



Boxgrove
Primary
School

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Early Years Policy

At Boxgrove we want every child to:

- Love learning
- Find their strengths and talents
- Achieve more than they thought possible.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 The EYFS seeks to provide:
 - quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
 - a secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly
 - partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
 - equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported
- 1.4 The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. The learning and development requirements cover:
 - the areas of learning and development which must shape activities and experiences (educational programmes) for children in all early years settings
 - the early learning goals that providers must help children work towards (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five)
 - assessment arrangements for measuring progress (and requirements for reporting to parents and/or carers)
- 1.5 The safeguarding and welfare requirements cover the steps that providers must take to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years settings. These are:
 - every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
 - children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
 - children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
 - children develop and learn in different ways (see "the characteristics of effective teaching and learning" at paragraph 1.9) and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

3 Teaching and learning style

3.1 Features of good practice within our school include:

- the partnership between teachers and parents/carers that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years;
- 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 space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents and carers;
- effective partnership and communication to sharing pertinent information to facilitate smooth transition from previous settings;
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the Early Years.

4 Play in the Early Years

4.1 Through play, our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or worries in controlled and safe situations.

5 Inclusion at the Early Years

5.1 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 we are planning for their learning (see our policy on inclusion).

5.2 In the Early Years, we set realistic and challenging expectations matched to the needs of our children, so that most achieve 'expected' within the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years. Some children progress beyond this point. We help them to do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

5.3 We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs and their interests;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively;
- offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued;

- employing resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid 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 providing support (such as speech therapy), as necessary.

6 The Early Years curriculum

- 6.1 Our curriculum for the Reception Year reflects the seven areas of learning identified in the Early Years Curriculum. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas. These areas include the prime and specific areas. The prime areas are Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Physical Development. The specific areas include Literacy, Maths, Understanding of the World and Expressive Art and Design.
- 6.2 By the end of the Early Years, as part of the smooth transition to Key Stage 1, the children will take part in a range of activities focused on 'Moving On', to ensure that they are well prepared for Year One. Teachers in Reception and Year One work very closely together to ensure that every individual child's needs are met.
- 6.3 The Elements and Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Early Years. Teachers use the national schemes of work, where appropriate, to support their planning for individual children. Our medium-term planning is completed half-termly, and identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals, working within the Early Learning Goals, and also for those working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum.
- 6.4 The school makes full use of the outdoor classroom, where a planned programme of appropriate activities takes place at all times of year. Children wear suitable clothing at all times.

7 Assessment

- 7.1 The Early Years Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Early Years, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. To be read in conjunction with "Development Matters" and "Birth to 5." (age related expectations) It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Early Years.
- 7.2 During the first term in the reception class, the teacher completes a baseline assessment of each child. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. We share the information contained in the Early Years Profile at our parental consultation meetings.
- 7.3 Parents and carers receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June, and send them to parents and carers in July each year.

8 The role of parents and carers

- 8.1 We believe that all parents and carers have a fundamental role to play in the education of their child. We therefore recognise the role that parents and carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:
- talking to parents or carers about their child before their child starts in our school;
 - visits to nurseries wherever possible, prior to their starting school;

- opportunities given to the children to spend time with their teacher before starting school in the form of visits in the summer term;
- inviting all parents and carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- offering parents and carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class;
- encouraging parents and carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- having flexible admission arrangements, and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- arranging for children to start school gradually over the first three weeks of term, so that the teacher can welcome each child individually into our school;
- offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers;
- providing various activities that involve parents and carers, i.e. regular communication with home through the child's school reading diary, and inviting parents and carers to curriculum evenings and workshops, in order to discuss the kind of work that the children are undertaking;

8.2 There is a formal meeting for parents and carers each in Autumn and Spring term, at which the parents/carers discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents and carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.

9 Resources

9.1 We want the children to learn, to be happy and to be safe in an environment that is; stimulating, imaginative, colourful, purposeful, fun, play based and well resourced. We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that features a balance of child initiated and teacher led activities where children are encouraged to be independent and to build their confidence and self esteem.

10 Monitoring and review

10.1 This policy is monitored by the governing body, and will be reviewed in two years, or earlier if necessary.