

Everyone Valued
Everyone Challenged
Everyone Achieving



“Attendance, Attention and Achievement”

The Early Years Stage (EYFS) Curriculum at Essex Primary School

Vision

Essex Primary School is committed to providing the best possible start to our children’s school life. We believe that if they are safe and secure they can grow and learn to be confident, independent and fulfilled.

Our approach is shaped and enriched by the diversity, needs and aspirations of the families in our community. In a culture that fosters mutual support and respect, we aim to ensure the best possible outcomes for our children, often in the face of hardship and challenge.

Underpinning our ethos, values and curriculum are the themes and principles of the The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five.

The EYFS is based around four Key Themes, three Prime areas of Learning and Four Specific Areas of Learning.

EYFS Themes and Principles:

- **A Unique Child**
Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships**
Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.
- **Enabling Environments**
The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.
- **Learning and Development**
Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

The Foundation Stage builds on the key skills of listening, speaking, concentration, persistence and learning to work and cooperate with others. It also helps develop their early communication and literacy and numeracy skills which prepare children for Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum, which begins in Year 1.

Our EYFS Learning Environment

We are continuing to develop our learning environments all of the time. We provide children with resources and space to learn which stimulates them to progress and develop. We ensure that all learning styles are considered when planning activities and believe that the outdoor area is just as important as the indoor area. We have purpose built classrooms which lead straight out into our outside area. This ensures children are free to flow in between the inside and outside learning environments as they wish. There are interactive whiteboards in all of the classrooms at the children's height, as well as high quality resources which are accessible to children in interest centres so that they can play, explore and learn independently.

The Importance of Play

For children, play is an essential and integral part of their existence. Well planned play, both indoors and outdoors, is the key way which children at Essex Primary School learn with enjoyment and challenge. In playing they behave in different ways: sometimes they will be noisy, sometimes they will describe and discuss what they are doing and sometimes they will be quiet and reflective as they play.

The Curriculum

The Foundation Stage is organised into seven areas of learning:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Understanding the World
- Expressive arts and Design

Personal, social and emotional development includes developing self-confidence and self-awareness, managing feelings and behaviour and making relationships.

This area of learning is vital for your child in all aspects of their life and it gives them the best opportunity for success in other areas of learning.

At Essex we aim to provide the support and experiences which enable your child to develop a positive sense of themselves and their respect for others. We actively use praise and encouragement to promote good behaviour and encourage all children in their efforts. A positive approach to discipline is paramount. Further information about our approach to behaviour can be found in Essex Primary School's Behaviour Policy.

Communication and language involves speaking, listening, attention and understanding. Developing effective speaking and listening skills is fundamental to all aspects of your child's learning and development. The children will be encouraged to talk confidently and clearly, answer how and why questions in response to their experiences and develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

Physical Development involves moving and handling and health and self-care. We aim to improve skills of confidence, coordination, control, manipulation and movement. Physical development also helps the children gain confidence and self-esteem in what they are able to do. In our outdoor area children have the opportunity to explore and play with equipment on a larger scale, with a continuous focus on all seven areas of learning. Within Physical Development there is a focus on how we keep ourselves healthy and the importance of exercise as well as fine motor development associated with cutting, mark making and threading.

Literacy covers reading and writing. Children learn the letter sounds to read and understand simple sentences as well as using their knowledge of phonics to decode unfamiliar words. They also learn irregular words which they can then read by sight. They attempt to write simple sentences and are encouraged to use their knowledge of sounds to spell unfamiliar words.

Numeracy is divided into numbers and shape, space and measures. This includes counting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns and calculating, along with exploring shape, space and measures. We use rhymes, songs and stories to encourage learning. Emphasis is also put on developing their ideas and methods to solve practical problems. It is essential that children's experiences in this area are enjoyable, meaningful and purposeful.

Understanding the World involves helping your child make sense of the world they live in. This forms the foundations for later work on geography, history, science, design and technology, and computing. Our activities are based on first hand experiences, which encourage interest and curiosity. Children will learn to investigate, be curious, to show enthusiasm and experiment. Areas of learning are based around people and communities, the world and technology.

Creative Development involves exploring and using media and materials and being imaginative. Children are encouraged to use their imagination and creativity through a range of activities including role play, music and art. At Essex we aim to provide a stimulating environment in which creativity, originality and expressiveness are valued.

Assessment of Progress

Monitoring of each child's progress throughout the Foundation Stage is essential to ensure that they are making progress and that any particular difficulties in learning are identified and addressed. This is done in a variety of ways.

EYFS Profiles:

Throughout the Foundation Stage, as part of the teaching and learning process, teachers need to continually assess each child's development in relation to the objectives, which form part of the EYFS.

The Foundation Stage Team make these assessments by accumulating observations and building up knowledge of your child. They are recorded in an individual profile, which includes these observations, samples of work and photographs of your child's learning.

In addition to class profiles, an Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed near the end of your child's time in Reception. It summarises and celebrates your child's achievements, assessing their knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding against Early Learning Goals.

At Essex, we value highly the important contribution that both parents and children can make to assessment. Throughout the school year, there will be regular parent/teacher evenings, in which there are opportunities to share and discuss your child's development and progress. However, we also actively encourage you to share with us on a more informal basis, any information and observations that you have made of your child's progress.

Parental Involvement

We recognise and value that as parents, you are your child's first educator. At Essex Primary School we welcome parental involvement. We encourage parents into our Foundation Stage classrooms at the start of the day to spend a few minutes sharing the activities with your child, and throughout the day to help with reading and many other activities. If you can give up any of your time to come in and help or you have a particular talent which you would be willing to share, you will be most welcome.

Home Learning

Your child will bring home a reading/story book regularly to share with you, alongside their reading diary, where both their teacher and you, as a parent, are encouraged to make comments about your child's reading. Please do spend time sharing this with your child and helping your child to talk about what you have read together. Some ideas for helping your child at home are provided in an additional leaflet and further information will be given through workshops in the Autumn term.

Key Information

It can be very unsettling for your child to miss school or to arrive late to their session/day. Please try to make sure that your child arrives punctually to ensure that they settle calmly, confidently and are present for the introduction of the day ahead.

It is essential that we have a minimum of two emergency daytime telephone numbers in case your child is unwell or has an accident. Please let the office know immediately if a contact number needs to be changed. Please also inform the school office staff before 9.00am if your child will be missing school due to illness. For further information about attendance and punctuality, please refer to the Attendance and Punctuality Policy.