



EYFS POLICY

All schools in Connect Schools Academy Trust are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Staff Responsible:	Head Teacher Head of Foundation Stage
Date of Review:	September 2017
Date of Next Review:	September 2020

## VERSION CONTROL

Date	Change
June 2018	Minor amendments and adoption as Trust policy

## Contents

1. Aims for the Foundation Stage	4
2. The Four Themes	5
3. The Characteristics of Effective Learning	8
4. Planning	8
5. Observations	8
6. Assessment	8
7. The Learning Environment	9
8. Teaching and Learning Styles	9
9. Transition	10
10. Safeguarding and Welfare	11
11. Keeping Safe	11
12. Good Health	12
13. Intimate Care	12
14. Monitoring and Review	12

## **Policy for the Foundation Stage at Connect Schools Academy Trust (CSAT)**

This policy has been written using the statutory framework, updated in April 2017, and the non-statutory guidance of Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage which became mandatory across all Early Years providers as of September 2012.

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from Birth until the end of the Reception year. At CSAT, all children begin school at the beginning of the school year in which they are five where they become part of a reception class.

### **Aims of the Foundation Stage**

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

At CSAT, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

## **The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes:**

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and Development

### **A Unique Child**

At CSAT we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### **Inclusion –**

We value the diversity of individuals within the schools and believe that every child matters. All children at CSAT are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our schools.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

At the beginning of the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. We do this through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, 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;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary;
- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met

These principles underpin all of the learning that takes at CSAT Schools during the reception year.

### **Positive relationships**

At CSAT we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure and positive relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

We recognise the vital role that parents/carers play in educating their children and strongly believe in parents as partners. We do this through:

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at our induction meetings and/or home visits.
- Arranging, where possible, visits by the teacher to all children in their childcare provision prior to their starting school.
- Outlining the schools' expectations in the Home-School agreement.
- Providing an induction meeting for Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.
- Holding a parent consultation in October to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Sending home praise cards which are designed to enable parents to record achievements.
- Publishing a termly curriculum topic map detailing the areas of learning and the overarching theme of the term as well as a weekly curriculum newsletter.
- Inviting parents to attend workshops relating to specific areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading.
- Sharing regularly the children's 'Learning Journey' with parents/carers and valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents/carers.
- Sending termly reports home which detail child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in reception.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, workshops, Christmas productions and sports day etc.
- Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers.

### **Enabling Environments**

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have

daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff.

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

### **Learning and Developing**

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years' settings. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.

They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The three Prime areas are:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Communication and Language
3. Physical Development

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the world
4. Expressive arts and design

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

### **The Characteristics of Effective Learning**

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

1. Playing and exploring - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
2. Active learning - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.
3. Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

### **Planning**

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers use the national schemes of work, where appropriate, to support their planning for individual children. The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. The planning is based upon themes with discrete phonics, maths and reading directed teaching. However, planning, which is based upon a different topic which is identified as vehicle of interest to deliver the children's next steps in learning, also therefore responds to the needs, achievement and interest of the children. Our medium-term planning identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals, and also for those exceeding the Early Learning Goals.

### **Observations**

Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's Learning Journeys.

### **Assessment**

During the first term in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using a baseline test. 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.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

We record each child's level of development against the 17 early Learning goals as Emerging, Expected or Exceeding. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

The teacher keeps progress records and learning journals and records examples of each child's work. These progress books contain a wide range of evidence that we share with parents at each parental consultation meeting. Tracking grids are updated at the end of each term. This provides a summary sheet for each child which feeds into the whole-school assessment and tracking process.

At the end of the final term in Reception we send a summary of these assessments to the LA for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information in the end-of-year report. Parents receive an annual written 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 in early July each year.

### **The Learning Environment**

The Foundation Stage classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc. Children have access to both inside and outside area across the day; this has a positive effect on the children's development. The Foundation Stage has its own outdoor classroom area and access to a Forest School. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and in different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. All areas of the curriculum can be explored outside.

### **Teaching & Learning Styles**

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 or 2. The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, carers and other settings 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 Foundation Stage;
- 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 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;
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school.

### **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 and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

### **Starting Reception**

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

- Go through the school handbook
- Explain about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals
- Explain about holidays and absences
- Explain the arrangements for the gradual induction into reception

### **New class sessions**

The children are given two opportunities to come in to school to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class. They will spend some time in their new class. This means that before they join their new class the Reception environment is already a familiar place to them.

### **September Intake**

When children join the school in September we will operate a staggered start system so that the children can gradually adjust to their new surroundings.

### **Starting in Key Stage 1 (Year 1)**

Throughout the Reception year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in Key Stage and whole school assemblies as well as sharing lunchtimes with the Key Stage 1 children.

Children have the opportunity to meet their new class teacher and spend a morning in their new class during the summer term.

### **Safeguarding & Welfare**

At CSAT, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017:

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.
- Ensuring that necessary and relevant training specific to the early year's staff is attended.

### **Keeping Safe**

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

We have procedures that are used to identify anyone at risk of harm or radicalisation, this sets out clear procedure for reporting any concerns from minor to major. All staff have received PREVENT and FGM training and are informed of any updates termly.

## **Good Health**

All children are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of milk. They have access to water at all times.

## **Intimate Care**

“Intimate” care is any care which involves washing, or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child’s age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, cleaning after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. No intimate care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or guardian of that child and all parents and guardians will be asked to provide that permission when their child joins reception at a CSAT School.

## **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head Teacher and EYFS Lead will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.