



CHALK RIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy April 2026

Last reviewed April 2026. Next review – April 2029

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This is a school policy using the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage,

DfE September 2025

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Aim

All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences within early years have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.

The Early Years Statutory Framework sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The EYFS is about what children learn, as well as how they learn. Effective practice is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other, through adult-guided learning and direct teaching.

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years.

These are:

- ✓ Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
- ✓ Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive nurturing relationships**.
- ✓ Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- ✓ Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See "the characteristics of effective teaching and learning" at paragraph 1.18). The framework covers the education and care of all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).



A Unique Child

At Chalk Ridge Primary School, we believe that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We know that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by their school and home environments and we begin to build links with the families as soon as possible. We observe how each child learns to gain an understanding of the characteristics they develop to become effective learners. We use questioning, praise and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning and high self-esteem.

During their first year at school, the children are introduced to positive learning behaviours and the routines of a school day. They are taught to be observant, investigative, curious, determined, imaginative, adventurous, co-operative and to use reasoning. They develop an understanding that everyone can learn with practise and effort. The children are taught how to learn and how to become successful learners.

Positive Relationships

At Chalk Ridge Primary School, we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the EYFS framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. All Early Years members of staff endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents.

We value the role of parents as children's primary educators. We encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes and dislikes). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interest.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the school through emails, reading records and informal discussions at the beginning and end of the day. Parents are also provided the opportunity to ask open questions to their child about their day from a communication whiteboard that is updated daily on what the school day has consisted of. This also allows for opportunities to give suggestions of how parents can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been covered in the school. Whole school newsletters are also sent home on a weekly basis.

Parents are invited to attend parents' evenings during the course of the academic year. The first of these takes place during the autumn term to allow teachers and parents to discuss how children have settled into school. Another parent's evening takes place during the spring and summer term where teachers will feedback on children's learning and development progress.

The school has a friendly, open-doors ethos and the Early Years members of staff are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of each day. Parents are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have.

Enabling environments with teaching and support from adults

At Chalk Ridge Primary School, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in enhancing, supporting and extending the children's development. The role of both the indoor and outdoor environment in learning/organisation provides opportunities for child-initiated activities reflecting the theme where they can develop specific skill sets, such as gross motor and social skills. We provide



stimulating resources which are accessible and open-ended so they can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways.

Learning and Development

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected. The children have time and freedom to become deeply involved in the activities and their learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage framework is divided into seven areas of learning and development that are used to teach children at Chalk Ridge Primary School. All of these areas of development are important and interconnected.

The 3 prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The specific areas are:

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

Active Learning through play in the EYFS

We organise the day to provide a balance between the following;

- Child initiated activities - children make choices from within the learning environment to meet their outcome for learning.
- Adult initiated activities- practitioners provide the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning.
- Adult directed activities – Children engage in planned activities to meet specific learning outcomes.

At Chalk Ridge Primary School, we know that young children learn best when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and our Early Years Foundation Stage has an ethos of learning through play.

We recognise the importance of children's play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

In providing these active learning opportunities through play we understand the central position of play within the EYFS framework. This is essentially a play-based curriculum and pedagogy as the provision of play opportunities underpins its delivery.



Inclusion

All children and their families are valued within our school. We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate because of differences. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or stage of learning. We do not group children based on notions of fixed ability. We teach the children that practice and effort lead to learning and improvement. Teachers plan activities that enable all children to access the learning and to achieve as highly as possible.

In the Early Years the children begin to learn to take responsibility for their learning and begin to understand the concept of challenge. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. Planning for children with additional needs is completed in liaison with the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator and external professionals.

In the EYFS we have realistic and challenging expectations and meet the needs of all our children through:

- ✓ planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests and develop their self-esteem and confidence through a creative curriculum and learning environment
- ✓ using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- ✓ providing a wide range of opportunities and environments to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- ✓ providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which each child's contribution is valued
- ✓ monitoring children's progress and providing support as necessary

It is vital that all children in the school are safe. Within our nurturing environment, we provide children with opportunities to help them develop the skills they need to keep themselves safe. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards both in the real and virtual world.

Planning, Observation and Assessment

Long term planning is linked to curriculum goals which are specific to the needs of the cohort, it is carefully sequenced to build on learning over time with the flexibility to adapt and change whilst being implemented to best facilitate the children's learning and development. Short/medium term planning is linked to key themes and the children's interests. A two/three weekly plan provides learning opportunities which include a range of adult focused and child-initiated activities indoors. The school also makes use of the outdoor environment whenever possible. An indoor and outdoor plan ensures all areas of learning are covered in the indoor and outdoor area and clearly linked to the two/three weekly planning. At Chalk Ridge, daily phonics and reading practise is carried out through following the 'Little Wandle' programme.

Assessment is about noticing what children can do and what they know and requires the staff to understand child development. Assessment of attainment and progress is based on observation, discussion, questioning and evidence of children's independent learning. Valuable evidence of children's learning is obtained through observation of independent and targeted learning. These observations are undertaken by teachers and learning support assistants. Observation checkpoints help identify children



who are at risk of falling behind and informs on children's abilities, needs, interests, play and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress.

Learning Journeys record children's independent progress over the academic year in all areas of learning and development of the EYFS framework. Samples of children's work are gathered, along with photographic evidence and observations.

Each child has their own Literacy and Maths book in which a weekly recording takes place to observe, assess and monitor the child's progression and areas of support needed.

Parents receive an end of year annual report that offers comments on the children's progress in Communication, Literacy, Maths and the Characteristics of Effective Learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress.

Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)

The RBA is an age-appropriate assessment of early mathematics and literacy, communication and language. It is delivered in English and is administered within the first six weeks of a pupil starting reception. The RBA will be used to create school level progress measures for primary schools which will show the progress pupils make from reception until the end of Key Stage 2. The children will complete the RBA with their class teacher once it is deemed the appropriate time to do so, within the first 6 weeks. The results of the assessment will not be used by the class teacher to assess children's ability upon entry to school.

Admissions and Induction

Chalk Ridge Primary School provides full-time Early Years education for children in the Reception Year. This is for children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old. We offer regular school tours to prospective parents and carers.

Before they start in the school, all children are offered a series of stay and play sessions during the summer term. The purpose of these initial visits is for the children to meet their new teachers and learning support assistants and start to become familiar with the classroom environment. The aim of these visits is to support staff in developing their knowledge and understanding of each child in order to make the transition period to Chalk Ridge Primary School as smooth as possible.

In the summer term parents are invited into school to meet the teachers and learning support assistants. At this meeting information regarding the induction process and what goes on in the school is shared. There is also time for informal chat and parents' questions. Information packs, that will be distributed to parents at this meeting, contain help and guidelines for starting school, details of school routines and school expectations etc. We also provide the child opportunities to participate in a 'post card' activity, as another way to help staff gain knowledge and understanding of each individual child.

In September the class teachers and learning support assistants meet with the parents and children, this is another opportunity to find out valuable information about the children before they start school. It also helps staff to build relationships with parents and children before they begin school. From September children attend the school part-time, then full time. This induction process is usually completed within a week, though parents can opt for their child to attend full-time should they see fit. Every effort is made to make children feel safe, secure and happy. There is a relaxed and open ethos in the school. Established



routines, a calm atmosphere and encouraging talk are some of the strategies members of staff use to maintain children's positive feelings about school.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This Governor will discuss EYFS practice with the Early Years staff regularly and provide feedback to the whole Governing Body, raising any issues that require discussion. The Headteacher and subject coordinators will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.