



# **FLASH LEY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY**

## **EARLY YEARS POLICY**

Approved by: Chair of Governors

Date: January 2025

To be reviewed: July 2025

## **Intention:**

At Flash Ley Primary School, we strive to:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging curriculum of learning for children within a caring and inclusive environment which is sensitive to the requirements of each individual child.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning in Key Stage 1 and beyond, fostering positive learning behaviours and equipping children with the tools to succeed.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and supporting each child to develop through effective adult interactions and progressive learning experiences, which are centred around children's individual interests and high levels of engagement.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children's learning.

Through our knowledge of children's individual needs we ensure our Early Years curriculum:

- addresses the children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual and cultural development
- builds upon children's current level of development and takes what they already know and can do as their starting point
- is fully inclusive regardless of gender, race, culture, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability or ability
- is a safe, secure and caring environment in which children become independent active learners
- provides a rich and stimulating environment through a wide range of planned, meaningful activities and experiences and an enabling environment that allows children to make their own choices

## **Implementation:**

Our Early Years Curriculum utilises Government guidance including The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2024, Development Matters 2023 and Birth to Five Matters 2021 alongside practitioner knowledge to deliver high quality learning opportunities to all children in the foundation stage.

Our curriculum is divided into the prime and specific areas of learning:

### Prime areas:

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

### Specific areas:

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

Together, these areas of learning guide practitioners to plan the appropriate skills, knowledge and experiences that our children need to learn, develop and grow. At Flash Ley Primary School, we use clear intentions and quality provision based on children's needs and interests to ensure individuals make clear progress in our setting. This is delivered through a mixture of adult-led session, adult-initiated activities and child-led learning. Our Foundation Stage is organised so that children can explore and learn securely and safely by navigating risk and developing their independence. We have two reception classrooms and a large Nursery classroom; both boasting their own outdoor area. Children have access to a climbing wall, forest area and the KS1 playground. Children take part in learning both inside and outside throughout the day. Our indoor environment consists of a range of different areas including role play, reading, maths, small world

and construction. We use learning launches with exciting provocations to spark children's love of texts within our curriculum.

### **Role of the adult**

Our teachers and support staff in Early Years are experienced and skilled in Early Years teaching. Within our continuous provision, you will find all of our staff facilitating learning, making observations, interacting with children, making assessments and providing suitable next steps which enable children to develop at their own pace. Teachers will lead direct teaching sessions for maths and literacy with support staff facilitating learning in these areas throughout continuous provision. Phonics is taught using our SSP 'Little Wandle' daily. Our teaching assistants deliver targeted and effective interventions to support those children who may need extra support.

### **Planning, observation and assessment cycle At Flash Ley Primary School**

Continuous assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. We understand that in order for children to make progress, we must follow an efficient teaching and learning model. We recognise that learning journeys begin with careful assessment. We create a picture of each child's capabilities through independent, group, spontaneous and planned observations. All observations are recorded through an online learning journey and shared with parents regularly through email.

Collating all of a child's observations and applying our knowledge of each child, enables us to build an accurate picture of any strengths and next steps. We also focus on learning styles and attitudes of the children within our Foundation Stage. Observations are discussed between practitioners in our setting and these then inform short, medium and long-term milestone planning. Having these professional discussions helps us to ensure that the needs of all learners are catered for. Once we have planned, observed and assessed, the planning cycle starts again. We do this to ensure that children continually progress throughout the year. When we identify that children need additional support in a particular area, intervention is provided for these children and conversations are held with our school SENCo who will contact external bodies for assessment where appropriate. This is identified throughout daily practice but also through summative data and pupil progress meetings.

At Flash Ley Primary School, we use a specially created EYFS tracking system to record data half termly and identify strengths and developments for provision. At the end of EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals, indicating whether they are:

- 1) Working at the expected level
- 2) Not yet at the expected level.

If a child achieves the Early Learning Goal in all of the strands included within Communication and Language, Physical Development, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Literacy and Mathematics they will achieve a Good Level of Development (GLD).

Although there is no longer an assessment against the Early Learning Goals for children working above the exceeding level, these children will have been identified and all relevant data will be shared with Y1 teaching staff.

### **Parental Involvement**

Flash Ley Primary School acknowledges the importance of strong partnerships with families and actively encourages family involvement in school life. Parents and carers in our school are encouraged to join MarvellousMe and EvidenceMe so that they can be kept informed with what is happening in Early Years and observations of their child can be shared. At the beginning of each half term we share a topic overview to inform parents of the learning we will be covering. Class teachers provide home learning challenges and QR codes to learning in children's planners. Children in Reception receive a phonics book each Friday to read at home and take part in weekly library visits to borrow books to encourage reading for pleasure with parents. We expect parents to write a comment in their child's reading record every time they read as this informs us of their progress and attitude to reading at home.

Each child has a digital learning journey that builds up a holistic picture of their progress and development over the year. Observations in the profile will capture wow moments in all areas of learning and will focus on what the child can do rather than what they can't yet do.

We hold parent's evenings which we encourage all parents to attend and each term a learning report is sent home. This is so that we can share their child's progress and anything we feel they need to develop.

### **Transition**

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child. Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an induction meeting in the Summer term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff, and learn more about the reception curriculum. This is an opportunity for staff to discuss:

- School vision
- School expectations
- Our areas of learning (in the EYFS) and supporting children at home
- Uniform (including P.E. kit)
- School dinners
- Attendance
- Arrangements for children to come into school for settling in sessions

During the Summer term, children will be invited into school for a settling-in session. Those who attend Nursery at Flash Ley take part in transition sessions in their new classrooms.

### **SEN**

With close relationships and partnerships built with our on-site private Nursery - Voyage we swiftly identify and action any measures necessary for children who have been identified as needing additional support. External agencies work closely alongside all our practitioners to break down any barriers to learning so a child can achieve their maximum potential and this support for additional needs can be carried through Early Years and into KS1. Our environments are inclusive and support the needs of all children who attend.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Having carefully looked at the demographic breakdown of Stafford, we have taken equal opportunities into extra consideration when planning and delivering our chosen curriculum; this relates to culture, gender and social stature. We choose engaging book texts and relevant provocations, or learning launches, to structure maximise engagement in boys and carefully utilise EYPP and PP funding to excel the progress of disadvantaged learners within our setting. This way we take huge strides in closing, and sometimes eliminating, the attainment gap between key groups. We have also built a range of specifically chosen texts to expose children to diverse and alternative living experiences.

### **Promotion of Reading:**

Reading is at the heart of our learning within Early Years with carefully chosen books texts leading our learning. As mentioned above, provocations are planned in relation to our chosen books to fully immerse our children in stories. Children frequently read for pleasure from birth to 5 and begin learning how to independently read from the end of Nursery. Our early reading is taught through a Systematic Synthetic Phonics program validated by the Department for Education 'Little Wandle'.

### **British Values/SMSC:**

British values are incorporated into our day to day routines. For example:

- **Respect** children are taught to tidy up after they have been playing in the setting, they are taught to look after plants they sown in our outdoor area or taught to respect the habitats of mini-beasts during Forest School sessions.
- **Democracy** children vote on the stories they would like to read or the activities that they would like during golden time.

- **Tolerance** our PSED curriculum is taught within real life experiences such as role play to ensure children are exposed to the world around them.

We use contextual information from carers and all practitioners to identify any pending concerns so that we can intentionally address this during whole class sessions, small group PSE sessions or through our school ELSE/HOPE programme. The breakdown of this potential barrier to learning to one that can then enable children to continue making good progress in our setting.

### **Health & Safety/Safeguarding:**

At Flash Ley we follow all relevant legislation and associated guidance relating to health and safety within the early years department including:

- The requirements of the statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation stage (EYFs) 2017
- The regulations of the Health and safety at work Act 1974 and any other relevant legislation such as Control of substances Hazardous to Health Regulation (COSHH)
- Any guidance provided by the Public Health England, the local health protection agency, the local authority environmental health department, fire authority or the health and safety executive.

In order to ensure best practise and minimise risk at Flash Ley we also adhere to the following practises:

- Hot drinks of any kind are not permitted in the Early Years department.
- Food and drink with the exception of water is not to be consumed in areas with children.
- Staff belongings such as bags and coats are kept within labelled staff cupboards and out of reach of children.
- Staff are not permitted to keep or take medication within areas with children present. Any medication must be kept with staff belongings in staff cupboards and taken in staff only areas.
- Children are not to be lifted, carried or placed on the knees of adults.

### **Impact:**

During their time in our Early Years setting at Flash Ley Primary school, we endeavour to support as many children as possible to achieve a good level of development. However, we do not use this as the basis of our curriculum progression. In regard to the type of learners we want to support, we have created termly milestones from birth to 5 years that describe where and who we expect children to be. This is something we have created as a team and through all the implementation strategies mentioned above paired with high aspirations of children, we consistently ensure that children make good progress from their starting points. As reflective practitioners, we will continue to evaluate our practice to ensure all of our day to day actions have the greatest impact on children's learning so the get the best possible start to their school care. Data across the 7 areas of learning is collected half termly and areas are adapted as an on-going development of our provision.

Linked policies:

Early Years Behaviour Policy

Nappy Changing & Personal/Self Care Policy

Dummy Policy

Food, Nutrition & Feeding Policy

Sleep Procedure

Health & Safety Policy

Mobile Phone Policy

Staff Code of Conduct