



## **EARLY YEARS POLICY**

### **COLLEGE TOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Approved Date	Sept 2025
Approved at FGB	Sept 2025
Date of Next Review	Sept 2026
Statutory	YES
Adopted from Bracknell Forest	NO

## **EYFS Policy**

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five 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 together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up (All quotes in this document are from ‘The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.’ DFE March 2021).

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school the children can join us in Nursery after their third birthday, or during a phased introduction at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults
- Learning and Development

### **A Unique Child**

At College Town 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, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### ***Inclusion***

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children at College Town Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion, gender or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to become the best that they can be. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds where necessary.

We 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;
- 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 to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. 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 well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Policy)

### ***Welfare***

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them."

At College Town Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage March 2021.

We understand that we are required to:

- Promote good health – including oral hygiene
- Manage behaviour
- Maintain records, policies and procedures
- Follow the school Safeguarding Policy
- Ensure that the adults working with the children are suitable

During a child's education at College Town Primary school we promote good oral health, as well as good health in general. We regularly, and routinely talk about:

The effects of eating too many sweet things and the importance of brushing your teeth. The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

## **Positive Relationships**

At College Town Primary School we recognise that children learn to be confident and independent through the development of secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

### ***Parents as Partners***

We recognise that parents are children's first and lifelong educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

#### **Nursery:**

- The children have the opportunity for a home visit. The home visits are arranged for as close to the child's start date as possible. During the home visit the children will be presented with a picture book, this will include photographs of the school and staff. The class teacher and a TA will attend the home visit.
- The start dates are staggered with the youngest (summer born) children starting first in small groups. We can offer shorter sessions too, for example only staying for one hour in their first week if the child is finding transition difficult. The parents are invited to stay and play to settle their child.
- Within the first term the parents are invited into school for a meeting with the class teacher, this meeting provides further information on Nursery and how the day runs.
- Within the first half term each child will be given a Chatter Bag. A Chatter Bag is an opportunity to develop the child's communication and language skills at home and at school.
- Parents are invited to special events for example, sports day or school trips. They are invited to help in Nursery whenever it is convenient for them.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress. Parents can login to Target Tracker Home Link to access observations that have been completed at school.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents in the first term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.

#### **Reception:**

- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher, in the classroom, before starting at school. During our Moving on Afternoon.

- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Children new to the school have the opportunity for a home visit. The home visits are arranged for as close to the child's start date as possible. During the home visit the children will be presented with a picture book, this will include photographs of the school and staff. The class teacher and a TA will attend the home visit.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress. Parents can login to Target Tracker Home Link to access observations that have been completed at school.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents in the first term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: curriculum meetings, nativity plays and Sports Day etc.
- Encouraging parents to make comments in their child's reading diary and maths challenge booklets and contribute to the on-going assessment throughout the year.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the Teaching Assistant.

We have good links with local Preschool schools and attend the local authority transition meeting in the summer term; this ensures that where possible the EYFS teacher meets with staff to discuss new intake children.

### Enabling Environments

At College Town Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

### ***Observation, Assessment and Planning***

The school knows that young children learn best when their learning is supported by high quality interactions and opportunities where they can practise and develop their new skills and understanding. We also believe that there is a requirement to ensure that all children learn to become literate and numerate to ensure equality of opportunity in life. Therefore we promote literacy and mathematical development through both direct teaching and high quality resources to allow child initiated exploration to deepen their knowledge and understanding.

From September 2021 it is a requirement that schools complete a baseline assessment on entry to FS2. The teachers work with the children on a 1:1 basis to complete tasks on a laptop. The NFER Baseline Assessment is completed within six weeks of starting school.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes many forms; the most vital is interaction between adult and child. These interactions along with other assessment such as observations, involve a range of adults both in and out of school. On-going assessment is recorded through the use of Target Tracker. These observations are linked to a statement from Development Matters and the parents are able to access these once a term.

At College Town Primary School we use Topic planning to link areas of learning together. These topics run half termly and are designed to give the children a wide breadth of the curriculum and excite their learning. Medium term planning is created and takes into account the individual children's learning and developmental needs. All Areas of Learning and Development are planned for and available to access within the setting. The learning opportunities provided include a range of adult focused and child initiated activities.

Outdoor learning opportunities will be planned throughout the year to cover all areas of learning. During their time in Reception all children will have the opportunity to participate in Forest Schools, to really explore the outside environment.

In Reception, we teach phonics, literacy and maths every day. With focus activities planned to reflect the teaching. The children have free flow opportunities throughout the day and the adults support the children through scaffolded play. Scaffolded play refers to a variety of instructional techniques used to move students progressively toward stronger understanding and, ultimately, greater independence in the learning process.

At College Town Primary School, we report to parents and the Local Authority on the progress made by each individual child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and the 3 characteristics of learning. These judgements are made at the end of a child's time in Reception. However, throughout the year in Nursery and Reception teachers are required to report progress to the Leadership Team. Initially a baseline is established within the first 4 weeks of children starting in either the Nursery or Reception classes. Progress is then measured termly from the baseline assessments and teachers identify pupils who may require additional and different support.

The children are also assessed against the Characteristics of Learning, these are:

- **Playing and exploring** - Finding out and exploring, playing with what they know, being willing to 'have a go'

- **Active learning** – Being involved and concentrating, keeping trying, enjoying achieving what they set out to do
- **Creating and thinking critically** – Having their own ideas, making links, choosing ways to do things

Each year we provide a written summary to parents. In Reception this is in the summer term and reports on their progress against the ELG's and 3 characteristics of learning. Parents are invited to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher and Year 1 teachers are provided with the assessment results to inform planning and transition.

### ***The Learning Environment***

The EYFS area and classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The areas are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

The EYFS area has its own enclosed outdoor area. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning. We also make full use of our outstanding physical environment to support the teaching and learning.

### **Learning and Development**

At College Town Primary School 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. Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as 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.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

The children within Early Years are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals. Their EYFS Profile is shared with parents and must also be shared with the receiving teacher in year 1. Practitioners must report whether the pupil has met the ELGs, or if they are emerging.

The children who achieve the expected ELGs in PSED, CAL, PD, Literacy and Maths are considered to have a Good Level of Development (GLD) this is tracked throughout the year to ensure that the children are on target to achieve GLD. See Appendix A for the Early Learning Goals.

### ***Teaching and Learning Style***

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- 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 support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

### ***Play***

“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, and 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.

### ***Every Child a Talker (ECAT)***

At College Town Primary School we understand that Communication and Language is extremely important and is at the centre of our EYFS. All members of staff have received ECAT training and ensure that they are developing communication and language within the EYFS.

### ***Home Link Target Tracker***

All EYFS staff assess the children through the use of i-pads, on the i-pads we use the app ‘Home Link Target Tracker.’ This app builds up a Learning Journey for each of the children within the EYFS. Each observation recorded is linked to development matters statements and characteristics of learning. These observations are published on Home Link Target Tracker once a term for the parents to see.

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of all EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy.

The Head teacher and subject co-ordinators will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

## **Appendix A**

### **Early Learning Goals 2021**

#### **Communication & Language**

##### **ELG Listening, Attention and Understanding – Children at the expected level of development will:**

- Listen attentively and respond appropriately when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions;
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding;
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers

##### **ELG Speaking - Children at the expected level of development will:**

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary;
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate;
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including accurate use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher

#### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

##### **ELG Self-Regulation – Children at the expected level of development will:**

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate;

- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

##### **ELG Managing Self – Children at the expected level of development will:**

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge;
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly;

- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

**ELG Building relationships - – Children at the expected level of development will:**

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others;
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers;
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

**Physical Development**

**ELG Gross Motor Skills – Children at the expected level of development will:**

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others;
- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing;
- Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

**ELG Fine Motor Skills – Children at the expected level of development will:**

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases;
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery;
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

**Literacy**

**ELG Comprehension – Children at the expected level of development will:**

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary;
- Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories;
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

**ELG Word Reading – Children at the expected level of development will:**

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs;
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending;

- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

**ELG Writing – Children at the expected level of development will:**

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed;
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters;
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

**Mathematics**

**ELG Number – Children at the expected level of development will:**

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number;
- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5;
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aides) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

**ELG Numerical Patterns – Children at the expected level of development will:**

- Count confidently beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system;
- Compare sets of objects up to 10 in different contexts, considering size and difference;
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally

**Understanding the World**

**ELG Past and Present – Children at the expected level of development will:**

- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society;
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Recall some important narratives, characters and figures from the past encountered in books read in class.

**ELG People, Culture and Communities – Children at the expected level of development will:**

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps;
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.

**ELG The Natural World** – Children at the expected level of development will:

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants;
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

### **Expressive Arts & Design**

**ELG Creating with Materials** – Children at the expected level of development will:

- Draw and paint using a range of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function;
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used;
- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

**ELG Being Imaginative and Expressive** – Children at the expected level of development will:

Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher; • Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs;

Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music.