrive with lower starting points than national. During their time in our EYFS, children make rapid progress so that we exceed the national expectation for GLD at the end of the year. We believe our high standards are due to the enriched play-based exploration alongside the rigour of assessment and teaching the children have as they move through the early years – a rich diet of balanced learning experiences is undoubtedly the best way to develop happy, curious children.

Our curriculum is carefully structured to provide opportunities for children to learn through a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences. These are purposefully planned in all areas of learning and development in the indoor and outdoor environment. Some learning is led by adults and some by the children themselves. Appropriate intervention by practitioners supports children to engage in the learning process and to extend their learning.

Safeguarding

Children's safety and welfare is paramount to us. We ensure that all children in the school are safe. Through using our school 'Gem Powers,' we help our children to learn about making safe and kind choices. All adults constantly model positive learning behaviours and set clear, high expectations. We provide children with choices to help them develop their understanding of how their choices can keep themselves safe. Children should be allowed to take risks but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding documentation for further information). At King's Oak Academy we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2023.

Induction

Inductions are carefully planned for and time is given to ensure a smooth and successful start to school. We acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child, including other settings, such as nurseries.

For pupils joining Reception, during the Summer Term prior to starting school the following September, where possible, a member of the EYFS team will contact the pre-school settings to discuss each child and hold a professional conversation with their key worker. This may take the form of a telephone conversation or visit to the child's Pre-school. Staff will arrange stay

and play sessions, where the children and families can explore the learning environment and meet the staff. If stay and play sessions are unable to take place, each family will receive a personal phone call from the class teacher to discuss their child's interests and needs.

When children join the school in September the following procedures will apply so the children can gradually adjust to their new surroundings:

- During the first week of the Autumn Term, EYFS staff will visit each child in their home environment; children feel more at ease and are able to speak with teaching staff in a less formal way.
- During the second and third week, children will attend in small groups on specified days to enable relationships to be built.
- From the beginning of week four, children will attend for the full school day unless staff and parents/carers agree that it is not in the best interests of an individual child.

Staff Supervision

The Early Years' Foundation Stage Framework places an increased emphasis on welfare and safeguarding standards, stipulating that regular staff supervision is now a statutory requirement. As we strive to improve outcomes for all children and families, and narrow the gap in attainment of vulnerable children, safe systems and the effective management of staff performance and well-being are of prime importance. Professionally, staff supervision has been a normal part of counselling, psychotherapy and social work practice and is increasingly to be found in related caring professions. At a time of heightened awareness of safeguarding issues, there is increasing recognition that working in the early years includes a high degree of outreach work and contact with families. Many practitioners find themselves working in unusual contexts and dealing with unpredictable and sometimes extreme issues. The need for keeping practice and practitioners 'safe' is a priority. If early years' practitioners are to provide the kind of encouragement and support necessary for the support, development and challenge of children and families, they need to be encouraged, supported and challenged as well. The purpose of 'Supervision' is:

- To develop confidence, and increase skills, insight and courage when working with children, parents and communities.
- To establish and maintain a positive and co-operative working relationship between leaders and staff, built on trust and respect.
- To provide a reflective and safe space that encourages a dynamic interaction to address issues and dilemmas experienced by staff members in their work roles.
- To increase confidence in dealing with complex safeguarding and other dilemmas.
- To ensure organisational and staff accountability and development, thereby promoting reflective, creative, ethical and safe practice.
- To ensure staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities, and that their practice is consistent with setting's values, policies, procedures and quality standards.
- To monitor progress in relation to appraisal objectives.
- To identify and review personal development needs and activities for staff that relate to their roles and the needs of the setting.

Each member of staff will have a Key Stage leader/ line manager. Supervision will be on a termly basis – but the frequency may change depending on circumstances, such as complex child protection issues. An agreed Staff Supervision Record form will be used to capture discussion points and decisions made. Supervision meetings can take the form of individual or group meetings. Supervisors may need to access external support to provide supervision of a more clinical nature (e.g., social care, counselling, speech and language therapy, infant mental health).