



Crosscrake CE Nursery and Primary School

EYFS Policy

Date last reviewed	January 2026	
Signed	ALBarnsley	PBlackburn
Date	2.2.2026	2.2.2026

Rationale

Every child deserves the best start in life and support to reach their full potential regardless of attainment, ethnicity, gender, language and special educational needs. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A safe, secure and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum (EYFS) runs from Birth to the end of the Reception year. The revised Development Matters (2020) is used as a tool along with observations and dialogue to assess children's learning, along with identifying their next steps of learning. This leads to a formal assessment through the Early Learning goals at the end of the Reception year. The expectation is that most children will be secure in achieving these Early Learning Goals.

We pride ourselves on having specialised and committed staff who welcome the support of other adults and parents in order to fully support each child's learning and development. This allows children to be given the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school life.

From September 2025, the EYFS statutory Framework introduced strengthened requirements to ensure children's safety, health, and learning. We have ensured that these changes have been implemented within our setting.

- All adults working in our Early Years are Paediatric First Aid-trained and are present during meals and outings, and maintain up-to-date certificates.
- We implement safe eating practices, including allergy checks, supervision during meals, and food preparation to reduce choking risks, alongside following the statutory EYFS Nutrition Guidance.
- Safeguarding measures have been enhanced with stricter recruitment checks, whistleblowing procedures, and attendance monitoring.
- Our planning reflects the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning, and Reception Baseline Assessments are still implemented within the first six weeks.

These changes aim to promote high-quality provision and robust safeguarding across all early year's settings.

The Early Years at Crosscrake provides -

- Quality and consistency, so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind.
- A secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- Partnership working between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

The curriculum of The Early Years Foundation Stage is a single framework for care, learning and development and underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's knowledge and understanding. There are seven areas of learning and development that shape a child's educational experience. All seven areas are equally important and interconnected. The seven areas of learning and development are:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication and language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design.

Three prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, these are;

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication and language
- Physical Development.

Children are also supported in four specific areas that include essential skills and knowledge that grow out of the prime areas, these are;

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design.

Children will develop the following knowledge, skills and understanding in the above areas through the Effective Characteristics of Learning:

- Playing and exploring,
- Active learning,
- Creative and thinking critically.

Children will also develop their knowledge, skills and understanding through the following ways;

- Purposeful play-based experiences with each other, independently, teacher supported and teacher led;
- Talk, investigation, observation and interaction to make sense of the world;
- The organisation of both indoor and outdoor resources in a stimulating way to encourage independence, self-help and a sense of ownership;

- Movement and using all their senses;
- Having time to expand and explore their ideas and interests, practice and build up ideas, concepts and skills;
- Feeling secure enough to become confident learners;
- Creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of thinking and language;
- Learning how to control impulses and see the need for rules;
- Take risks,
- Make mistakes and problem solve.

Principles

The EYFS is based upon four key principles:

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

A Unique Child

At Crosscrake School we understand that all areas of child development are equally important and that our children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. We value and respect the diversity of our community and proactively seek to include our families in school life. We ensure that all children in our care are safe and feel confident to explore their surroundings. We believe that the children's emotional health and well-being is central to their ability to learn. We want our children to be confident individuals, successful learners and responsible citizens.

We ensure this by:

- Observing our children to see what they can do, to find out what they are interested in and to help plan their next steps
- Inviting families to celebrations and events which highlight the learning and skills the children have been working on.
- This is linked to our project themes and may involve class assemblies/presentations, workshops linked to key aspects of their learning and opportunities for parents to join in with sessions within the setting.
- Sharing children's experiences at home. This includes talking and learning about the children's different cultures and faiths and visiting children in their home settings prior to them starting school.
- Keeping our environment safe and secure at all times, ensuring that resources are suitable and in good repair and by promoting a caring and supportive atmosphere where children feel confident and able to succeed and achieve independently.

- Talking and listening to children and their families, modelling positive relationships amongst all and expressing and managing feelings.
- Celebrating successes and encouraging team work and consideration of others.

Positive Relationships.

We value each child as an individual and strive to meet their needs. When each person is valued for who they are and differences are respected, everyone feels included and understood. We work closely with outside agencies to support our children with Special Educational Needs and our more vulnerable children. We value the role of parents as educators and seek to share and celebrate their child's achievements whether at home or at school. We know that working in partnership with our parents has a positive impact on the child's development and learning. We build strong relationships with each child in order to support their learning more effectively. This enables our children to be confident, independent and inquisitive learners. Adult interactions are key to developing children's skills and extending their thinking. We ensure this by:

- Using 'Tapestry' an online learning journey. This shows photographs of the children implementing teacher led and self initiated activities and highlights the learning that is taking place using development matters. Parents can also make comments on their child's learning journey.
- Homework – Which highlight ways in which they can support their child further at home.
- Updating our class pages on the school website.
- Allowing time to talk with and play alongside each child.
- Celebrating children's play, ideas, work, behaviour and themselves as special individuals.
- Children share and discuss their Learning Journeys through 'Tapestry' with staff and parents.
- Through listening to children in a variety of situations such as during Reflection time and Circle times. Children are able to share their experiences of both home and school.
- Whole class and individual recognition of trying hard 'persevering' and during whole school celebration assemblies.
- Time to share news about the children with parents/carers on a daily basis as well as twice yearly parent evening sessions, where we celebrate achievements and progress.
- Encouraging parents to help us to know the whole child through sharing information through open dialogue and Tapestry.
- Participating actively throughout the day so that they benefit from high quality interactions.
- Developing strong relationships with all children so that when their learning is challenging, they show the ability and confidence to reach their learning potential.

- Taking appropriate opportunities to learn about each child before they start school e.g., home visits, school visits to their new class, talking to parents, children and nursery key workers.
- Practitioners share the 2-year progress check to identify strengths as well as any developmental delay and any particular support from which they think the child/family will benefit from. Always with the consent of the family.

Enabling Environments.

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. All planning starts with observing the children, this allows us to understand and consider their current interests, their culture and development and learning needs. The environment both indoors and outdoors, supports every child's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable. We work to continually enhance the learning opportunities taking into account children's interests and next steps in their learning. We believe that being outdoors has a positive impact on children's sense of well-being and helps all aspects of their development. The outdoor environment can offer opportunities on a different scale such as first-hand experience of the natural world, freedom to explore and being physically active and exuberant.

We ensure this by:

- Observing all the children and respond to individual steps on the children's learning journey; giving the opportunity to consolidate and extend skills through challenge and support.
- Staff will observe children through purposeful dialogue. All members of the team are involved in observations, and they may take the form of individual, group observations, spontaneous notes, annotated photographs or records of conversations. But the emphasis is on spending quality time with the children.
- Ongoing assessments, implemented through open and honest professional dialogue informs staff of individual needs of all children and supports our medium, short term and daily planning.
- Providing a safe and secure shared outdoor learning environment for both reception and nursery children.
- Encouraging the development of social awareness, sharing, turn taking and team games outside.
- The inside environment is organised into areas which provides a richness of opportunity across all areas of learning.
- Children can access both exciting and challenging indoor and outdoor activities and resources independently or through adult teaching and learning.
- Encouraging learning outdoor in all weathers where possible, to utilise our Woodland Classroom. Parents are encouraged to provide outdoor weather clothing so that children can learn in the outside environment all year round.

- Planning enrichment opportunities for visitors and visits to engage, excite and stimulate learning for our children. Involving local people in the community to share their experiences and expertise to support the development of children's interests and skills.
- Contacting outside agencies as appropriate and using their professional advice for individual children.
- Staff being aware of the need for children to learn through appropriate (calculated) risk taking.
- Following Government guidance on the teacher/child ratio.
- Professionally developing the expertise of students and training teachers.
- Meeting regularly as a team to share good practice, reflect and discuss research.

We also firmly believe that creating a secure emotional environment is equally as important as creating an enabling physical environment. We provide an environment that is warm, welcoming and nurturing allowing the children and their families to have a sense of belonging.

Learning and Development.

The curriculum reflects the way that young children learn, through purposeful and well-planned play and first-hand experiences across the prime and specific areas of learning and development. Play enables the children to make choices, solve problems and develop and practise skills. In their play children learn at their highest level and are encouraged to explore, experiment and take risks. We recognise the importance of active learning for all children regardless of their special education need, their home language or cultural experiences, and provide stimulating opportunities to engage and involve the children for sustained periods. Our learning environment is set up to provide opportunities for creative and critical thinking, allowing children to play with ideas in different situations with a variety of resources. Adult interaction is the key to develop children's communication, language and thinking skills. Through our planning we connect all areas of learning and provide a balanced curriculum where all are equally important.

Children's attainment is built on from Nursery information and then tracked through the Reception year using the EYFS development matters statements, teacher knowledge and summarising through the Early Learning Goals at the end of the year.

On Entry assessment is made in October, this is the baseline assessment and is used as the children's starting point. The Early Years Profile is completed in June. Additionally there are termly discussions on every child within the Foundation Stage this highlights any individual learning needs and informs future planning. All our work is underpinned by the principles of the EYFS. This is reflected throughout our policy and in our daily practice. All staff values the importance of learning and are committed to supporting every child in their personal, social and emotional and academic development.

Roles and Responsibilities

As a school and Early Years team we recognise the value and expertise of the Early Years Leader, Mrs Brown. The Early Years Leader actively seeks to develop their own personal and professional expertise through attending relevant courses, networking with Early Years Practitioners and undertaking appropriate research.

The role involves:

- developing a vision for our young children
- sharing and imparting expertise
- supporting staff professional development needs
- implementing change
- monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of our Early Years classes to provide the very best start for our children
- overseeing smooth transitions into Key Stage 1
- To implement termly supervision meetings. This ensures that these areas are covered and discussed- Child Protection: Staff can discuss safeguarding and welfare concerns regularly. Professional Development: Providers can offer coaching, training, and support to improve staff effectiveness. Culture of Support: Supervision should foster teamwork and allow for the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.