



"Inspiring minds to ignite lifelong learning"



Onchan Primary School
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Onchan EYFS Policy

Rationale

"It is vital that we get to know and value all young children. All children learn more in the period from birth to five years old than any other time in their lives." "When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we can give them what they need tomorrow. We also set them up with every chance of success." (Development Matters 2020)

At Onchan Primary school, the Early Years Foundation Stage is viewed as a distinctive phase of education which integrates the care and education of our youngest children. We believe that all children are unique and bring with them a diverse range of previous experiences and learning which must be acknowledged and built upon.

Effective Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide highly effective teaching and learning within a culture of challenge, nurture and support. We support all children to progress to be the best they can be. Our curriculum enables as many children as possible to achieve a Good Level of Development by the end of their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and we build on this in subsequent years. Children develop and learn at different rates and therefore, understanding the holistic child and their needs is at the heart of our pedagogy.

Our practice is informed by the EYFS framework and covers the education and care of all children in EYFS, including children with special educational needs and disabilities. The seven key features of effective practice and the characteristics of effective teaching and learning is detailed in the Statutory Framework for the early years foundation stage which can be found on the UK government website.

The Areas of Teaching and Learning Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 EYFS statutory framework. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally as important as each other in developing the whole child. The prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The 3 prime areas are:

- **Communication and language** - Listening, attention and understanding - Speaking
- **Physical development** - Gross motor skills - Fine motor skills
- **Personal, social and emotional development** - Self-regulation - Managing self - Building relationships

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Compassion - Integrity - Endeavour - Courage - Respect



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The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- **Literacy** - Comprehension - Word reading – Writing
- **Mathematics** - Numbers - Numerical patterns
- **Understanding the world** - Past and present - People, culture and communities - The natural world
- **Expressive arts and design** - Creating with materials, - Being imaginative and expressive

Role of the Adult

We recognise that teaching can take place at all times of the day through directed teaching sessions, through times of play and inside and outside the classroom. We encourage the children to choose where they would like to learn as well as invite them to other areas that they might have missed. We strive to make our environments inviting for children by regularly updating the environment inline with current topic or themes e.g. Space, Animals – and this in turn, enables children to actively engage and have a purpose for their learning. We have half-termly topic plans which include all the areas of the environment with possible tasks and activities to setup for the children. We will also incorporate adult-directed learning time relating to the topics which include finding out the prior learning, thinking of questions, and then researching those questions. This has been found to be highly effective as the children take ownership of their learning and are able to build upon knowledge they already have – digging deeper! As well as this, learning should be personalised by building on the child's interests and involving them fully in reflecting on what they have learned and how they may build on their skills. This will help us to reach our mission statement of "inspiring minds to ignite life-long learning."

At appropriate opportunities the adults will:

- Question, respond to questions and engage the child in extended conversations that support sustained shared thinking
- Extend vocabulary, knowledge and skills
- Encourage independence
- Add resources that stimulate, motivate and engage the learner
- Demonstrate, model and work alongside the children
- Help children to see links in their learning
- Support and encourage the children
- Undertake small group interventions where gaps are found in learning
- Encourage children to be problem solvers, problem setters and investigators
- Re-direct the play if necessary
- Help children to learn how to negotiate and resolve conflict
- Promote children's well-being

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- Observe and assess learning using observations and Tapestry
- Record judgments and plan for next steps in learning
- Provide feedback to child/other adult/parents
- Ensure the environment is safe and secure

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We uphold the view that learning is underpinned by the characteristics of effective learning.

The 3 characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

All of these areas interlink throughout the curriculum and adults make the most of opportunities to interact with children to develop their playing, thinking and learning. Adults also recognise that there are times when they need to take a step back to enable children to think critically and solve a problem by trial and error or perseverance.

It is our aim that children leave the EYFS with our school's core values of:

- Endeavour
- Compassion
- Courage
- Integrity
- Respect

Early Language, Reading and Mathematics

At Onchan we provide a language-rich environment in which high quality talk is valued. All staff model good communication skills in their interactions with pupils and each other. For early phonics teaching, the school follows the Onchan Phonics Scheme. Home reading books ensure that the children are given reading books that reflect their phonic knowledge and we use book bands to assess the children's reading level. The children start by taking home lilac books, which have no words to read to encourage children to talk about the pictures and develop a love of books. As we start to learn the Phase 2 sounds, or if they already have knowledge of sounds from Nursery, children will progress to books with words and are encouraged to segment and blend the sounds. Comprehension is also a key element of reading and children can only move through the book bands if their comprehension level is at the same stage as the word-reading level. This is crucial for developing children's vocabulary, inference and deduction. We ensure that children read a book to an adult twice a

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week and children that need further support may have a third. Adults also strive to promote a love of reading through daily story time and carefully chosen books within the learning environment that link with our current topics. Teachers closely monitor children's progress in reading during 1-1 reading, phonics sessions and termly phonics assessments in order that interventions are implemented to address gaps in learning promptly.

Literacy based learning is through the Literacy Tree Scheme which is used across the school and based on a key text. There is an exciting hook into this book which engages the children and motivates them throughout the series of lessons. Children will be able to write for different purposes and are encouraged to use their knowledge of phonics to support their writing.

Speech is assessed after children are settled using the Language Link tool. This enables us to identify children that may have speech issues or other difficulties with their language e.g. verbs, tenses. We are then able to create intervention groups that can support these children and also make referrals to SALT if necessary.

Maths is taught through a range of experiences including counting as part of the daily routine, discreet teaching using the White Rose Scheme with follow up group activities and play based opportunities and experiences through the learning environment. We recognise that Maths can take place in any environment and we promote the use of learning maths skills through play-based opportunities. We have termly maths assessments and any children that are identified to be experiencing any difficulties are given appropriate support and possibly a small group intervention to consolidate counting and other skills. Teachers target specific questions at individuals in whole class teaching, extending the children's understanding, allowing key mathematical concepts to be revisited and developed across the year. We adopt the White Rose Maths approach to our teaching, which ensures progression and coverage throughout the year.

Play

We believe that it is vitally important for adults to support children's learning through play. We believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is the fundamental way in which young children learn. Children can learn and play in different ways – loud social play or quieter more focused play. Some children may have accessed pre-school or Nurseries prior to starting school where there will already be on their way to developing in the areas of learning. Through play, children will be developing skills across all the Prime and Specific areas of learning, working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals, the desired outcomes for the end of the EYFS.

Planning

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The teacher responsible for Reception uses the EYFS statutory Framework. From this and from analysis of data and on-going assessments, areas of learning are planned through a series of topics or initiated by the pupils' interests, each of which offers experiences in all seven areas of learning. These plans then inform short-term weekly planning, alongside observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses. Adult focused and independent activities are planned on a weekly basis. Children have the opportunity to work in each of the learning areas within the classroom and outdoors. Whole class, group and individual activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum, as appropriate. We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, our early years practitioners interact and question to challenge children. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.

Assessment

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and carers. We do a baseline assessment at the start of the year against the areas of learning, which is then built upon throughout the year and is based on teacher judgements. We also use a range of assessments, both formative and summative, with individual pupils at various points including phonics screening, speech link, language link. At the end of Reception, teachers complete the EYFS profile for each child.

Pupils are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals, indicating whether they are:

- meeting expected levels of development
- not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions among teachers working with the children. The results of the profile are shared with parents and carers. EYFS profile data is submitted to Department in the summer term when these are requested. The report in July is a detailed, written summary and contains information about how each child learns and an assessment against each of the seven areas of learning.

Safety

We believe children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure. Children's safety and welfare is paramount to us. We create a safe, secure and welcoming environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence. We provide a curriculum that teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies in place to safeguard children and daily procedures are in place to encourage children to operate in

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safe ways and to keep them safe. We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food at snack time, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Inclusion

We value all of our children as unique individuals at Onchan Primary School, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home-language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children meet the expected levels of development against the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies. At times, it is necessary to work with children in a small group or on an individual basis outside of the learning environment to allow for specialist input e.g. Speech and Language support. However, whenever possible, support is provided within the classroom context.

Relationships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

We know what an important role parents/carers play in their children's learning journey and we aim to involve them as much as possible in school life. We recognise the huge contribution that parents make to their child's learning and we work hard to develop and sustain links with parents. We seek to start building relationships with parents from the first stay and play session in the Autumn term. Parents and carers are then able to alert us of any concerns and help their child to feel more settled as they are used to the setting themselves.

Ways in which parents are involved include:

- Stay and play sessions
- Transition days
- Nursery visits
- Reading books shared between home and school
- Weekly and termly newsletters
- Parent workshops (Phonics)
- Home/School diaries
- Parents consultations

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible. We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings, for example to the local library, and inviting members of the community into our setting.

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Transition

At Onchan Primary School we work closely with the local pre-schools to ensure that we have detailed information about the children prior to them starting school. The Reception teachers visit children in their pre-school setting in the summer term prior to the children starting school. The Early Years teachers observe all of the children in their pre-school settings and we invite the children to join us for three stay and play sessions that take place each term.

We aim to get the children Year 1 ready as the children prepare to enter KS1. The Early Years teachers also meet with the Year 1 teachers to discuss the end of year data in order to ensure a smooth transition into Year 1. These discussions help the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children. The children will also spend time with their new teacher in the Year 1 classroom during the two transition days in July.

More information about transition can be found in the transition policy.

Reviewed March 2024

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