



# **Milecastle Primary School**

## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

**Reviewed May 2020**



## MILECASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

### EARLY FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

#### RATIONALE

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Milecastle Primary School we aim to provide a learning environment of the highest quality which reflects their needs and achievements. Children are presented with a range of learning experiences which enable them to flourish into independent, successful and resilient learners.

#### AIMS

- To provide a secure environment where all children have the right to feel safe and happy.
- To provide a stimulating and engaging environment where the learning is enjoyable and purposeful.
- To provide a well-balanced curriculum for each child to develop socially, physically and intellectually.
- To observe the children's interests to implement our future planning.
- To encourage all children to become independent learners.
- To promote a child's 'well-being'; ensuring they always feel at ease, are spontaneous and free of emotional tensions.
- To provide equal opportunities for all children to develop to their full potential and to encourage children to be respectful and appreciative of others.
- To encourage the children to develop positive relationships with their peers and adults.
- To establish and maintain a partnership with parents to support the education of their children.
- To ensure smooth transitions from home to Receptions and from the Early Years Foundation Stage into Key Stage 1.

#### CURRICULUM

Our Reception class follows the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS). This document is available to download at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework-2>

The EYFS is grouped into four principles:

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

These are delivered through 3 Prime Areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language

These areas are core to the children's learning and underpin all learning in Reception class.

The specific areas of learning are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

The characteristics of effective learning underpins all teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creative and Thinking Critically

At Milecastle Primary School we ensure this is delivered through a well-planned, broad curriculum where children enjoy learning in a fun and purposeful way. Our baseline assessment provides a detailed knowledge of every child so that they have the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding at the appropriate level.

Our curriculum is structured so the children quickly become independent learners with opportunities for adult-led as well as child-initiated activities, where children can apply learnt skills.

## INCLUSION

All activities are differentiated to take account of every child's needs. Every effort is made to present these in such a way that they are equally interesting and accessible to all children no matter what their gender, ethnicity or impairment. (see Inclusion Policy)

## ASSESSMENT

The Foundation Stage Profile states all children have a right to have their strengths acknowledged and celebrated and their needs and next steps in their learning clearly identified.

At Milecastle Primary School we complete a baseline assessment in the first half term, which provides vital information to plan a curriculum suited to each child's individual needs. The children are tracked on a termly basis from that starting point to ensure every child is making at least good progress. It also identifies where some children may need additional support as well as ensuring Pupil Premium children's needs are well met.

Assessment of the children is made from independent tasks or from structured sessions, such as literacy and maths and also from their child-initiated activities. Recording from structured sessions is evident in the child's literacy and maths books, as well as photos and practitioners notes. Recording of achievements in child-led tasks are made on their online learning journey, which is also accessible by parents and carers. We value our parents' views and welcome their contributions to these learning journals. Where appropriate the online learning journals provide next steps in the child's learning.

At the end of Reception year the statutory Foundation Stage Profile is completed, which summarises young children's achievements in relation to the Early Learning Goals and their individual characteristics of learning. Samples of work and observational recordings are used to assess whether a child is emerging (1), expected (2) or exceeding (3) based on their knowledge and understanding relating to the Early Learning Goals. This information is sent to the Local Authority as well as reported to parents and discussed with Year One practitioners.

## TRANSITION

Starting school can be an exciting but overwhelming and daunting experience for both parents and children. At Milecastle Primary School we have established a system to ensure parents and children feel confident and secure when facing these challenges.

Open afternoons and evenings are held to allow parents to visit school and meet staff, as well as an opportunity to see the school when it is in session. A further opportunity to visit the school is given in the term before the child starts school. This is an informal evening, which provides parents with key information, school expectations, knowledge about the curriculum and assessment and advice on how they can help their child with the transition to Milecastle Primary School.

Where possible, all children are visited at their settings to allow the Reception practitioners to gather as much information as possible about each child. This also provides a recognisable face for the children when they come to visit. There are two opportunities for the children to visit our school with their parents. This gives the children the confidence to explore their new setting with the security of their parents nearby.

At the beginning of the school year, new children are given staggered entry times to ensure that they have the time to feel welcomed and to support them in exploring their new environment.

At the end of Reception, children have the opportunity to meet their new teachers in their classrooms on three occasions prior to starting Year One. At the end of each school year, teachers have the opportunity to share their knowledge of each child's knowledge, understanding and achievements, including end of year assessment data, with their next class teacher to ensure that all teachers have a well-rounded picture of the children before they begin the new school year.

## PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore we work very closely to ensure they are involved in what their child does at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child and to feel comfortable in our setting.

'Friends of Milecastle' hold termly coffee mornings for parents to socialise and meet other parents.

We offer parents a weekly opportunity to work with their child before school starts. Termly, parents are invited into the classroom to work with their children on a 'topic' based activity, such as decorating an Easter egg. We also provide parents with information evenings to help support their child with reading, writing and maths. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to share information about their child, to ask questions and discuss their child's learning with their teacher. They can do this through adding to their child's seesaw learning journal.