



The Pilgrim Federation of Church of England Schools
Blakeney, Hindringham, Kelling, Walsingham

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Aims and objectives:

The Pilgrim Federation aims to provide a safe, secure and enabling environment that meets the needs of all the children that attend and takes account of individual need. We believe that all children deserve access to the best possible start to reach their full potential. The EYFS is based on 4 main principles.

1. Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
3. Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
4. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities. Department for Education 2014, Reference: DFE-00337-2014

Transitions and settling

Our transitions system allows children many opportunities to visit the school both during stay and play with their parents and sessions for them and their peers without parents. Transition sessions are run in the term prior to transferring to reception. Families receive comprehensive information prior to these sessions about the process and the learning their child will receive in the reception year. Preschool settings also receive up to date information to share with families. Home visits and preschool visits are offered and all preschools are contacted for transition reports prior to a child starting. Children start in reception class full time from day one wherever possible. We believe this allows a complete fresh start as children are unaware of what to expect from school and therefore accept the change readily. Experience tells us children settled quicker and better and get off to the best academic start. We have a Federation Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) who is available to aid the transitions of those children for whom this will not be possible.

Teaching and learning

Teaching occurs in a mixed EYFS and KS1 class. Reception children have differentiated tasks within the class lessons that meet their curriculum. Enhanced provision planning takes account of current topic, class learning, children's interests and individual need. This planning is for the free flow, indoor/outdoor play opportunities which form two thirds of reception's curriculum learning time and are known in our federation as 'Learning play'. This phrase has been adopted to highlight that time spent on these play activities are focussed on EYFS curriculum learning and are therefore distinguishable from play that children are no longer learning anything from. Continuous play provision is also available and accessed via children's own selections. Every lesson contains a teacher led task which follows the EYFS curriculum and is within the learning objective for the whole class. There is teaching assistant support full time.

Teaching in the EYFS follows 7 areas of learning and seeks to support and promote good behaviours for learning. Behaviours for learning are the attitudes, approaches and habits that allow children to make the

best use of learning opportunities and be at their most receptive to learn. In the Early Years Foundation Stage these are referred to as the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning.'

Prime areas: These are the areas seen as most beneficial for children to be in the position to be ready to learn.

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional

Specific areas - These are the core areas of learning seen as the basic foundation of early education.

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive art and design.

Characteristics of effective learning

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 on 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

Assessment

Children are assessed against the EYFS curriculum statements, or profile, and the characteristics of effective learning which demonstrate a child's individual attitudes and approaches towards learning. A baseline assessment provides class teachers with a marker of a child's abilities and needs on entry to reception year. EYFS planning builds on that ability and need to allow progress towards the Early Learning Goals, the final statements of the EYFS curriculum. Assessments are made via 'in the moment' observation notes, photographs of children's work and activities, examples of mark making and items children have made, and planned observations of children's play. Children's work produced during teacher led tasks is also considered but learning play child initiated or child led evidence takes precedence.

Distinctions in teaching and learning tasks and types of play provision

Teacher led task - task set by the class teacher that follows the whole class learning objective and constitutes formal teaching. Children are required to take part.

Adult led - This refers to play opportunities in learning play time that have been set up by an adult with some instruction as to what to do. Scope in the task has been engineered to meet specific needs or curriculum areas.

Child led - This refers to play opportunities in learning play time that have been provided by the adult in terms of a resource or play opportunity but without any specific instructions or pre-conceived ideas of where the play will go. Children have much scope to take the play opportunity in their own direction and come up with their own ideas for using the resources.

Child initiated - This refers to play opportunities that children have started themselves by asking an adult for a particular resource/s or via an adult providing play opportunities that link to a child's interest they have observed.

Key Person

The Early Years Foundation Stage sets out guidelines for children in early years settings to have a designated Key Person. This is a person with whom a child has more contact within the setting, or in other words someone who will be assigned to develop a positive relationship in order to ensure the child's needs are fully met. In a school there are less staff than a pre-school and classes are typically staffed by a class teacher and a supporting teaching assistant (TA). At the Pilgrim Federation our classes follow this staffing arrangement and therefore the class teacher takes responsibility for being the key person for the whole cohort. We believe that in order to educate a child successfully the class teacher should know each child as well as another and therefore the teacher takes this role supported by the TA.

Monitoring and reviewing

It is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team in consultation with the Early Years Foundation Stage Leader to monitor the delivery of the EYFS curriculum and its outcomes. EYFS progress tracking is monitored by the Head of Teaching and Learning and the Early Years Leader.

Transition to year 1

The Pilgrim Federation classes are mixed age and stage and children benefit from the continuity of transferring to the national curriculum in year 1 with the same class team. Where staff changes are inevitable transition information is passed on in collaboration with the previous class teacher, EYFS Leader and Head of Teaching and Learning.

Participation of parents and carers

The Pilgrim Federation encourages parents and carers to participate in their children's learning by:

- Adding to their child's learning journey as and when appropriate.
- Attending learning workshops provided by the school, tailored to helping parents understand their children's learning and enabling them to support it at home.
- Attending regular school events to support school activities.
- Helping on school trips where needed.

Opportunities are available to become a school volunteer by helping in school or becoming a member of the Friends to help support school. Please be aware parents and carers who volunteer in school are not positioned in their own child/children's class.

Early Years Foundation Stage Lead

The Pilgrim Federation has a Lead Teacher for the EYFS. This is currently Mrs Hilary Myhill who is based at Kelling School.