



**Christleton Primary School**  
**Be the best you can be**

**EYFS**  
**Policy**

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Signed Head teacher			
Signed Chair of Governors			

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## **Christleton Primary school**

### **Early Years 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.**

#### **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Christleton children join us in the September after their fourth birthday. The start is phased to give the children every opportunity to get to know the school environment, school routine and to ensure they are happy, settled and ready to learn. The children start part time for the first three weeks and by week four all children are in school full time.

The EYFS is based upon four overarching principles:

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

#### **A Unique Child**

At Christleton we recognise that every child is an individual with different skills, abilities and talents and we understand that children develop at different rates. We aim to provide quality and consistency so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind. Children's dispositions and attitudes to learning are influenced by the feedback they receive from others. We value each other's contributions and time is set aside to reflect on this. We use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards to develop a positive attitude to learning

#### **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals, all children and their families are valued and treated fairly regardless of race, religion or ability. We believe that all our children matter and we give them every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking into consideration children's interests, life experiences when planning for learning and we value contributions from parents, carers and previous settings.

In the EYFS the expectations we set are realistic and challenging to meet the needs of the children. The phased start at Christleton enables us to get to know the children discovering their personality likes, dislikes, interests, needs and school readiness. Through learning and development opportunities we plan around these needs and interests ensuring that every child is included and supported.

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 range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs and styles.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and help them to learn effectively.
- Forming strong positive relationships with parents and/or carers
- Sharing information with parents and/or carers and previous settings
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the children's contributions are valued
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support where necessary
- Forming close links with outside agencies in an advisory and diagnostic capacity
- Attending courses to further develop staff knowledge and ensure effective teaching and learning

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure. At Christleton we aim to educate the children on boundaries, rules and limits, helping them to understand that they are in place to keep them safe. Children should be able to take risks but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We provide opportunities for children to talk about their own and others behaviour and work together as a class to know that some behaviour is unacceptable. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well being of all children. (See whole school safe guarding 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 Christleton we understand that we need to comply with the welfare and safe guarding requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012.

We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children and recognise and be alert to any concerns in a child's life at home or elsewhere
- Ensure that all people looking after children are suitable and fulfil the requirements of their roles
- Ensure that all staff have appropriate qualifications, training, skills and knowledge and a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities
- Provide adequate supervision to ensure children's needs are met
- Promote good health, prevent the spread of infection by taking appropriate action when children are ill
- Provide prescribed medication to children only when written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer following school procedures for administering medicines.
- Provide fresh fruit daily and ensure fresh drinking water is available and accessible at all times
- Record and act upon any dietary needs, preferences, food allergies or health requirements children may have
- Ensure there is a first aid box accessible at all times with appropriate content for use with children and that parents are informed of any first aid treatment given
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe, secure and suitable for purpose
- Provide opportunities for children to get fresh air and exercise by spending time outside at playtimes and during outdoor learning activities
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and developing experiences tailored to meet their needs, including children with special educational needs or disabilities
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for a safe efficient management of the setting

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

## **Positive Relationships**

At Christleton we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with children and their families.

## **Parents as partners**

We recognise that parents and/or carers are children's first educators and we value the contributions they make by:

- Encouraging the parents to visit school before applying for a place
- Holding a 'stay and play' afternoon for parents and children in the summer term, before they start school
- Inviting children to visit school to spend time with the class teacher and teaching assistant on two afternoons in the summer term before they start school.
- Visiting children in their pre-school settings prior to starting school
- Inviting parents to a 'New Parents' evening at the beginning of the summer term, giving parents an opportunity to meet the Head teacher, Foundation Stage staff, PTA members and visit the classroom
- Provide parents with a 'One-page Profile' in order to provide the opportunity for parents to write about their children prior to them starting school e.g.: children's interests, friends, worries, Likes /dislikes and anything else parents feel will be of value.
- Openly encouraging parents to come in and talk to a member of the Foundation Stage staff, either in the morning or after school to discuss any worries or concerns
- Inviting parents to bring their children into school in the morning and settle them in the classroom for the first term
- Inviting parents to a 'meet the teacher' evening at the beginning of the Autumn Term, where the Foundation Stage curriculum and assessment documents are discussed and whole school procedures are explained
- Holding formal parents' evenings in the Autumn and Spring Term, where parents meet with class teachers to discuss their children's attainment and progress
- Providing parents with a written report on their children's attainment and progress at the end of the Summer Term
- Inviting parents to 'Share the Learning' events, where children are encouraged to share the work they have been doing during the term

- Encouraging parents to contribute to their children's Learning Journey by filling in a 'shocks and surprises' card which celebrates moments of achievement by their children when they are not at school
- Inviting parents throughout the year to attend curriculum meetings. These meetings explain how we teach subjects such as phonics, reading and mathematics and suggest ways in which parents can support their children's learning at home.
- Sending home reading books and phonic activities weekly for the children to practise and complete at home
- Sending home curriculum overviews to parents at the beginning of each term, these share the learning intentions for the children each term. Information is regularly sent home informing parents of what the children have been doing at school in the form of a learning update.
- Using a school twitter account to inform parents of activities and experiences taking place in school. (See Twitter Policy)
- Inviting parents to come into school to talk about their jobs or special talents
- Accepting offers of help in the classroom from parents
- Inviting parents to accompany children in the Foundation Stage on school trips

At Christleton the class teacher acts as the 'Key Person' to all the children in the EYFS supported by the Teaching Assistant. We build good relationships with children, responding sensitively to their feelings, needs and behaviour, so that they become confident, capable and independent. We support children to build up friendships and to understand their own and others feelings through stories, assemblies, activities and class discussions. Children learn about other cultures, communities and traditions and learn to respect that others have different needs, views and feelings. Through positive praise and encouragement children are nurtured and develop good self esteem.

At Christleton we operate a very successful buddy system. Year 6 children are paired with a Foundation Stage child to support them through their first year at school. They help the Foundation Stage children at lunch time, during whole school events and with some paired reading activities.

## **Enabling Environments**

At Christleton we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development. We begin by closely observing the children and assessing their interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

## **Observation, assessment and planning**

Planning in the Foundation Stage is based around themes which, where possible, reflect the children's interests. These themes alter from year to year depending on the needs / interests of the cohort. The teaching staff plan weekly, following on from what has been observed during the week, these plans are fluid and open to change in response to needs, achievements and interests of the children and where applicable changes in the weather.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. The Foundation Stage at Christleton has a full time class teacher and a full time Teaching Assistant, communication between both members of staff is vital to ensure that observations, achievements, interests and conversations with children and parents and/or carers are shared to ensure individual needs are identified. Assessment in the Foundation Stage is recorded in a variety of ways, such as anecdotal notes, photographs, formal assessments, videos, audio recordings and observations of children during child initiated, adult directed and adult initiated activities. These observations are used to inform the class teacher of children's next steps. The observations are used to create a child's Learning Journey which provides a record of a child's year during the Foundation Stage. At Christleton we use the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile to assess the evidence collected and use the seven areas of learning and development to make judgements of the children's progress and achievement. During the Summer term the class teacher may be moderated by a Cheshire West and Chester external moderating team to ensure accuracy and consistency of the judgements made. At the end of the summer term parents are given a report showing progress against the EYFSP assessment scales.

## **The Learning Environment**

At Christleton we recognise that children need time, space and materials to investigate and explore. The Foundation Stage classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classroom is set up in areas to enable children to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Some areas provide opportunities for the children to be creative and loud whereas other areas provide opportunities for children to play quietly or rest. The children have the use of a covered outdoor area allowing for free flow activity between inside and outside during the day. The outside area provides opportunities for the children to do things in different ways and on different scales than indoors. It offers the children the space to explore, use their senses and be physically more active. Outdoor activities are planned to help the children develop in all areas of the EYFSP.

## **Learning and Developing**

At Christleton we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. Play is essential for children's learning and development, it builds their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. We value all areas of learning and development equally and recognise and understand that they are all inter-connected.

## **Teaching and Learning Style**

The features that relate to the EYFS are:

- The partnership between Foundation Stage staff and parents, so that the children can feel safe and secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- The understanding Foundation Stage staff have of how children develop and learn and how this affects their learning
- The range of approaches used to 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 enables children to work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout the EYFS
- The provision of activities that build on and extend children's 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 indoor and outdoor space, equipment and facilities
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents
- The regular identification of training needs for the adults working within the Foundation Stage



## Play

**Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play and by taking part in play that is guided by adults.**

Through play the children at Christleton explore and develop learning experiences which help them to understand the world around them. Learning through play is one of the key principles of the EYFS and can be seen when we as practitioners observe children.

Our children are given opportunities to practise skills, develop and build on their own ideas. They learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They are able to think creatively alongside others as well as by themselves. They communicate with others investigating and solving problems. They learn to value each other and develop their speaking and listening skills. They have opportunities to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled, safe situations.

We recognise the importance of giving children time to practise and become confident using their developing skills and value that children need to be able to practise and apply these skills in a most meaningful way for them.

## Active Learning

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 and have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop confidence they learn to make decisions, providing them with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

## Creative and critical thinking

When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they 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.

At Christleton we aim to provide opportunities for children to be creative through all areas of learning. As adults we support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. We make sure children can access resources freely and are allowed to move around the classroom to extend their learning independently.

## Areas of Learning

The EYFS is divided into seven areas of learning, three prime areas and four specific areas.

**All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. These areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building the capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.**

**The three prime areas are:**

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

**The four specific Areas are:**

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

It is the responsibility of the EYFS practitioners to follow the principles stated in this policy to ensure that all children in their care complete the EYFS ready to benefit fully from the opportunities ahead of them.