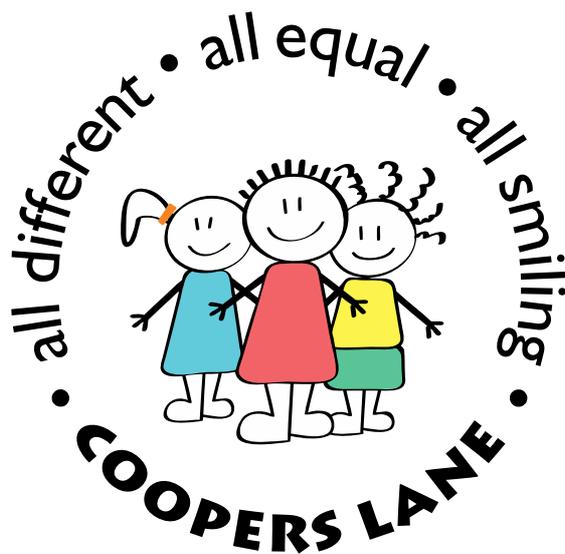


# Coopers Lane Primary School



## EYFS Teaching and Learning Policy

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# A Coopers Lane Learner...



## INTRODUCTION

*“Play is the highest form  
of research”*

**- Albert Einstein**

At Coopers Lane, we truly believe that the Early Years is called the foundation stage for a reason. It builds the solid foundations for a child’s emotional, social and intellectual development and paves the way for a successful

start to their journey throughout school and beyond. In Early Years, we develop that initial ‘thirst for knowledge’, empowering each individual child to take an active role in their learning and teaching them that through a growth mindset, **you can achieve anything.**

As a school, **we are passionate about play** and recognise its value as one of the key ways that children learn. We know that play is essential for children’s healthy development and wellbeing and understand that it is key to the development of collaborative skills, problem solving, creativity and communication. We also appreciate that play is essential for developing social skills and self-regulation. At Coopers Lane, we are committed to providing the very best experiences, activities and opportunities for our children and therefore prioritise learning and consolidating new skills, in a high quality, play-based, enabling environment. We are dedicated to responding to the individual needs and interests of our children and want **each individual to reach and maximise their full potential.** Through opportunities for open-ended exploration and collaborative learning, our children learn essential skills such as problem solving, risk taking, sharing and much more.

**We care about our children’s wellbeing** and want the children to leave EYFS with an awareness of their emotional health. We want them to be confident in expressing their thoughts and feelings and to be able to self-regulate confidently, using a variety of strategies.

At Coopers Lane, we know and value that childhood is such a significant and precious time within a person’s life and we want our children to relish in it, by providing them with **positive and cherished memories that will last a lifetime.** We all know just how challenging and hard the adult world can be and therefore aim to equip our children with the life skills that will not only see them through school, but beyond our doors too.

We ensure our provision meets the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which sets the standards that all early years’ providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

*“Let them be little.”*

**- Anon**

## AIMS

We aim to provide the very best start to each and every child's journey within education, by providing inspiring and challenging learning experiences, within a nurturing, friendly and safe environment.

### We want our children to:

- be **happy** and **confident**, with **high self-esteem**
- make **meaningful friendships and relationships**
- be **excellent communicators** who are able to express themselves effectively and listen to others
- develop **an awareness of their emotional health** and the skills to self-regulate effectively
- develop **a life-long love for learning** and a thirst for new knowledge
- **thrive** within an environment that excites and inspires them

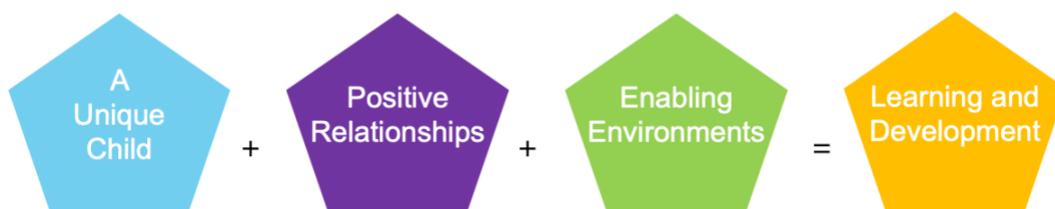
We believe our children leave the EYFS stage, as happy, confident and independent individuals and aim to support a successful transition into Year 1.

*“Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.”*

– Aristotle

## THE PRINCIPLES OF THE EYFS

We underpin the four guiding principles of the EYFS, in order to shape our practice. The four principles are:



## A UNIQUE CHILD

At Coopers Lane, we recognise that **every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured**. We know that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates and therefore set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all of our children.

**As a school, we are highly inclusive, valuing all children and families** and embracing all cultures, languages, ethnicities, religions, special needs and disabilities. We want our children and families to feel valued and therefore strive to work closely together, as a team.

**We value the importance of talk and encourage our children to express themselves** verbally, listening carefully to them and supporting their needs. We support children in expressing and coping with their different and varied emotions safely, by being empathetic and understanding.

**It is important to us that all children in our school are 'safe'**. We educate our children on boundaries, rules and limits and help them to understand their importance, when making decisions and choices. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards, too.

**We want our children's learning experience to be a positive one** and believe in the importance of creating independent and passionate learners. We take the time to give verbal feedback to our children, celebrating their efforts and achievements and building a positive attitude towards learning. We think carefully about how we talk to our children and about the language that we use when doing so.

*"The greatest gift we can give our children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence."*

- **Maria Montessori**

## POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

We believe that positive relationships are central to ensuring that our children feel safe, nurtured and cared for. We understand that **children thrive from a base of loving and secure relationships** and therefore endeavour to build close relationships with each and every child, meeting their emotional needs and providing reassurance, when needed. We respond sensitively to each child's feelings and support their well-being. We know that emotional attachment to adults influences a child's immediate all-round development and future relationships. **Children who feel safe are more inclined to try new things and become more independent**. They are more confident in expressing their ideas and feelings and in turn, **build a strong sense of who they are**.

As Nursery is often a child's first experience of being away from home, we provide each child in Nursery, with a **key person**. A key person is a named member of our Nursery team. We believe that a key person allows small groups of children to foster a bond with a designated adult, in a way that large groups cannot easily do.

*"Children are our greatest treasure. They are our future."*

**- Nelson Mandela**

Each child's key person is identified during the first few weeks of their first term, so that the Nursery team is able to observe and discuss the most suitable key worker, depending on whom each child naturally gravitates towards and seeks out for comfort.

As our children progress into Reception, the class teacher is considered each child's key person, working closely alongside the class Nursery Nurse. Together, they develop and sustain positive relationships, with the children and their families too.

## **PARENTS AND PARTNERSHIP**

Parents and carers are fundamental in their child's development and learning and we therefore actively seek to learn from them, as well as share with them in all aspects of their child's learning. We foster our relationship with parents and carers through:

- **Providing home visits** for all children new to our setting, ensuring positive early relationships and providing a supportive transition for both children and parents
- **Arranging 'Stay and Play' sessions** and parent meetings before children start in both Nursery and Reception
- **Setting events throughout the year** that encourage parents and carers to come and celebrate the learning within our setting (such as; 'EYFS Stay & Play Week', Termly 'Progress Parties', 'Multi-Cultural Day 'etc.)
- **Providing workshops** throughout the school year to support parents and carers in understanding the EYFS curriculum and suggesting ways to support their children at home
- Holding parent conferences and written targets/ reports, in order to share children's current attainment and next steps, with parents and carers
- **Promoting an 'open door policy'** to encourage communication, feedback and discussion from parents and/ or carers
- **Ensuring up to date communication** through website, texts, newsletters, noticeboards, displays etc.

## ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS

At Coopers Lane, we understand that an enabling environment plays a key role in supporting children's learning and development. We trust the power of play, both child-initiated play and play that is sensitively supported by adults. We **value our learning environment as an additional 'teacher' to the children**, providing them with rich opportunities and resources, to develop and extend their learning.

We believe that **continuous provision transcends all areas of learning** and have therefore taken the time to plan out each of our EYFS classrooms carefully. Each classroom is fitted with high quality furniture, designed specifically for children to access independently, where all resources are clearly labelled and readily available. This allows our **children to take charge of their own learning, in the absence of an adult** and in turn, builds their confidence with skills such as risk-taking, self-reflection and perseverance.

We strive to create a stimulating environment, both inside and outside. We believe that we provide a rich, varied and safe space in which children can play, explore and learn, across all seven areas of the EYFS.

*"Children learn as they play.  
Most importantly, in play  
children learn how to learn."*

- O. Fred Donaldson

We believe that our environment is welcoming and **facilitates a sense of belonging for all children and parents.**

Our outdoor environment gives us the space to plan activities that cannot take place indoors. These larger scale activities encourage collaboration and cooperation between the children and provide opportunities for the children to experience problem solving and risk-taking within big-scale play, safely.

In the outdoor area, there are opportunities to experience and enhance many different skills, with a **greater sense of freedom and independence than those experienced indoors.** The children make contact with the natural world and are able to explore and use all of their senses, whatever the weather.

The physical activity is greater in the outside area, as is the level of risk taking, which is important as children grow up

## ROLE OF THE EYFS PRACTITIONER

Our EYFS team are highly dedicated to improving outcomes for all of our children. We understand the many different responsibilities that come under the role of an Early Years practitioner and value the importance of each and every one. We believe that each of these responsibilities feed into the successes of our children:



Our team interact with the children in all areas of continuous and enhanced provision, including the outdoors. They are actively involved with the children and 'live in the moment'. The adults encourage the children to initiate their own learning, and make careful judgements on when and how to intervene to develop and extend learning.

#### **Within our Continuous and Enhanced Provision, the adults;**

- **Talk with the children** in a variety of ways (such as; conversing, discussing, questioning and modelling);
- **Encourage children to find solutions** to problems and to make choices;
- **Extend the children's activities**, by making extra resources available and providing new ideas;
- **Initiate games and activities**;
- **Join in games** and activities when invited by children;
- **Observe, assess and record**;
- **Evaluate observations**, in order to plan appropriate resources and experiences.

We are dedicated to making positive contributions to the children's play and setting up exciting and challenging situations for our children to experience.

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework supports an integrated approach to early learning and care. In the Early Years at Coopers Lane, we take time to know our children, families and communities well to create a curriculum to meet the children's needs and develop their learning across all the areas. There are seven areas of learning, which are separated into the Prime Areas and the Specific Areas:

### PRIME AREAS

<b>Communication &amp; Language</b>	Listening. Attention and Understanding
	Speaking
<b>Physical Development</b>	Gross Motor Skills
	Fine Motor Skills
<b>Personal, Social &amp; Emotional Development</b>	Self-Regulation
	Managing Self
	Building Relationships

### SPECIFIC AREAS

<b>Literacy</b>	Comprehension
	Word Reading
	Writing
<b>Mathematics</b>	Number
	Mathematical Patterns
<b>Understanding the World</b>	The World
	Past and Present
	The Natural World
<b>Expressive Arts &amp; Design</b>	Exploring and Using Media & Materials
	Being Imaginative

Our timetable in both Nursery and Reception, is adapted and dependent on the needs of each cohort. We deliver adult led sessions such as short carpet sessions around phonics and early mathematics, as well as small group and 1:1 adult focus sessions, throughout the day. Our children are provided with independent learning time (both in the indoor and outdoor learning environment) where they are able to free flow and **make decisions about what they play with, where they play and who they play with.**

*“Scientists have discovered that it takes approximately 400 repetitions to create a new synapse in the brain, unless done with play, in which it only takes 20 repetitions.”*

Karyn Purvis

## CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE LEARNING

Underpinning the Characteristics of Effective Learning is the understanding that **during their earliest years, children form attitudes about learning that will last a lifetime.** We reflect on the characteristics of effective learning when planning and guiding children’s activities and use this to inform our future practice. **We not only value the importance of what our children learn, but also how they learn too.** We know that the characteristics of effective learning not only exist in the EYFS, but throughout a person’s life too. We believe that the characteristics are part of the journey towards better self-regulation and a life-long love of learning. (See appendix)

## ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING

We ensure that planning is relevant to each child’s individual needs and understand that **stimulating and extending children’s learning is integral to their progress** in the EYFS and beyond.

**We strongly believe that every child has the right to a well-planned and meaningful curriculum,** which will provide them with the tools needed to succeed through their lives, regardless of culture, social class, gender, physical and cognitive capabilities and beliefs. We plan multi-sensory activities that are based around our children’s interests, which are differentiated to suit the needs of each child. We provide both adult-led and children-initiated activities to ensure that children are not only taught new skills, but are furthermore, provided with opportunities to practice these skills independently, without fear of failure.

**We are committed to narrowing the gap between different groups of children,** for example, disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children. We understand that on-going formative assessment is at the heart of effective early years practice and therefore use regular monitoring and evaluation of children’s progress in order to enable us to continually adjust our provision in response to any areas of underachievement that may be identified. **We ensure there is**

**challenge for all children**, including those whose attainment is beyond that expected for their age and may need provision to progress beyond the early learning goals.

**We understand that language skills are amongst the best predictors of educational success** and know that children who enter school with poorly developed speech and language are at risk of literacy difficulties and educational underachievement is common in such children. We ensure early intervention is put in place where necessary, including referrals to outside agencies where appropriate.

**Diversity and inclusion are our priority** and therefore we differentiate our planning and provision to ensure every child can access the learning experiences at their stage of development. We liaise with local agencies to support specific children's needs and provide internal interventions based around early language and social interactions.

Over the course of the children's time in EYFS, we build our knowledge of what each child knows and can do. This allows us to plan appropriate next steps for their future development, based on their individual needs, through both our adult led sessions and within our provision.

At the end of the EYFS, our practitioners make a judgement for each child against each of the Early Learning Goals. **We actively engage children, their parents and other adults who have significant interaction with the child in the assessment process.**

The judgement must say whether the child's learning and development is:

- best described by the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS ('expected')
- not yet at the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS ('emerging')
- beyond the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS ('exceeding')

**At Coopers Lane, we believe our children can do anything.**

*"The goal of early childhood education should be to activate the child's own natural desire to learn."*

**- Maria Montessori**

# Appendix – Characteristics of Effective Learning











