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Reach For The Stars

## **Early Years Policy**



### Our Motto

★ **Reach for the Stars**

### **Vision Statement**

Our vision is to develop an inclusive school, which promotes and achieves excellence, and continues to nurture the values, confidence and skills of pupils, staff and the community, in order to meet the emerging opportunities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Our vision and values support Articles 2, 12, 15, 19, 24, 27, 28, 29, 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child.**

**Articles 2/12:** We respect the right to be listened to and listen to others.

**Articles 19/24:** We respect the right to feel safe at school and help others feel safe.

**Article 28:** We respect the right to learn and let others enjoy their learning.

**Articles 15/31:** We respect the right to join in and be part of a team.

**Article 29:** We respect the right to develop our potential and to do it with a growth mindset.

**Article 27:** We respect the right to look after our own and others property

### Our Values

- ★ **Striving**
- ★ **Teamwork**
- ★ **All Included**
- ★ **Responsibility**
- ★ **Success**

#### ★ **Striving**

Our aim is that we are a school that:

- **uses our Growth Mind-set ( learning from mistakes and always willing to have a go)**
- **never gives up and always find ways of improving**
- **enjoys challenges and aim high**

#### ★ **Teamwork**

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Our aim is that we are a school that:

- **encourages and supports each other to be the best we can be**
- **learns from each other**
- **listens to and respects each other's ideas**

★ **All Included**

Our aim is that we are a school that:

- **has high expectations of everyone**
- **encourages everyone to take an active part in learning and life of our school**
- **nurtures and celebrates what makes each and every one of us unique**

★ **Responsibility**

Our aim is that we are a school that:

- **takes ownership of the choices we make**
- **takes ownership/charge of our own learning**
- **looks after each other and our school**

★ **Success**

Our aim is that we are a school that:

- **provides an education that encompasses academic, creative, social, emotional, physical and cultural development.**
- **celebrates our efforts and achievements.**

### **Equal Opportunities and the Single Equality Scheme**

We believe that all those who work in Osmani - children and adults - have the right to be treated fairly and with respect by everyone connected with the school.

We aim for Osmani to be a safe, supportive place, where all children and adults feel valued as individuals, whatever their **ability, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.**

The school aims to foster the social and personal skills of co-operation, sharing and mutual respect.

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The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, all children join us in nursery from the age of three, at the beginning of the school year in September.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

### **Early Years at Osmani School**

#### **A Unique Child**

“All children have equal access to the curriculum. Children will learn from opportunities to form positive relationships in a setting that supports mutual respect and understanding and that celebrates and acknowledges difference” (QCA, p.29)

To be successful learners, we feel strongly that children need to have a strong positive self-identity and high self-esteem. As a school we promote this through having a Growth-Mindset which helps children to develop their resilience and perseverance.

We value the diversity of individuals within our school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children at Osmani School are treated fairly regardless of their ethnicity, gender, and educational needs, abilities, and disabilities, social and cultural background. All children and their families are valued within our school.

The majority of children at our school have a home language other than English. We value this linguistic and cultural diversity and will provide opportunities for children to develop and share their experiences. Bi-lingual staff working in the Early Years will support these children in their learning and provide an essential communication link between school and home.

In our Early Years we are committed to providing high quality education and care for all children. We understand that each child is an individual with different experiences and needs. We will endeavor to provide for the children

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using their backgrounds to enrich their learning and ensure that each child feels secure, valued and included.

**Therefore we meet the needs of all our children through:**

***Fostering the enjoyment of learning by:***

- having the highest expectations of achievement;
- providing a broad, balanced and enriched curriculum;
- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- teaching and learning in varied and creative ways;
- encouraging talking, questioning, curious and open minds;
- planning challenging activities for high achieving children who are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary;
- being open to change and innovation in order to improve.

**Safeguarding**

"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 Osmani School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014. 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.

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- Any medicines which need to be kept in school will be kept in the school office. Only members of the office staff or SLT are allowed to administer medicines.
- If a child is going to be picked up by another family member/ friend, the EY's staff must be informed.
- Nursery children cannot be picked up by anyone under the age of 16.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements in our daily practice.

### **Positive Relationships**

At Osmani School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

#### **Parents as partners**

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

#### **We do this through:**

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- The Early Years team visit all children in their home setting prior to them starting school;
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their key worker before starting school during our Parent & Toddler session during the Summer term to discuss their child and school procedures as well as running parent workshops;
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- Providing help sessions for parents to explain further school procedures and curriculum content and to give them ideas about fun ways to support and extend their children's learning at home.

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- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our nursery and reception class and allowing regular access to the children's 'Wow books';
- Parents/carers are encouraged to contribute to making regular observations of their child at home to inform needs, interests and the EYFSP.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's key worker if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting each term at which the parents can discuss the child's progress in private with the key worker and class teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the summer term;
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: EYFS assemblies, fun afternoons, parent workshops, gardening projects etc;
- Providing a home-school link where parents are informed of the theme of the week and learning taking place in school each half term. This is displayed on the website and each child takes a hard copy home.

### **The role of the Adult**

When children enter the Early Years they will be assigned a key person with the aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. The key person will be responsible for particular children ensuring that they feel special, individual and cared for, someone who is affectionate and reliable whilst the child is away from home. They will also be responsible for helping to settle their key children initially in Nursery and Reception.

In the Early Years we work as a team to best meet the needs of the individual children. All adults will have some involvement in the planning process, as well as the implementation. Communication between staff is a vital tool in this process.

We maintain good links with Collingwood Children's Centre and develop further links with other local children centres and nursery settings. The EYFS team regularly meet with staff to discuss new intake children, policies and protocols. We aim to ensure continuity and coherence by sharing information about the children's achievements.

### **Enabling Environments**

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At Osmani School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We begin by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

### **Observation, Assessment and Planning**

Achievements, progress and interests are carefully monitored throughout the year against the EYFS via observations and adult led activities. This informs our weekly planning, objectives covered and our theme. Parents are then informed of these in the EYFS class websites and parent information letters.

Coverage of the EYFS statements are carefully monitored and recorded so that complete and fair coverage of the curriculum is achieved during the year.

Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher/nursery nurse and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in children's individual 'Wow Book'. They also contain information provided by parents.

At Osmani School, we use the EYFSP Target Tracker to record judgements against the EYFS Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the EYFS Early Learning Goal's. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written report to parents at parents evening, reporting children's progress against the Early Learning Goal's. We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with their child's class teacher.

### **The Learning Environment**

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to locate and use equipment and resources independently. Each class has a door which leads on to the outdoor area. Although we are restricted by physical barriers at our school, we ensure that the access we have is used as well as possible. Children have an opportunity to use both the indoors and outdoors equally.

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This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It allows the children to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

### Learning and Development

At Osmani School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected.

#### Teaching and Learning

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between 'key workers' and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that 'key workers' have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum, based on interests and needs, that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout the EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;

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## **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

### **Play and exploring:**

"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development."

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and 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 express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

### **Active Learning:**

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods."

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 satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

### **Creativity and Critical Thinking:**

"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions."

Children should be given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can 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 allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

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## Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

### Prime Areas of Learning

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

### Specific Areas of Learning

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

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

As part of the Early Years at Osmani, children begin a phonics programme in the Nursery. Children are given the opportunity to explore sounds, rhymes and actions, moving on to a more structured learning of sounds which is continued as the children move through Reception.

### Monitoring of policy

This policy will be monitored through e.g planning, book scrutiny, lesson observations, moderation meetings, drop in by the SLT, learning walks, focus groups, Pupil progress meetings and the Target Tracker as well as keeping abreast of national policy changes.

### Evaluation of policy

This policy will be evaluated through termly or annual reports by the postholder to the Headteacher and Governing Body. This evaluation will also inform school priorities.

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