Early Years Foundation Stage Policy Laughton CP School

In its November 2013 report, Ofsted concluded that 'children experience vibrant and imaginative teaching in Early Years Foundation Stage. They are well prepared for Year 1.'



Our new Reception pupils on their first day at school.

We are very proud that Ofsted recognised that our teaching in Early Years is outstanding:

'An outstanding literacy lesson featured a very effective search for a dragon with different fantasy worlds to promote imaginative early writing and storytelling.'

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of early learning in our school.

Written by: Mrs Budd Date: 3rd July 2007 Updated: March 2018

Our Vision

To utilise a Growth Mindset and 'can do' approach to learning to support all pupils to maximise their potential through an engaging indoor and outdoor environment combined with creative curriculum; which fosters natural curiosity, independence a love of learning through hands on play based exploration.

Introduction

At Laughton CP School we aim to ensure that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provides an engaging and well resourced environment where children benefit from rich and stimulating learning experiences including indoor and outdoor activities, trips and visits, themed events and workshops.

In its 2013 inspection Ofsted concluded that we deliver a high quality enabling environment for our Reception pupils:

'The indoor and outdoor learning environments are attractive and well laid out and resources, including role-play area, are very well presented and used.'



We are working together to complete an outdoor maths and fine motor skill challenge. We are resilient and keep on going until the challenge is completed.





We used our senses to explore a range of healthy vegetables as part of our Picnic in the Park topic and this culminated in making and tasting our home-made soup.

Exciting resources backed up with trips, themed events in school and outdoor experiences help to develop our children's creativity and ability to talk about their ideas.

Here all Reception and KS1 children enjoyed the opportunity to act out a Circus play after we secured a free drama workshop. It helped them to extend their understanding of being a performer, which supported our work in class linked to acting out the Jack & the Beanstalk before writing their own version of the story.



We explored how plants grow and as part of this we acted out the 'Enormous Watermelon' story before writing our own funny tale.

We understand the Characteristics of Effective Learning – Playing and Exploring; Active Learning and Creating & Thinking Critically – and value our role in helping children to get the most out of every aspect of their school life. We also value the role that parents play in their child's learning and work in partnership together to support our children's needs.

The enabling indoor and outdoor environment we have created combined with our knowledge of how children learn best, means that we can support our youngest learners and help them to develop life long skills. For example we offer free flow to an outdoor area including a wooden play area for under 6's and new sensory learning area, which we utilise to support learning and development. This hands on approach helps our pupils to be engaged learners, who are willing to have a go, are self motivated and have the perseverance to complete even the most challenging activities. Our pupils are also encouraged to have their own ideas, make links and develop problem solving skills.

Ofsted agreed that our hands-on and creative curriculum approach helped children to learn well and have positive attitudes towards learning because 'they are active in their own learning and because the topics they study excite them.' (2013)



We always aim to make our learning fun, interactive and challenging to inspire children to be engaged and independent learners with natural curiosity for the world around them. All reception, Year 1 and 2 children benefit from weekly sessions in the woods together using their senses to extended their understanding of the world and using natural materials to create themed items linked to our topics.



We have invested in a range of technology to support and extend children's learning. For example, we utilise our new iPads to take photos of our amazing nature creations.

Our recent trip to Paradise Park inspired our Underwater pupils to be dinosaur explorers. We enjoy our hands on active learning experiences and our engaging topics, combined with trips and visitors, encourage children to 'have a go' at writing for a purpose.



We provide a nurturing experience for up to 15 EYFS pupils every year, in a mixed age Reception and Year 1 class, with Mrs Budd as the Class Teacher supported by full time Teaching Assistant Mrs Durrant.

Mrs Budd is an accredited Early Years Advanced Skills Teacher and her teaching, leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is deemed outstanding by Ofsted.

Mrs Budd is also currently a moderator on behalf of East Sussex County Council to ensure that practise and provision in EYFS across County enables children to reach their potential and accurate data is submitted linked to the end of year Early Learning Goals. She is fully aware of how to effectively use the Development Matters supporting materials to ensure our Reception pupils make good progress across in their learning and development and strive to at least achieve a Good Level of Development in line with the 75% County target.

Ofsted on progress in EYFS (2013): 'The EYFS prepares children well for the rest of their time in school. Most children start school with skills that are expected for their age and make steady or faster progress in all areas of learning as they move through the Reception year.'

We focus on three prime areas, which are deemed by the Department of Education to be the 'most essential for children's readiness for future learning and healthy development.' (Department for Education – Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012)



These three areas, the *prime* areas, are:

- **communication and language;**
- **physical development;**
- **personal, social and emotional development.**

In line with statutory requirements, we also support children in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The specific areas are:

- **literacy;**
- **mathematics;**
- **understanding the world;**
- **expressive arts and design.**

The four principles outlined in 'Development Matters' - A Unique Child; Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments and Learning and Development - underpin all the new guidance and our ethos in Reception at Laughton CP School.
We believe that the ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner in line with Development Matters.

It is essential to take a holistic view of the whole child and we use all the current guidance to help support each individual child's development pathway. We carefully observe and assess children to make sure we have a full picture of where they are in their learning and their next steps. In September 2015, we completed the new Reception Baseline assessment, which was due to be mandatory for every Reception pupil from September 2016. Following a comparability study, the Dfe announced in April 2016 that this on-entry assessment system would not be introduced as a measure of progress and the outcomes from this year's Baseline would not be used for accountability. The Government is currently considering 'options for improving assessment arrangements in Reception beyond 2016-2017 and will make an announcement in due course.' In the meantime, we will continue to assess each child's level of development against their age and stage bands within Development Matters based on a 'best fit' approach. This involves using on-going observations and assessments to make best fit judgements in line with our existing legal requirements and completing an end of Year EYFS Profile for each child against the Early Learning Goals. We will keep updated of and implement any statutory changes to assessment and reporting procedures in Reception and inform staff, governors and parents of all national updates relating to EYFS.

The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1.

As part of our statutory responsibilities, we must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). We also provide a short summary on how each child is developing in relation to the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

We follow the new Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which became statutory in September 2012. By taking a holistic view of the unique child and using all the new Development Matters Materials backed up by the Characteristics of Effective Learning, we can help our pupils to develop a range of skills and attitudes including an excellent attitude to learning.

Our environment, with its dedicated outdoor area facilitates free flow from the indoor to outdoor classroom in accordance with EYFS expectations of daily outdoor provision for children. We also strive for all children to feel included, secure and valued in line with 'Every Child Matters.' As part of this, we focus on the social and emotional aspects of learning through circle time, planning activities and dedicated as well as integrated PSED sessions, a weekly session is delivered by the school's nationally accredited PSHE teacher, to help the children become familiar with their new setting and friends.

Our high quality care incorporates well planned purposeful activities, with appropriate adult intervention and interactions to help and support children as they gain invaluable new skills and experiences.

Ofsted commented that throughout our school 'the best teaching is pacey, stimulating, enthusiastic and imaginative.'



In EYFS we take advantage of our outdoor areas to work alongside Year 1 and 2. We utilise our sensory garden to have engaging learning experiences. Our children are stimulated to explore their environment and to use it to extend their understanding of living things.

We have a 'can do' attitude to learning and work collaboratively.





We are proud of our EYFS and the benefits that our cross curricular approach has in enabling every child to reach their potential in the Prime Areas and Specific Areas. This includes working together, talking and sharing ideas in order to adapt and improve our ideas and finished creations.

In Underwater Class we use the indoor and outdoor classroom to all seven areas of learning via a topic based and linked approach to learning. Our creative style includes utilising the outdoor environment and exposing the children to a variety of trips, workshops and visitors to enhance learning. Children's work is celebrated and regularly displayed in our class to support learning.



The skills and concepts formed in the early years help children to make sense of and apply their knowledge and understanding. They are the foundations upon which the quality of later life depends. We often use themed days or events and curriculum weeks to enhance our creative approach to learning and teaching.



We enjoy whole school events such as dressing up as our favourite book character for World Book Day. Here are the winners from each year group.

In Underwater Class we work especially closely with our KS1 colleagues, so the children have excellent transition sessions as well as weekly opportunities to develop topic knowledge, skills and attributes with the Year 1 and 2 children.

Our Vision



We help everyone to achieve their potential through using a Growth Mindset 'can do' approach to learning.

We recognise value and celebrate individuality.

We develop children's high self esteem.

We promote respect for self and others.

We foster qualities of initiative, independence, co-operation and self motivation.

We deliver high quality teaching, recognising that play is a vital tool in the learning process.

We encourage a positive attitude to learning.

We work closely with parents and carers.

Our Commitments

'Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people, and in the world around them. Development is not an automatic process, however. It depends on each unique child having the opportunity to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments.' (Department of Education - Development Matters 2012)



Partnership with Parents and carers



- Parents and carers have the opportunity to spend time with their child's new teacher before starting school at an induction meeting; the Head teacher also meets with parents and an induction pack is given
- Parents and carers are invited to weekly reading sessions
- Parents and carers are invited to meetings to discuss their child's progress
- Parents and carers are encouraged to talk to their child's teacher on a daily basis if there are any concerns.
- Parents and carers receive a written report in the Summer term, which includes an individual Learning Journey.
- We give parents the opportunity to record comments about their child's progress via individual communication diaries and wow cards.
- Each term a curriculum newsletter and topic overview is sent home which gives detailed information about the areas to be covered in class across the areas of learning.
- ICT is used to share key learning moments with parents including outcomes of trips, visits, special events etc
- Parents and carers receive newsletters, keeping them up-to-date on forthcoming events and are invited to come into school and participate.

Parents and younger siblings are actively involved in supporting their child's learning through our weekly parent-child reading sessions

Our Aims

We aim to develop the characteristics of effective learning as well as the prime and specific areas by:

- promoting resilience and a 'can do' attitude to learning through collaborative working and sharing ideas
- fostering high self esteem
- valuing children's own ideas and motivate children via consistent positive encouragement and praise
- encouraging children to have some control over their learning and actions
- providing a happy, safe and secure environment both indoors and outdoors
- encouraging practical exploration and discovery

- developing each child's confidence, independence and a desire for life long learning
- developing a feeling of fun and mutual discovery
- encouraging co-operation and mutual respect
- helping each child realise their full potential and develop the whole child
- developing children's confidence to 'have a go' at new and tricky skills
- developing problem solving skills
- celebrating individuality, personal success and achievement
- enriching and extending learning patterns and experiences
- promoting effective partnerships with parents/carers, governors, and the wider community
- introducing the children to their new school life in a gradual and sensitive manner

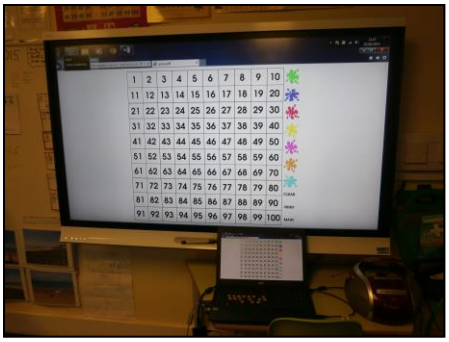
The Learning Environment

Young children need active exploration and opportunities for investigation and discovery.



We use our wider environment to engage children in their learning including providing opportunities to extend our creative and collaborative skills. We undertake weekly wellie walks to our local woods and the children participate in forest school themed activities.

At Laughton School we provide:
A dedicated outdoor area to enhance co-operative play and provide extension activities.



- A range of ICT to develop new skills and support learning across the curriculum including dedicated laptops,iPads, beebot roamers, new class interactive whiteboard, microphone, digitial cameras etc
- New and challenging opportunities.
- A broad and balanced curriculum and stimulating setting.
- Opportunities for collaboration.
- Materials to develop fine and gross motor skills.
- Time for children to practise and consolidate developing skills.

Observation, Planning and Assessment

In Underwater class we use speaking and listening, observations, photos and assessments to evaluate where the children are in their learning and to inform future planning. It is a cyclical and on-going process throughout the year. We also use Classroom Monitor to track progress across the age and stage bands in Development Matters for the seven areas of learning.

Observations are used to help us to identify learning needs and highlight personal achievements so that all children's learning can be moved on to the next step of their developmental path.

Each child has an individual Learning Journey, containing photos, wow comments, pupil and parent voice and significant learning moments. The Learning Journey enables us to see your child's progress and development across the prime and specific areas of learning throughout the Reception year and it is used as part of the end of Early Years Foundation Stage moderation process. They are also fantastic celebratory book for parents to keep and treasure.

We believe in Assessment for Learning in which the children are directly involved in in developing their Learning Journeys and adding self assessment faces to every piece of work. As educators, we also provide verbal feedback including next steps advice to each child to help them reach their potential.



We have daily phonics sessions in class to support reading and writing. We also provide independent phonics activities during planning time as this is an effective way to enable children to consolidate their skill as well as to assess a child's ability to be independent and secure in their letters and sounds and having the confidence to word build. This helps our children to have the confidence to write independently and share their writing.

Our Links to Pre-school

- We know our local pre-schools and visit their settings as part of our on-going liaison process.

- We offer transition visits in which pre-school children have the opportunity to visit Laughton School in the run up to starting school. The pre-school children join us for a series of weekly afternoon sessions in order to familiarise them with our setting. It culminates in a 'shuffle up' session in July, where all pre-school children get the opportunity to get to meet all their new peer group and teaching staff. This helps facilitate a smooth transition for the children when they formally join Underwater Class in September.

- Pre-school are invited by Early Years to special annual events.

- Teachers visit children in our local pre-school settings.

Governors

By sharing the principles of early childhood education and effective practise through discussion, reports and classroom visits, our Governing Body supports our work and makes informed decisions about provision and resources and regularly monitors EYFS.

Reward, Behaviour and Discipline

Children at Laughton are actively encouraged through positive reinforcement of good behaviour at all times. We use our Golden Rules combined with a Growth Mindset 'Can do' Approach to learning- to help us get the most out of every day at our school. Children are rewarded frequently with verbal praise and individual, group and class rewards. Children are encouraged to be responsible for their own actions in line with class and school rules and children praise each other's good behaviour by clapping and verbal support. Once a week children are nominated for the Headteacher's award for a specific behaviour or good work during that week and are presented with a certificate to take home and their photo is displayed in a special book. We also encourage children to make the right choices and reward them for doing so, through our weekly Golden Time. At Golden time, children who consistently follow our Golden Rules over the week, get the opportunity to undertake special activities that they are allowed to self select at the start of the week.



Unacceptable cases of behaviour are dealt with instantly with the child, the behaviour being cited as not liked and not the child themselves. Relevant behavioural issues may become the focus of our circle time sessions to help all children learn to respect themselves, each other and school and to learn how to resolve conflict in an acceptable way.

Children are disciplined in a quiet and non threatening manner and told that their actions are inappropriate. Continuation of the unacceptable behaviour would mean withdrawal from the situation and children moved away until they have calmed down.
Serious bouts of behaviour would mean that the child is spoken to, removed from the situation and not allowed to return to that activity and the parent would be informed (in line with the School's Behaviour Policy).

Organisation

Staffing

At present the Early Years Foundation Stage class is taught by Mrs Budd, with dedicated teaching assistants Mrs Durrant. Our SENCO Mrs Levey also provides 1:1 and group work for children who are identified as needing additional support.

How we work

- Children have the opportunity to work alone, in pairs, small and large groups, and sometimes as a whole class
- We recognise that children have different learning styles. A particular approach is selected which matches the children's needs and learning styles including visual, auditory and kinaesthetic styles.
- Groups change depending on the activity and children work in different combinations designed for the specific situation.
- Children work in different ways and at different times throughout the day by utilising both the indoor and outdoor classroom as well as our large school grounds.
- We work as a joint EYFS and KS1 unit every Friday morning as part of our Outdoor Learning experiences.
- We have weekly parent-child reading sessions

The Buddy System

At our transition visits, each child is carefully allocated a year 6 'Buddy' to support them in their integration into their new school life. The Buddy will help the children to settle quickly into Laughton school and enjoy playtimes and lunchtimes.

Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and the more able pupils

The Early Years Foundation Stage follows school policy in regards to Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and challenging the more able pupils.
We understand that children develop quickly in the Early Years and as outlined in Development Matters 2012, we practitioners 'can help children have the best start in life. Children have a right, spelled out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to provision which enables them to develop their personalities, talents and abilities irrespective of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities or gender.'
School Policies are available from the office on request.

Learning through play

Our pedagogy is based upon our understanding of the value of high quality learning through play. We know that each area of Learning & Development must be implemented through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity.

'Play is essential for children's development' (DFE 2012) and it is a major vehicle by which children gain access to the curriculum and learn to take turns and share. As well as activities guided by adults, purposeful play led by the children features highly in our early years curriculum planning and permeates across all areas of learning and development.



We encourage high-level play and exploration as this sustains interest and motivation. Young children take their play experiences very seriously and enjoy exploring through construction and tactile resources and role play based scenarios.

Research indicates the benefits of productive play and in their play we see children:

solving problems	**sharing**	**initiating ideas**
predicting	**taking risks**	**ordering**
communicating	**reflecting**	**planning**
applying skills	**leading**	**following**
sequencing	**co-operating**	**building confidence**
showing empathy	**anticipating**	**having mutual respect**

Summary of Laughton's Early Years Ethos:

We want every day in underwater Class to be full of wonder and exploration.
We provide a resource rich environment both indoor and outdoor, which encourages investigation and active learning through purposeful playful experiences.
We use trips, visitors and workshops to engage children in their learning.
Our good provision helps children to fulfil their individual potential and to develop a lifelong love of learning.







'Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people and in the world around them. Development is not an automatic process, however. It depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments.
Development Matters in the EYFS 2012