

## CROMWELL ACADEMY EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

This Early Years Foundation Stage policy sets out our aims and principles in delivering the best early years education we can in our Cromwell Academy Reception class.

It should be read in conjunction with our other Cromwell Academy policies, and Cromwell Academy prospectus.

A full list of these documents can be found in this policy.

### **Aims and Principles**

All providers, including childminders, day care nurseries, playgroups, Pre-Schools and schools, are required to use the EYFS curriculum to ensure that whatever setting parents choose, they can be confident that their child will receive a quality experience that supports their development and learning.

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of their first year in school and here at Cromwell Academy that includes children in our Reception class.

It is based upon the four themes and 16 commitments of the Early Years Foundation Stage:

#### **A Unique Child**

Child Development: Skilful communicator, competent learner.

Inclusive Practice: Equality and diversity, children's entitlements, early support.

Keeping Safe: Being safe and protected, discovering boundaries, making choices.

Health and Well-being: Growth and developing, physical and emotional wellbeing.

#### **Positive Relationships**

Respecting Each Other: Understanding feelings, friendship, professional relationships.

Parents as Partners: Respecting diversity, communication, learning together.

Supporting Learning: Positive interactions, listening to children, effective teaching.

Key Person: Secure attachment, shared care, independence.

#### **Enabling Environments**

Observation, Assessment and Planning: Starting with the child, planning, assessment.

Supporting Every Child: Children's needs, the learning journey, working together.

The Learning Environment: The emotional environment, the outdoor environment, the indoor environment.

The Wider Context: Transitions and continuity, multi-agency working, the community.

#### **Learning and Development**

Play and Exploration: Learning through experience, adult involvement, contexts for

learning.

Active Learning: Mental and physical involvement, decision making, personalised learning.

Creativity and Physical Thinking: Making connections, transforming and understanding, sustained shared thinking.

Areas of Development and Learning.

## **A Unique Child**

“Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.”

## **Child Development**

At Cromwell Academy we recognise that every child is a unique individual with their own character and temperament. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, 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/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

## **Inclusive Practice**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children at Cromwell Academy are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

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 and their interests when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children 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 to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children’s progress and taking action to provide support as necessary;
- providing an accessible environment so children can direct their own learning.

*Cromwell Academy – Early Years Foundation Policy*

*Review Date: Summer 2017*

## **Keeping Safe**

It is important to us that all children in Cromwell Academy 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. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. Children are encouraged to think about their own safety and assess risks with the activities they choose. Reception children undertake more formal risk assessments for outdoor activities.

## **Health and Well-being**

“Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.”

At Cromwell Academy we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children;
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill;
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so;
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose;
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs;
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

## **Positive Relationships**

“Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.”

## **Respecting each other**

At Cromwell Academy we aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with all our children and their families. We recognise that children experience a wide range of feelings and aim to support children in learning to understand and manage these feelings. We recognise that helping children to understand other people's feelings will enable them to be more caring towards each other.

We value each person for who they are and want everyone to be included, regardless of their personality, ability, ethnic background or culture.

## **Parents as Partners**

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our Reception class;
- inviting all parents to a "New Intake" evening during the term before their child starts at Cromwell Academy;
- inviting parents to "Welcome", curriculum and information evenings;
- our staff being available each day to talk to parents at the beginning or end of the session or school day;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress at parents' evenings;
- parents receive a written report on their child's attainment at the end of each school year;
- parents also receive "next steps" of learning each term to enable them to support their children's learning at home;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: In themed school days, Class assemblies, Sports Day etc;
- parents receive regular newsletters and "Curriculum Focus" notes detailing what children are learning and how to support this learning at home.
- using the link books to share information on a daily basis;
- encouraging our parents to share children's achievements from home by completing "Magic Moments" certificates in Reception;
- encouraging parents to contribute to children's learning journeys and ensuring these are accessible for parents to peruse at appropriate times.

## **Supporting Learning**

All our staff involved in the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to play and listen to them.

They observe children sensitively and respond appropriately to encourage and extend curiosity and learning. By observing and listening, practitioners discover what children like to do, and when they feel confident, scared or frustrated.

## **Key Person**

When children feel happy and secure, they are confident to explore and try out new things. In our Reception class, children develop a special bond with their class teacher which helps children to become familiar with the setting and to feel confident and safe within it. When children feel happy and secure in this way they are confident to explore and to try out new things.

## **Enabling Environments**

At Cromwell Academy we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.

### **Observation, Assessment and Planning**

All our Early Years' practitioners are involved in observing children to assess their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend children's learning.

All our assessments of children are based on observations of them across all seven areas of learning and in a variety of situations. In our Reception class, children are regularly observed and their development is recorded against 17 assessment scales culminating in the Early Learning Goals. We use SIMS to record this information which is then sent to County in October and June. This information is reported to parents in a written end of year report and is passed to and discussed with the Year 1 teacher.

Planning in our Reception class is based around six half termly themes. These themes endeavour to appeal to children's interests, build upon and extend children's prior knowledge and first hand experiences and address the seven areas of learning equally within the Foundation Stage. Whilst these themes form the basis for our planning, we will always tailor it to meet the needs of our children as well as their interests and abilities and aim to provide children with lots of first hand experiences and fun activities which will be built upon as they enter the National Curriculum.

### **Supporting Every Child**

At Cromwell Academy we recognise the need for children to be supported by sensitive, knowledgeable adults who know when and how to engage their interests and how to offer support at other times.

We understand that children benefit and learn from a range of experiences and plan carefully to ensure these are predictable, comforting and challenging. We also aim to ensure that children's physical and emotional needs are met as they are then more ready to take advantage of the play and learning opportunities on offer.

## **The Learning Environment**

Our Reception 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.

Our Reception class has its own enclosed outdoor areas. Children have free daily access to outside play activities to do things in different ways and on different scales. It offers children opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. Our indoor and outdoor environments are equally valued.

The emotional environment is created by all the people in the setting and when children feel confident and valued in their environment they are willing to “have a go”, knowing that their efforts are valued.

## **Planning and Organising the Curriculum**

In Cromwell Academy we believe that all our children are special. 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. We set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of their Reception year.

Our children learn:

- By doing!
- In whole class situations
- In small groups
- With 1:1 support
- Through first hand experiences
- By having visitors and going on trips
- Both inside and out
- Through fun topics/themes

When children start with us in Cromwell Academy Reception class we give them time to settle in and make friends. During this time, we observe them, talk to them, listen to them and play with them. We take account of their interests, their likes and dislikes and their personalities.

## **Cromwell Academy Reception Class**

In our Reception class we have six themes areas across the year – a new one for each half term. These topics are varied and relevant to the children, have balance in terms of the seven areas of learning and aim to give children experience and play opportunities on which they will build as their progress in their education.

Each topic includes:

- A role play area
- A finding out table
- A linked Writing table
- A visitor or trip

Children are introduced to the topic and asked what they already know and what they would like to find out about. This then forms the basis for their learning.

Children are then involved in a balance of child-initiated and adult focused activities linked to the theme and continuous provision of sand and water play, painting, listening activities and free choice play – both inside and outdoors.

The Reception staff get to know the children very well and are able to observe and assess children on a day to day basis.

As the year progresses, more “formal” tasks are gradually introduced in preparation for Year 1. However, we ensure there is a gradual transition into Key Stage 1, by continuing with an integrated day for the first half term.

### **Assessment and Record Keeping**

All our Foundation Stage children are regularly assessed to ensure that their individual needs are met. Our staff know the children very well and are then able to plan accordingly. Information from parents about their children is also vital in understanding our children.

Observational assessments are carried out on a daily basis.

### **Reception Class**

Prior to children starting in the Reception class, the teacher visits all children in their Pre-School setting, talks to the staff and receives the written assessment information. The teacher also has discussions with parents. This information, together with initial observations of children forms the starting points for planning.

Reception staff also undertake regular observations and then complete the EYFSP for all children by the end of the year. This information is shared with parents throughout the year, parents’ evenings and “next steps” information is sent in the mid-year report. This information is passed up the Year 1 teacher prior to September.

Reception staff collate children’s achievements, selected pieces of work and photographs in a special “Learning Journey” which is presented to children at the end of the year.

### **The Wider Context**

Prior to starting school, children may move between several different settings in the course of a day, a week, month or year. At Cromwell Academy we recognise the importance of liaising with other settings to ensure all children's needs are met and there is continuity in their learning. This is done by keeping a record of all the settings children attend and sharing information relating to children's development, interests and progress. Permission is always sought from parents prior to sharing information.

## **Partnership with Parents**

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before they start at Cromwell Academy;
- encouraging parents to talk to the teacher if there are any concerns;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress at parent consultations;
- sharing "next steps" and assessments and achievements with parents;
- parents receiving a written end of year report;
- inviting all parents to a "New Intake" evening prior to their child starting in the Reception class;
- Cromwell Academy Reception parents are invited to "Welcome" evenings;
- arranging a range of social and fund-raising activities through "Friends" to encourage collaboration between school, child and parents;
- inviting parents to Curriculum evenings;
- offering parents the opportunity of attending "Family Learning" courses to support children's learning;
- regular newsletters and Curriculum notes which inform and suggest ways that parents can support children's learning at home;
- providing parents with a Link Book in which they can record any concerns;
- offering support from our SENDCo and Family Liaison & Inclusion Officer if needed;
- Encouraging our parents to share children's achievements from home by completing "Magic Moments" certificates.



## **Links with the Community, other Agencies and other Settings**

As an Academy, we want to support our children in all aspects of their development.

We liaise closely with outside agencies who offer individual support, including:

- Early Years Foundation Stage Advisor
- Early Years Specialist Support Teachers
- Speech and Language therapists
- Social Services
- Health services and Health visitors
- Special Educational Needs support services

Our children in Reception are invited to attend many after school clubs, including:

- Dance club
- Football club
- Multi-sports
- Science club

From Reception children are also eligible to attend our Breakfast and After School Clubs. The After School club and Reception class teacher have a meeting each half-term to share information on EYFS children.

## **Key Supporting Policies**

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Admissions Policy

Healthy Eating Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Inclusion Policy

SEN Policy

Community Cohesion Policy

Health, Safety & Welfare Policy

First Aid Policy

Uncollected Child Policy

Complaints Procedures