

Coulsdon C of E Primary School



Early Years Policy

November 2022 (next review November 2024)

The ethos of this school is to enable every child to learn and develop in a Christian environment. We ask all parents of whatever faith applying for a place here to recognise and support this ethos and its importance to the school

Together, growing in mind, body and spirit

This policy outlines why, what and how **Coulsdon C of E Primary** ensures that each child's care and learning requirements are met during their time here.

Curriculum Intent

Our curriculum is designed to be **creative, innovative** and closely linked to children's 'wonderings'. Learning is tailored to have relevance alongside holding and following the interests and experiences of all pupils and we believe this makes learning memorable and **relevant** to their lives. At Coulsdon we understand the importance of a solid and secure start to primary education and that the Reception year helps the children to begin to form relationships which they may foster all the way through their primary years.

We understand that starting Primary School is a big transition for many children. We try to ensure a smooth move into school from nursery or home by obtaining as much information as possible so that we can create a familiar and inviting environment for the children. **Continuous provision** in the setting provides opportunities for both familiar and new activities and experiences for children to engage with. These aid in their development across the curriculum and also enable pupils to support each other through collaborative learning and playing.

Children are supported to identify the skills which help them to learn and are also given a vocabulary of learning closely linked to the Characteristics of Learning from the EYFS curriculum. Adults in the setting try to equip the pupils with the skills for a life of learning using these approaches. We aim to avoid tokenistic opportunities for learning and instead, encourage children to engage with a number of experiences involving a similar concept to enable them to develop fluency and manipulation of their own understanding (mastery).

Child-led provision

We want children to be enthusiastic and curious about learning. To facilitate this we react to pupil interests, tap into the community and what they can offer and hold the identity of children as high importance to ensure that they see themselves reflected in our curriculum. Children contribute to the shape of the curriculum in the early years and voice their ideas and thoughts about avenues of learning they want to pursue. As a team, we plan and teach creative and thought provoking activities, setting up provocations and taking into consideration the various learning needs and experiences of individual children. Cooking, woodland walks and visitors feature highly in our approach to learning and we recognise the importance of the environment as the 'third

teacher'.

Encouraging Parental support

We want children to feel that learning happens everywhere and that families value and invest in their child's learning. We know that **parental involvement** supports the development of children so we promote and encourage this by holding parent information sessions, inviting families to view their child's learning journal, parents evenings and by creating an online dialogue through Tapestry.

Creating opportunities for Personal, Social and Spiritual development

The areas of 'Personal and Social Development' and 'Communication and Language' in the EYFS form the underpinning for most of the curriculum. We thread opportunities for development in these areas through all aspects of the curriculum. For example, songs and actions when learning skills in maths and experiment provocations to promote the development of questioning. We intend for children to leave Reception having a secure grasp on the English Language and fully equipped to be able to express their needs and ideas to others.

Spiritual development is given a high priority in our curriculum. At Coulsdon C of E Primary we identify this as a continuing journey of discovery about yourself, others and the world around you. It is learning about and developing the strengths and talents you have inside yourself thus becoming secure in your identity as a unique and valued individual. It is developing a deeply held set of values that become so ingrained that you can act in line with those values in any situation. It is reflecting on and questioning the 'bigger picture' of life and being secure in the knowledge that some questions can be answered and some cannot. It is recognising and accepting differences and beliefs in yourself and others. This is vital to equip the children to live in multicultural Croydon and prepare them for later life. Developing children's understanding of Christian values is an integral part of children's learning within our school day. It is our intention that children should know how love, courage, honesty, faith and forgiveness are lived out in their own lives and the lives of others.

1. Aims and vision

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the foundation in knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life

- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff, experts and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

We use cooperation, resilience, confidence and enjoyment to explore the world around us.

We listen, comprehend and make links, then communicate our learning to others through rich speech or varied materials.

An engaging and accessible environment, alongside an adaptive and creative curriculum, enables us to thrive within our individual learning journeys.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021.

3. Structure of the EYFS

At Coulsdon C of E Primary we have one reception class. Children arrive from more than 10 surrounding nurseries, but most children know each other from older siblings that attend the school or from the church community. Our Reception children mix with the children from older years at playtimes, lunchtimes and in more structured activities such as our 'buddy' scheme which encourages cross phase learning and support

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows 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 of equal importance and are 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

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas. However, staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience.

Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. When they are planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

Staff make good use of the outdoors for learning, and opportunities for first hand experiences. Topics have been developed over time to ensure an exciting and balanced curriculum, linking to seasonal opportunities or celebrations, but also allowing flexibility to follow the children's interests.

We follow the Read Write Inc structured phonics programme, and the NCETM Mastering Number maths scheme, so phonics and maths are taught every day with clear progression towards the ELG and skills needed ready for joining Year 1.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as

their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

5. Assessment

At Coulsdon C of E Primary, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Tapestry Learning Journal is used to capture and evidence each child's learning. Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child. The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. Tapestry observations and the EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

There are formal opportunities to discuss children's progress at parents evenings, and also informal opportunities. The staff always welcome the children at the gate in the morning, which allows for informal chat or questions. Parents are invited into class every term to watch a carpet session, look at their child's folder and engage in the class environment with their child. Parent

workshops are provided in person and online, in phonics and maths, to enable the parents to support their child's learning at home.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children and families about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the EYFS Lead every two years. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.