



COTTESMORE SCHOOL

Early Years Foundation Stage 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, September 2021)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 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 broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

A summary of our aims in the EYFS

- To provide a happy, safe and stimulating environment to enable children to learn how to work, play, co-operate with others
- To ensure children feel secure, valued and confident and are able to develop a sense of achievement through learning which is a pleasurable experience
- To offer the children a broad and balanced curriculum
- To use a play based curriculum to teach the children
- To offer equal opportunities for all children by making them active in their own learning
- To put the needs, interests and aptitudes of the individual first
- To ensure opportunities for expression and creativity
- To ensure staff, parents and visitors are aware of the curriculum

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 Cottesmore 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, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebrations, sharing assemblies and rewards, 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 Cottesmore are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.



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In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. 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 all the girls and boys, 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.

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.

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. The safeguarding and welfare requirements, specified in this section, are designed to help providers create high quality settings which are welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence."

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, September 2021)

At Cottesmore we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain safeguarding and welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. We understand that we are required to:

- safeguard children
- ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behavior, effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.



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Positive Relationships

At Cottesmore we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from 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 most enduring 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:

- children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school.
- inviting all parents to a coffee meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- An EYFS meeting for all parents at the start of term (covering the curriculum, routines and an opportunity for questions)
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents three times a year and the parent can discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress three times a year.
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: school concert, Nativity Play, Sports Day etc;

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 children's 'Key Person' is their teacher who will monitor their Personal, Social and Emotional development. This is supported by the Teaching Assistant.

The Principal meets with staff to discuss new intake children. Where children move schools the teacher is responsible for ensuring that information is shared with the new school. We aim to ensure continuity and coherence by sharing information about the children's achievements.

Enabling Environments

At Cottesmore 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 Planning within the EYFS follows the school's Long Term Plan and Medium Term Plans (MTPs), which are based around half termly themes. These plans are used by the teacher as a guide for weekly planning, however the teacher may alter these MTPs in



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response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Much assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in children's individual learning journals.

At Cottesmore, we use the learning journal to record judgements against the EYFS Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the steps leading up to and including the early learning goals. Occasionally when a child's learning exceeds way beyond the early learning goals, the Year One curriculum may be followed, through conversation and assessment with the Year One teacher. In the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their child's progress against the ELGs and assessment scales.

The Learning Environment

Our EYFS classroom is 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 classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Reception class has an enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It allows the children to 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 the areas of learning. We plan and use the outdoor learning environment regularly where the children have a variety of learning opportunities.

Learning and Development

At Cottesmore 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 inter-connected.

Teaching and Learning Styles

These are the features of effective teaching and learning in our school.

- 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, self-management and self-regulation;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;



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- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

Playing and Exploring

Children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'

Through play children explore and develop learning experiences, which helps them to make sense of the world and appreciate the effect of their actions. 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. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Physical Development
- Expressive Arts and Design

There are three prime areas –



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Personal, social and emotional development:

- Self-regulation
- Managing self
- Building relationships

Physical development:

- Gross Motor Skills
- Fine Motor Skills

Communication and Language:

- Listening, Attention and Understanding
- Speaking

As well as the three prime areas, we will also plan activities in the following areas of learning and development, known as specific areas.

Understanding the world:

- Past and Present
- People, Culture and Communities
- The Natural World

Expressive Arts and Design:

- Creating with Materials
- Being Imaginative and Expressive

Mathematics:

- Number
- Numerical Patterns

Literacy:

- Comprehension
- Word Reading
- Writing

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

Monitoring and Review



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It is the responsibility of the teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Principal and Reception class teacher will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.