



## **Philosophy:**

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know that provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the framework that provides that assurance.”

*(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)*

## **Principles:**

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

We also work towards the outcomes of Ever Child Matters.

### **A Unique Child**

In our school 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 planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set challenging expectations based upon a secure knowledge of our children and a clear identification of their needs. We achieve this by planning for the individual and acknowledging the different requirements of those with special educational needs, the more able and those with disabilities.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning challenging activities based on observation and knowledge of individual children with a purposeful identification of the “next steps” which will benefit them;
- 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 to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- monitoring children’s progress and taking action to provide support as necessary
- Working closely with parents and communicating effectively with them about their child’s progress.

### **Positive Relationships**

At Priestley we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from the experience of secure relationships.

#### Our Staff

We aim to be the best possible role models for the children and develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with them and their families.

#### Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are the children’s first and most enduring educators and we highly value the contribution that they make. We recognise the role that parents/carers play, as well as their future role in educating the children. We do this through:

- a carefully structured introduction to the school even before the child has formally started
- talking to parents before their child starts in our school and arranging Home visits in the first two weeks of them starting school
- Having an “Open Door” policy, actively encouraging the early discussion of concerns.
- keeping parents informed of the curriculum and events through newsletters, our website and our daily parents board

## **Enabling Environments**

At Priestley School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

### The Learning Environment

The classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. We have our own well resourced outdoor area which is used throughout the year.

## **Learning and Development**

At Priestley Primary 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 inter connected.

### Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

#### Three Prime Areas:

Personal, Emotional and Social Development. (PSED)

- Making relationships
- Self-confidence and self-awareness
- Managing feelings and behaviour

Communication and Language. (CL)

- Listening and attention
- Understanding
- Speaking

Physical development

- Moving and handling
- Health and self-care

#### Four Specific Areas:

Mathematics.

- Numbers
- Shape, space and measure

Literacy

- Reading
- Writing

Understanding the World

- People and communities
- The world
- Technology

Expressive Art and Design

- Exploring and using media and materials
- Being imaginative

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

### Teaching and Learning

Important features of the way in which we deliver our curriculum are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- 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 indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
- the understanding of the importance of the transition stage from a previous setting to ours.

## **Procedures:**

The Foundation Stage applies to children from 0 months to the end of reception year. At Priestley all the children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the

term after a child's fifth birthday).

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) class at Priestley School we aim to provide a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum which addresses the children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, moral and cultural development within a safe, secure, stimulating environment. Our curriculum enables the child to learn and develop skills, attitudes and understanding in all 17 areas of learning.

Throughout the EYFS we plan activities to give children learning experiences and opportunities to work towards the Early Learning Goals and prepare them for the National Curriculum. Teaching and learning will take place within the classroom and outside areas. Within these areas children will participate in a variety of activities, both child initiated and adult led.

### **Play in the Foundation Stage**

#### A play based curriculum

“Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.”

We deliver a play based curriculum which encourages curiosity and active learning. There is room for creativity and time for shared, sustained thinking. We want our children to select their own resources and use them in their independent work whilst drawing on skills and knowledge they have developed in teacher-directed activities. We aim to facilitate this in a well resourced, safe environment staffed by knowledgeable and committed professionals working in partnership with parents.

### **Assessment**

#### Observation, Assessment and Planning

Planning within the EYFS follows medium-term plans, under the guidance of “Cornerstones” which inform weekly plans; however, planning is flexible to allow changes when necessitated by the needs and interests of the children.

Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation. Assessment of children's learning is continuous whether through structured activity or in recording a spontaneous moment in child initiated play. We use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Observations are recorded on post-its, annotated pieces of work and photographs. All work carried out by the child, whether it be through child initiated play or through adult led activities are then displayed in each Child's learning journey.

In Reception we assess each child against the 17 assessment scales derived from the EYFS Profile. In the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against those scales as well as providing a full narrative report on their achievements, including the Characteristics of Effective Learning. Parents have an opportunity to discuss the report with the class teacher.

### **Resources**

At Priestley we plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. 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

**This Policy alongside the Teaching and Learning Policy underpins all that we strive to achieve at Priestley and supports the school's vision and aims**

**To Be Reviewed Spring 2020**