

# **Carrington Infant School (Carrington Schools Federation)**

## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

### **MISSION STATEMENT:**

**The Carrington Schools Federation: an ambitious, caring, and inclusive community.**

### **VISION:**

**To be a nurturing community that develops respectful, resilient, and happy children with the self-belief, knowledge, and skills to thrive in the future.**



Date Policy last reviewed: September 2025

Signed by:

Head Teacher: Kate Cliffe

Date:

Chair of Governors: Nadia Zachary

Date:

#### Introduction

At Carrington Infant School we embrace a ‘Learning without Limits’. We believe in the potential of every child, so all the children are given the opportunity to develop the capacity to surprise themselves and those around them. They are taught to challenge themselves to build confidence and resilience.

Early Years education is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives and is an education that encompasses all learning.

*‘All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in the early years 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 fulfil their potential. (‘The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.’ DFE 2023).*

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school all children join us on a phased introduction at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

The EYFS is based upon four principles that all fit with our motto, values and Carrington Cares curriculum.

- 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 with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Importance of **learning and development**. Children learn and develop at different rates.

Developing the vocabulary of the children from their starting points is absolutely fundamental and is the most important way we can bridge any cultural gap.

This policy explains how our practice is underpinned by these four principles.

#### A Unique Child

At Carrington Infant School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We know that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. We value the diversity of individuals in our school and through a well-planned, personalised curriculum, children are taught to be observant, investigative, curious, determined, imaginative, adventurous, cooperative and to use reasoning. We use questioning, praise and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning and high self-esteem. Through the ‘Characteristics of Effective Learning’ children are taught that they can ‘grow their brains’ so that they understand that everyone can learn with practise and effort. The children are taught how to learn and how to become successful learners.

#### **Inclusion**

All children and their families are valued within our school. We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate because of differences. All children at Carrington Infant School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or stage of learning. We do not group children based on notions of fixed ability. We teach the children that practise and effort lead to learning and improvement. Teachers plan low threshold, high ceiling tasks which enable all children to access the learning and to achieve as highly as possible. In the early years the children begin to learn to take responsibility for their learning and begin to understand the concept of challenge.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. Planning for children with additional needs is in line with the Special Educational Needs & Disability policy.

In the EYFS we have realistic and challenging expectations and 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 through an ambitious/creative curriculum and learning environment.
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- providing a wide range of opportunities and environments to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which each child's contribution is valued.
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is vital that all children in the school are safe. Through our Carrington Cares Curriculum, we provide children with opportunities to help them develop the skills they need to keep themselves safe. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards both in the real and virtual world.

#### **Positive Relationships**

At Carrington Infant School we recognise that children learn to be confident and independent through the development of secure relationships. We develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

#### **Parents as Partners**

At Carrington Infant School we recognise the important role parents play in educating the children.

- Carrying out home visits in September to all non-Carrington families.
- Visiting every pre-school/nursery in June/July.
- Inviting the children and parents to spend two sessions in the classroom before starting at school.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the Autumn term.
- Encouraging parents to attend consultation meetings in both the Autumn and Spring terms to discuss their child's progress.

- Providing parents with a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Encouraging parents to send in 'Wow' moments.
- Encouraging parents to contribute to observations on Tapestry.
- Inviting parents to workshops about how they can help their child.
- Operating an open door policy.
- Home/School agreements are issued when a child starts school.
- Parent/carers are invited to come to various performances that their children are in e.g. Harvest and Christmas performances.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to help in school and become involved in their child's learning (e.g. supporting children with reading).
- Parents are invited to 'Stay and Play' sessions every half term.

Staff develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

### **Enabling Environments with Teaching & Support from Adults**

At Carrington Infant School we recognise that both the indoor and outdoor environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning in order to achieve our ambitious curriculum.

### **Observation, Assessment and Planning**

Planning within the EYFS is based on the Educational Programmes, however at Carrington we aim to deliver a curriculum which offers the children much more. This is outlined in our ambitious curriculum and on Sonar. These plans are flexible so that Foundation Stage staff can respond to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. We make assessments of children's learning which are recorded on Tapestry our online learning journal and shared with parents. We use this information to ensure that future planning reflects individual needs. Children's learning and development is tracked on Target Tracker. Half termly this data is analysed, to enable us to plan for children's individual needs. A written report is given to parents at the end of Foundation Stage, which outlines how their child is progressing within the curriculum and the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning.' Each child's level of development and attainment is assessed against the areas of learning and the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) is submitted to Buckinghamshire County Council in the Summer term.

## **Learning and Development**

At Carrington Infant School 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 interconnected. The children have time and freedom to become deeply involved in the activities and their learning which is tailored to the children's individual needs and interests.

There are seven educational programmes that must shape educational provision within the EYFS.

### **Prime Areas**

#### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

#### **Physical Development**

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

#### Communication and Language

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

#### Specific areas

##### Literacy

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

##### Mathematics

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

#### Understanding the World

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

#### Expressive Arts and Design

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe

*These areas are delivered through themes/topics based on the children's interests. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities.*

*The children are able to access both the indoor and outdoor classroom throughout the day.*

#### **The Characteristics of Effective Play**

*At Carrington Infant school the children are introduced to our learning powers which underpin the characteristics of effective play.*

*These are:*

- Concentrating Caterpillar
- Imaginative Iguana
- Curious Camel
- Have A Go Hedgehog
- Improving Insect
- Cooperate Cat
- Enjoy Learning Elephant
- Don't Give Up Duck

Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to ‘have a go’

Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

**Effective Teaching and Learning in the EYFS**

- The partnership between teachers and parents.
- The approaches used that provide first hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend/ develop play.
- The carefully planned curriculum tailored to the children’s current needs and interests.
- 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 talk about their learning and encourage independence.
- The support for learning with appropriate accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.
- The identification of children’s next steps to help children reach their full potential.
- Daily systematic teaching of phonics based on Little Wandle phonics programme.
- Phased reading books are used to match children’s current phonic development.
- A wide variety of visits, trips and visitors take place to further enhance the curriculum.

**Indoor Classroom**

The indoor classroom provides a stimulating environment. Learning bays consisting of a reading/quiet corner, maths area computer area, home corner, a listening centre, writing table and art and craft area ensure that all 7 areas of the curriculum can be accessed indoors. The areas are enhanced weekly with learning challenges, including ‘chilli’ challenges to extend children’s learning.

**Outdoor Classroom**

The outdoor classroom is an essential extension of the indoor classroom offering equally valid learning opportunities. Activities and resources are changed on a weekly basis so learning is constantly being challenged and developed. Some advantages of the outdoor environment include

more space, first hand experience of nature, fresh air and a change of scenery, plus the opportunity for a more active learning style.

#### **Play**

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play, children can be inquisitive, creative, questioning and experimental and will learn at their highest level. Playing with their peers is important for children's development.

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. The adults model play and play sensitively with the children fitting in with their plans and ideas. The children are encouraged to try new activities and judge risks for themselves. We talk to them about how we get better at things through effort and practise and that we can all learn when things go wrong. They practise and build up ideas learning 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.

#### **Health and Safety**

Both EYFS main classrooms have their own toilets, washbasins and access to a safe outdoor play area. Staff make visual checks of the outdoor areas daily before school in accordance with school risk assessments. Safe use of equipment is taught and a safe environment is promoted. In line with the school's policy on safeguarding EYFS staff hand each child over to their parent/carer at the end of the day to ensure their safety when leaving the premises. If parents/carers are not able to pick their child up from school, they are required to issue a password to the school which must be given by the person picking up the child before he/she is handed over to them.

#### **Welfare requirements**

The school ensures that all statutory welfare requirements for EYFS pupils are met and understood by all staff. The class teacher is the key worker for pupils in their class, although each class has at least 1 additional teaching assistant. These staff members, together with 3 midday supervisors make up the EYFS team. A minimum of one EYFS teacher/support staff are trained in Paediatric First Aid and all of the other members of the EYFS team are qualified First Aiders. Disadvantaged pupils are allocated individual key workers to give them 1:1 support according to their individual needs. Water bottles are freely available throughout the day.

**(See current Child Protection Policy)**