



# Crockerton Church of England Primary School

Potters Hill, Crockerton, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 8AB

Web: [www.crockerton.wilts.sch.uk](http://www.crockerton.wilts.sch.uk) Tel: 01985 212168

Headteacher: Mrs Nic Ilic

## VISION STATEMENT

*Together we learn and grow, beyond expectations, guided by our faith and values.*

## Early Years Policy

*This is a single policy which has been written on behalf of the Governing Body for Crockerton Church of England VA Primary School.*

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<b>Reviewed</b>	
<b>Author</b>	Headteacher & Early Years Teacher
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*We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people*



This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of 'The Early Years'.

### **What is 'Early Years'?**

For the purpose of this policy 'Early Years' refers to children in their first year at school (Reception Year).

### **Aims:**

- To provide a structured, secure, caring and well-resourced learning environment; both inside and out which meets all the individual developmental needs of 'young learners'.
- To enable children to become confident, motivated and happy learners, developing the necessary skills and attitudes required for a successful learning journey.
- To develop independence and individuality, whilst fostering respect and tolerance for others irrespective of ability, race, creed, gender or background.

### **The Curriculum:**

Our Curriculum is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

"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." Department for Education 2014

Further information on the EYFS framework can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

### **Meeting the needs of young learners:**

- Staff are sensitive to a child's differing needs, abilities, backgrounds and previous experiences.
- Staff will teach, support, care and offer equal opportunities for all children in their care.
- Staff will respect and value children's ideas and opinions.
- Staff will provide a challenging and diverse curriculum offering ample opportunities to develop resilience and build self-confidence.
- The curriculum will offer rich and positive learning experiences with plenty of first-hand experience, varied to include all learning styles and including regular opportunity to explore and learn through practical and play activities.
- Pupils will be given the chance to make decisions and to take responsibility - both for their learning and behaviour. This includes the chance to make mistakes in a forgiving environment and to realise that making mistakes is a learning experience.
- In all we aim to offer a well-planned, carefully structured programme of academic and personal development, building on past experiences and achievements - delivered in ways appropriate to a child's age and level of development.
- Staff understand that they are required to adhere to safeguarding and welfare requirements specified in the Statutory Framework for Early Years.
- Staff will take all the necessary steps to keep children safe and well. (Please refer to Whole school Safeguarding Children Policy.)
- Staff adhere to policy guidelines reference medicine in school.
- Staff remain with a child who has not been collected until parents or an emergency contact are present. (Refer to Before and After School Policy for more information.)

### **Building Relationships to foster life-long learning:**

We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children, their families and outside agencies.

### Links with pre-school providers:

- The school maintains good relationships with the local pre-school groups and its feeder nurseries. Contact is maintained throughout the year via Early Years' Cluster meetings. The class teacher visits feeder nurseries during the summer term to facilitate a smooth transition between FS1 and FS2. Visits include observations of new pupils and transfer of information with current key workers.
- Members of the 'Early Years Team' represent the school at local 'Early Years' network events and training activities.

### Home-School links:

We strive to create and maintain a good partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning.

We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways: -

- A '**Welcome to Crockerton**' Parent information evening is held in May/June for parents of the prospective Reception group. The purpose of this meeting is, to disseminate important information, to encourage discussion and to emphasize the vital importance of home-school cooperation and mutual support. All members of the Reception team attend this meeting.
- All Reception children have a **Link book** as do all the pupils at Crockerton. Parents are encouraged to maintain written dialogue with the teacher using the 'Home-School' book. This link book is checked on a daily basis.
- Literature to support the parental role in early learning is given to all parents prior to their child's entry to the school.
- Parents are invited to attend workshops to find out how we teach phonics, number skills and other areas of learning.
- Parents' evenings are held and the staff involved with the early years children are happy to meet with parents after school, often on an informal basis or by appointment if necessary. We promote an 'open door' policy.
- A weekly '**Celebration Book**' provides parents and staff an opportunity to continue a two-way flow of information about a child's learning. It also provides insight into life in the Potters' classroom.
- Parents are invited to attend three 'Open classroom' sessions to share their child's '**Learning Journey**' and celebrate successes.
- Parents and staff celebrate a child's home learning and development by sharing "wow" moments from home. These **WOW sheets** help inform planning and provision. Parents and grandparents are invited to join the class on weekly '**Welly Walks**' around the local area.
- Parents are invited to attend **Sports' Day** and **focus week celebrations**.

### Induction and entry to school:

- Parents of new Reception Year children are invited to a meeting in May/June when admission arrangements, the curriculum and provision as well as practical details such as uniform are discussed.
- Home visits are conducted in early September. Arrangements for these are made at the Summer meeting for new parents. Home visits are an integral part of establishing a positive working relationship with families and allow a valuable opportunity to make early connections with children and families.
- A 'Welcome Book' is sent to new children during the Summer term. Parents are encouraged to familiarise their child with the contents of this book to ensure a smooth transition.
- The children are invited to attend two induction sessions during the summer term. These usually include a morning or an afternoon session.
- New Reception pupils are 'buddied' with a pupil in Year 6 who acts as an experienced and caring support as the children start school. These early friendships endure and allow the new children to feel at home and comfortable at school from day 1.
- Children attend school part-time for the first 2 weeks of the Autumn term. This valuable time is used to allow the children to get acquainted with their new school environment, make new friends and conduct baseline assessments.

## **ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Staff consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care. This information is used to plan challenging and exciting experiences for each child across all areas of learning and development.

### **Support for pupils:**

Planning carefully enables pupils to demonstrate their developing knowledge and skills. Pupils are taught as a whole class, in small groups and often in 1-1 sessions. Pupils who are demonstrating gaps in their learning are rapidly identified and supported so that the gap narrows. Interventions are led mainly in class but occasionally pupils are withdrawn for rapid catch up interventions. The class teacher works collaboratively with the SENCO and Head teacher to ensure that all pupils are on track with their learning and any outside agency support can be facilitated promptly where appropriate.

### **Observation and Assessment:**

A baseline assessment, based on observations, transition reports and information provided by parents is completed during a child's first term at school. Staff will assess attainment in the three prime areas and the four specific areas.

Ongoing assessment (formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff are involved in daily observations and assessments throughout the Reception Year.

There is a balance between child-initiated tasks and teacher led activities in the inside and outside learning environments. Observations, samples of work and photographs from these activities are recorded in each child's 'learning journey.'

Parents are actively encouraged to provide evidence from home to support ongoing assessments. Progress is tracked on Target Tracker, an online assessment tool.

The EYFS Profile is completed at the end of the Reception year. Children are assessed against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals. (ELGs) Parents will receive a written summary of their child's attainment against these ELGs. For each ELG teachers will report if a child is:

- meeting expected levels of development
- exceeding expected levels or
- not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

It will also describe the child's 3 characteristics of effective learning.

During term 6 parents are invited to discuss the outcomes of their child's EYFS profile with the Reception teacher.

In the final term in Reception, Early Years staff meet with the Year One teacher to discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year One. This discussion and copies of the profile help the Year One staff to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that meets the needs of all children.

### **Organisation:**

- Early Years pupils may be in a mixed age class depending on the size of the cohorts.
- The curriculum is planned, overseen and delivered by the Early Years Co-coordinator and an experienced Teaching Assistant with specific early years training and experience.
- Risk assessments are undertaken to remove or minimize risks.
- Parent helpers might be used to support Early Years children.
- We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting. (Eg. Local Community Police Officer, Veterinary Nurses, Fire Safety Officer and Vicar.)
- A named EYFS governor makes a formal visit once a term.

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different paces. Planning is tailored to the needs of our children and is adapted and amended when necessary. Learning opportunities are available inside and outside on daily basis.

Staff plan opportunities to maximize the locality of our setting. Weekly "Welly Walks" and whole school Winter and Summer walks with parents are examples of this.