

Padstow School

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Kate Whitford: Head of School

Member of Aspire Academy Trust

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EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Date becomes effective: JULY 2019

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Person responsible for implementation: Head of School

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“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to reach their full potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children’s ‘school readiness’ and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life. (EYFS 2017)

At Padstow School we fully support the above statement and aim to provide opportunities that will enable our children to feel safe, to enjoy learning and to be successful. During their time at Padstow School every child will be given the best possible start to their education. Our school's vision statement is “Embark on a journey to discover your future”. We aim to provide pupils with opportunities that inspire them and enrich their lives, encouraging them to develop skills that will enable them to become independent and successful learners on their ‘journey’ through Padstow School.

EYFS Aims

- To foster positive attitudes to learning including confidence, curiosity, responsibility and independence.
- To ensure that all children have equal access to the curriculum.
- To promote an inclusive ethos and approach to learning for all our children to ensure that none are excluded or disadvantaged.
- To provide all children with a well-planned curriculum which fosters enthusiasm for learning, is challenging and stimulating.
- To develop children's knowledge, understanding and skills in all areas of learning through first-hand experiences.
- To provide opportunities for children to make choices and become independent in their learning in a variety of safe and secure environments both indoors and outdoors.
- To establish and maintain a close partnership with parents/carers, families and pre-school providers in our community.
- To use focused assessment and record keeping based on direct observation of children and discussion with them and the adults who work with them.
- To use this assessment to inform future planning, monitor progress and build on children's prior learning to ensure they achieve their potential.
- To ensure a smooth and well-planned transition into Reception at the start of the year and into Year One at the end of the EYFS.

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The EYFS is based on four principles:

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

This policy explains how our curriculum practice is underpinned by these four themes.

A UNIQUE CHILD

At Padstow School 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, at varying rates. Child'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.

The Unique Child and Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Padstow School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. We endeavour to give our children to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of children's range of life experiences 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;
- 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 who ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;

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- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

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. Children should be allowed to take risk but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well being of all children. (Refer to *Aspire Academy Keeping Children Safe in Education Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2018*)

The Unique Child and their Welfare

"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 Padstow we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2019. 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.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

At Padstow School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from secure relationships. All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. This centres on developing good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

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Key person:

The key person approach is aimed at enabling and supporting close attachments between children and practitioners. Attachment provides a sense of security so that children can become confident, independent and capable young learners.

At school the key person is the Early Years class teacher. Their role is to meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, talking to the parents and working in partnership with them. They will of course work in close partnership with the class teaching assistant and the Head of School.

A key person is:

- A named member of staff who has more contact than others with the child;
- Someone to build relationships with the child and parents;
- Someone who helps the child become familiar with the provision;
- Someone who meets children's individual needs and care needs;
- Someone who responds sensitively to children's feelings, ideas and behaviour;
- The person who acts as a point of contact with parents.

Positive Relationships and Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- The class teacher visits the nursery or pre-school setting prior to the child starting school;
- The children have the opportunity to attend Transition Sessions;
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress;
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- Regularly sharing the children's 'Learning Journey' via Tapestry and valuing the on-going contributions to these from parents through their Tapestry uploads.
- Parent meetings in the Autumn, Spring and Summer Terms;
- Open sessions where parents are invited into class to join their child for a planned activity.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration.
- Sending a more detailed report on their child's attainment and progress early in the Summer term which is then followed by an opportunity for parents to meet teachers to discuss targets and areas for development.

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ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS

At Padstow School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development. Through observation of learning and interactions with others, we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. The planning within the EYFS is based on the 17 Early Learning Goals. These plans are flexible so that teachers can respond to the needs, achievements and interests of the children and this is indicated on weekly planning. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning.

The Learning Environment

The Early Years Foundation Stage classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely, safely and independently. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet and creative. The classroom has defined learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. There is an outdoor area and children are able to free flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Being outdoors offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. They are able to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities, learning opportunities and resources for both the inside and outside environments to enable the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At Padstow School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often interconnected.

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. These are:

- **Prime Areas:** -
 - Personal, Social and Emotional Development
 - Communication and Language
 - Physical Development

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

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● **Specific Areas:**

- Literacy – Reading and Writing
- Mathematics – Number and Shape, Space and Measures
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

There are three characteristics of effective learning which help us to focus on and understand how children learn. The characteristics of learning are:

● **Playing and exploring**

- Observing how children engage with their learning
- Finding out and exploring
- Using what they already know in their play
- Being willing to have a go

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. We deliver learning for all the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

● **Active Learning**

- Observing how children are motivated to learn
- Being involved and concentrating
- Keep trying
- Enjoying and achieving what they set out to do

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

● **Creativity and Critical Thinking**

- Observing how children are thinking
- Having their own ideas
- Using what they already know to learn new things
- Choosing ways to do things and finding new way

Creating and thinking critically relates to how young children make sense of the world around them by looking for patterns and gradually developing their understanding by

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processing repeated experiences. Children are given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. The adults working in the Early Years Foundation Stage support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are encouraged to use the indoors and the outdoors to extend their learning. From a very early age, our children are encouraged to learn the skills they need to take on the challenges they will encounter in their life. They are taught and learn important life skills. They are encouraged to investigate, to take risks and to be creative and critical with their learning.

Resources

We aim to review / renew our resources on a regular basis to ensure they are:

- Suitable to meet the needs of the children
- In a safe and clean condition for use
- Appropriate for all areas of learning equipment.

At Padstow School we place great emphasis on the importance of keeping our practice up to date. We ensure that all staff are kept up to date with changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage as well as current practice and pedagogy. The EYFS staff regularly attend in-house training updates led by the Aspire Lead for the EYFS together with appropriate external training as needed. The teachers within the Early Years Foundation Stage attend courses and conferences relevant to the Early Years.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

We recognise that children learn at different rates, therefore, we aim to provide learning opportunities which have a balance of visual, aural and kinaesthetic stimulus. We believe that our children learn best by actively being involved in activities, through first-hand experiences and their senses. We therefore provide a range of activities which are interesting, enjoyable, challenging and fun! Through these, we encourage our children to explore, experiment, question, investigate, discover, create and practice and consolidate their developing understanding, knowledge and skills. We firmly believe that if a child is excited and motivated by learning, especially in the early days at our school, then we are already helping that child to become a lifelong learner.

Play

All Children Have the Right to Play

- We believe that all children have the right to play and that play is important and fundamental to their development.
- Through play, children need to feel safe to make mistakes and have the confidence to try out and test their ideas in order to develop confidence and self-esteem.

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- We understand that it is vital to treat all children with equal respect. Each child has his/her individual needs and practitioners aim to meet the needs of all children in an inclusive way.
- We encourage a culture of listening to children, respecting and valuing their needs and interests.
- Children are given time and space to become engrossed, work in depth and complete activities.
- We use risk assessments daily as a positive tool to enable children to develop their responses and understanding of the world around them.

Providing Appropriate Opportunities for Play

We ensure that children have plenty of opportunities to play in a secure environment with effective support from caring adults. We use the classroom and our outdoor area to enable children to access both planned, structured play activities and self-initiated, spontaneous play activities. We achieve this through the following:

- Children are engaged in relevant, exciting and absorbing play opportunities which promote meaningful learning experiences.
- Observing and planning is used to continually consider the interests of the children and their individual developmental needs.
- We provide challenging and stimulating play experiences inside and outside the setting and value these environments equally.
- We provide and value an equal balance of adult-led and child-initiated opportunities in all seven areas of learning. Children do not make a distinction between play and learning and neither do the practitioners.

ASSESSMENT

Our assessment of pupil progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage is based on regular and close observations as well as questioning, listening and discussion with individual children. In this way, we can make professional judgments about what children have learnt and what their next steps need to be. Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations. Observations and assessment of the children's learning is recorded using the Tapestry software. Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage have their own iPad to record children's learning. Observations are sent to parents through their email account. Photographs and independent learning are also included in the learning journey. We involve all adults who come into contact with the child and regard parents as especially important in this process. We therefore want to ensure that parents are able to contribute to the assessment process through an ongoing dialogue between home and school. Parents are encouraged to upload their own proud moments onto Tapestry so that staff build up a clear picture of each child's talents and abilities. This showcases any learning and

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achievements that their child has done at home. This could be swimming, getting dressed by themselves, writing their name or reading their new book.

On entry to school we make initial assessments of what children already know, understand and can do. Each term we track each child's progress against the Development Matters document. At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage the child's progress is recorded on to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals. Teachers identify whether the child is 'emerging' in an area, has made the 'expected' level of development, or is 'exceeding' in all the 17 areas of learning.

Parents and Carers receive a report early in the Summer term which indicates where their child is currently achieving nationally along with their child's next steps in learning. This is followed by a parent consultation.

During the summer term each child's achievements within the EYFS are summarised and data submitted to the Local Authority as part of the statutory assessment.

Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident. Please see our separate policies and procedures on Health and Safety and Child Protection.

Parent Partnerships

At Padstow School we believe that parents should be vital partners in a child's education, and we feel that engaging and working with parents is essential for children to succeed at learning. We aim to make contact with all parents during the year prior to admission through pre-arranged meetings, information evenings, and the 'Welcome' sessions.

Parents are given clear information about all events and children's learning through regular newsletters, the school website, school's text system and regular letters from the teacher. We provide parents with Topic newsletters and suggested Shared Learning tasks that they can support their child with to further enhance their child's learning. Parents are also able to communicate with staff on a daily basis either face to face at drop off and pick up times or by making an appointment to see the class teacher at a more convenient time. During the first half term, parents are encouraged to spend time with children in the classroom at the start of the school day, after 8:45am and before

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registration time at 8:55am. During this time parents can help the children with a range of settling down activities. After half-term, we encourage the children to come into class independently. This fosters and develops a sense of achievement and individuality. Parental involvement is valued, and we encourage parents to become actively involved in their children's learning by sharing curriculum information with them, and giving them plenty of opportunities to share information, experiences, thoughts, concerns and resources with us.

TRANSITION TO YEAR ONE

The EYFS aims to provide Year One teachers and parents with reliable and accurate information about each child's level of development as they reach the end of the EYFS. This will enable the teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet all children's needs, to support their continued achievement more fully.

At Padstow School we ensure that our children are well prepared for transition between all classes. The transition from the Foundation Stage to Year One is part of a broader whole-school approach to achieving good curricular continuity and progression in pupil's learning. In addition to the transition sessions where the children spend sessions with their new teacher, Foundation stage children spend time with the Year One teachers during outdoor play opportunities throughout the Summer Term. This enables Year One teachers to build in strategies that will help and support the children and provides an opportunity for the children to familiarise themselves with the Year One staff and to prepare themselves for the next stage in their learning.

BRITISH VALUES

The Department for Education (DfE) have laid out a clear statutory requirement for Early Years providers to actively promote the fundamental British Values of Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual Liberty and a Mutual Respect and Tolerance for those of a different faith or belief. This is what it means for children in our setting:

Democracy:

- Staff will encourage children to see themselves in the bigger picture by expressing views but also by valuing the views and ideas of others, model sharing and turn taking.
- Sharing feelings and expressing needs will be encouraged and when appropriate demonstrate democracy in action, eg by a show of hands.

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Rule of Law:

- Staff will support children with understanding their own, and others', behaviours and the consequences, to learn to distinguish right from wrong.
- Staff and children can collaborate to create rules and codes of behaviour in their settings, eg to agree the rules about tidying up and ensure that they understand why we tidy up.

Individual Liberty - Freedom for all:

- Children should develop a positive sense of themselves. Staff should provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities.
- Staff should provide a range of opportunities to explore the language of feelings, responsibility, reflect on their differences and understand why we are free to have different opinions.

Mutual Respect and Tolerance – Treat others as you want to be treated:

- Staff should create an ethos of inclusivity where faiths, views, cultures and races are valued, and children are engaged with the wider community.
- Children should acquire as tolerance and appreciation for their own and other cultures, know about similarities and differences.
- Staff should promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes, eg sharing stories that reflect and value the diversity of children's experiences and providing activities and resources that challenge gender, cultural and racial stereotyping.

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