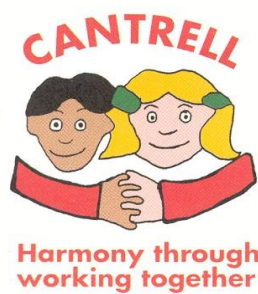


# CANTRELL PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL



## FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

**April 2024**

## Introduction

Cantrell Primary School has an established designated Early Years Foundation Stage Department. There is a 39 place Nursery and two 30 place Reception classes (FS2). The building is adjacent to the main school. The Nursery (FS1) takes up the ground floor and whilst the Reception Classes work alongside each other upstairs. The Reception classes share a Creative area which is timetabled for use by each class every day and the outside wrap around garden area also shared with the Nursery.

All our early years provision supports child-initiated learning through continuous provision. Focused activities and adult initiated tasks are also offered alongside the dedicated teaching of Phonics and Mathematics on a daily basis within FS2. In the Nursery there are two dedicated teaching times where early number and rhyme are a daily focus.

The provision is well resourced throughout and the environment is bright, purposeful and engaging.

### Our Vision

Within Cantrell Early Years we believe that well-being and involvement are essential in the development of confident and engaged learners. We aim to embed enriched language and provide communication opportunities for all children to reach their full potential. Our aim is for children to be safe, happy and thrive in our setting. We introduce and share our common school values 'We are Kind, Respectful and Responsible' across the EYFS unit.

### Our Learning Environment

At Cantrell our aim is to promote independent learning, success and enjoyment through stimulating, safe and positive experiences. We have a balance of focussed activities, teacher initiated and child-initiated learning. The learning environment is challenging and purposeful for the differing needs of the children. We strive to develop confident and engaged learners for all children. We support individual children with signs and symbols showing the daily routine using Communicate INPrint and the use of 'Now and Next' boards. Throughout the department, each child's achievements are celebrated through a 'Super Me' display.

### Staffing

There are two Early Years lead teachers who work as a job share (0.6) in the Nursery and also oversee Reception teaching and learning. The Reception classes both have experienced job share teachers and a Teaching Assistant assigned to each class. Within the Nursery there is one level three qualified teaching assistant and one level two qualified assistant. The EYFS team work closely and cohesively together and meet regularly to discuss any matters arising. They also meet and work as a team during most INSET and designated phase meeting times.

### Our Curriculum

Within Early Years our teaching and learning is guided by 'Development Matters' non-statutory guidance. Together as a the EYFS team we have developed our curriculum document that is relevant and pertinent to our school and community. Our curriculum and planning format are consistent and progressive for our setting and expectations are high. (See Cantrell EYFS Curriculum document).

From September 2021 we follow the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). *Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five*. This framework is mandatory for all early year's providers. At the end of the

academic year of a child becoming five all children will strive to meet the 17 expected outcomes known as the 'Early Learning Goals'. These incorporate **seven** Areas of Learning and data collected will be sent to the Local Authority.

Within the Development Matters guidance there are seven key features of effective practice.

1. The best for every child
2. High-quality care
3. The curriculum: what we want children to learn
4. Pedagogy: helping children to learn
5. Assessment: checking what children have learnt
6. Self-regulation and executive function
7. Partnership with parents

Underpinning the curriculum are 'The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning'.

Three 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 learning. Our curriculum document looks carefully at Intent, Implementation and Impact for the seven Areas of Learning.

The seven areas of learning are split into two categories:

***Prime areas of learning*** and ***Specific areas of learning***.

The ***Prime areas*** are:

### **1. Communication and language**

We encourage speaking and listening through the telling and listening to stories; extending children's vocabulary and encouraging them to respond to what they hear with comments, questions or actions. We offer opportunities for children to act out story scenarios.

Within the Foundation Stage there are opportunities for role play whereby children take on roles and express themselves through play. At whole group circle time, children are encouraged to speak, listen and share ideas with each other. We support the development of communication and language with signs and symbols. Cantrell school is also Makaton friendly.

### **2. Personal, social and Emotional Development**

PSED takes place all the time through real life situations with support and direction from caring adults. We support children to understand their own feelings and emotions through talk and play. In both the Nursery and Reception classes there is a dedicated 'circle time' whereby guidance and modelling of issues around PSED are structured. We follow guidance from the LA and early years curriculum. Positive reinforcement through praise and encouragement to all are integral.

### **3. Physical Development**

Children are supported in developing good control and co-ordination through large and small movements, (fine and gross motor). There are many opportunities to develop these skills through various areas within the curriculum including using challenging apparatus, balancing

and designated Forest School sessions. The outside environment is integral and experienced daily. This environment incorporates; climbing with a slide, balancing and building with crates and planks and areas for running and jumping. We also use the large school playground area which supports the development of core stability, agility and strength through a static trim trail and balance track. Fine motor skills are accessed both inside and outside. Outside water play contains resources for pouring, scooping and collecting. Sensory play such as play dough, a malleable resource extends with the use and control of tools such as rolling pins and cutters. Throughout continuous provision, there are scissors, hole punches, pencils, crayons, felt pens and enhancements to promote fine motor skills.

The **Specific areas** are:

#### **4. Literacy**

At Cantrell Primary school we deliver a progressive and systematic phonics programme. Within Nursery, children are exposed to rhymes and sounds to begin to orally blend and segment. These incorporate pre-phonics fun activities to encourage children to tune into different sounds. We support children in the development of listening, remembering and talking about environmental, voice and instrumental sounds. Spotting similarities and differences in pictures, objects and identifying everyday words in the environment, including their name.

Phase Two begins at the start of the Reception Year with the explicit teaching and learning of phonemes and graphemes (Letters and Sounds) including long vowel digraphs and trigraphs. Phonic lessons take place daily and include reading and writing. Children are encouraged to apply their knowledge during independent work time and whole class writing at the beginning of the day. This usually begins after the Autumn half term. Parents are encouraged to support with reading at home and communicate through a reading diary. Story themes are integral with our planning and are introduced through story reading, singing, rhymes and story talk. The learning environment also supports the development of reading and writing.

#### **5. Mathematics**

In both Reception and Nursery mathematics is taught daily through interactive first-hand experiences. This includes counting, matching, subitising (recognising an amount without counting) patterning and problem solving. We follow a 'Mastery' approach to teaching and learning through a dedicated whole class session. Children are encouraged to verbalise their understanding and acquire mathematical language and vocabulary. This year one reception class has been part of a wider research project around counting and recording number 'Counting Collections'. This has proved to be an effective way of embedding early number composition. We are intending to widen this approach to the whole of the early years department.

We aim to develop positive attitudes and interest in mathematics to apply in the real world. The learning environment and resources allow all children to apply their skills through play and investigation.

#### **6. Understanding of the World**

First-hand experiences enable the children to develop understanding of the world around them. Wherever possible children are given real life experiences such as visiting our woodland area, farm, looking after chicks, and observing changes in life cycles such as frogs and butterflies. Children are encouraged to talk about their families and where they live and how it might be different to other people. We also celebrate different traditions and customs

throughout the year with food tasting, stories, art work and the teaching and learning of new vocabulary.

## **7. Expressive Arts and Design**

Children are encouraged to develop their imagination and artistic awareness by selecting from a wide range of creative resources both independently and through teacher directed tasks. Children are encouraged to respond to what they see, hear and say and to develop self-expression through the use of different media. This may include: dance, singing, arts and crafts and imaginative role play.

### **Planning**

Planning is themed across six half terms to inspire children's interest, teach specific skills and celebrate special days and occasions throughout the school year (see Long Term Planning overview). Weekly planning demonstrates particular focused tasks and continuous provision allows children to make their own choices and lead their own play and learning by selecting equipment that they enjoy and are interested in. We follow children's interests and ideas and encourage them to talk about interests within school and at home. Objectives for learning are identified through specific skills and next step criteria.

### **Observations and Assessments**

Children starting the Nursery have their own Learning Journey. This incorporates incidental observations, photographs and a selection of special pieces of work. Their learning Journey continues until the end of the Reception year. Observations and assessment procedures are recorded using Tiny Tracker a dedicated early years online platform. This informs our judgments for age related development and the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP). These are recorded at six weeks, on entry into Nursery and then termly thereafter. This data is used for intervention groups and monitoring individual progress including children eligible for Pupil Premium. A final judgement is given at the end of the academic year before a child leaves the Foundation Stage, usually around June. Individual Profile scores are then sent to Local Authority for analysis against other similar city schools and nationally. In FS2 we use ongoing assessments and record progress in Phonics half termly and in Mathematics termly.

We regularly liaise with parents to discuss progress and talk about issues arising for individual children. This takes place each term through parent's evenings and within the Nursery termly Open Days. If further discussion is required, teaching staff are usually available at the end of the day. Alternatively, appointments are offered at a mutually convenient time.

### **Admission**

Children are admitted to the Nursery usually the term after their third birthday. All admissions are taken from a waiting list which is held in date of birth order. A start date is given and the children attend from this date. A settling in period allows for individual needs of the children.

Children enter the Reception class at the beginning of the academic year of the child turning five years of age. At the end of the Reception year children then transfer into a Year One class.

The Nursery has termly 'Open Days' where existing and new parents and children engage in learning together, discuss progress and for parent to experience our settling alongside their child.

At Cantrell we offer 30-hour nursery provision for eligible families. These children attend nursery for a full day and bring their own packed lunch from home to eat at lunchtime.

### **Toileting Statement:**

We acknowledge that every child is unique and will reach milestones at different stages of their development. We work with parents to ensure that children are happy and comfortable within the setting.

If a child is not yet toilet trained we encourage parents to place their child in pull-ups. This encourages independence and ensures that staff are able to support children with toileting. We have purpose built low-level toilets or a potty which we encourage the children to use.

On arriving at the setting, we ask parents to ensure that their child's nappy/pull-up is clean and dry. We have changing facilities for this in the health room and private toilet areas.

We ask that each child has their own bag containing nappies/pull-ups wipes and spare clothes to enable staff to keep children clean and dry.

### **Dummy and Drinks Statement:**

The NHS outlines the importance of language development and recommends that dummies are discouraged from the age of one. Evidence suggests that children who have dummies have fewer opportunities to babble and practise sounds, as a result they may talk less and speech sounds may be unclear.

In the Foundation Stage we focus greatly on a child's language development and discourage dummies in our setting.

We provide milk and water for the children and convey to parents that juice and baby bottles are not allowed within our setting.

Children are asked to bring their own named water bottle to use throughout the session or day.