

Lydney C of E Primary School

'A caring Christian community where every child achieves a love of life and of learning.'

EYFS

2022-2023

Intent

Together may we give our children the roots to grow and the wings to fly

Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their schooling. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting at Lydney C of E Primary School we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to help them develop to their full potential. We take time to get to know each child, building good relationships so that we can really understand their individual needs. Every child is recognised as a unique individual and we celebrate and welcome differences within our school community. Our approach gives the children opportunities to learn, make choices and decisions and develop self-awareness and confidence, whilst allowing them to build resilience, independence, ambition and integrity. This learning takes place in an atmosphere of caring and warmth, where each child's learning needs and achievements are recognised, valued and praised. We recognise children's individual needs and prior learning to create a holistic curriculum that builds strong foundations for the future. We provide enhancement opportunities to engage learning and believe that children's first experience of school should be happy and positive, enabling them to develop a lifelong love of learning.

We aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special.
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates – physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued by the practitioners looking after them.
- Fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community.
- Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways.
- Encouraging children's independence and decision-making skills, supporting them to learn through their mistakes.
- Developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously.

- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions that differ from their own.
- Providing learning experiences in play which reflects children's personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage their natural desire, interests, excitement and motivation to learn.
- Providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.
- Providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, both inside and outside.

Our Christian values of **trust, friendship, respect, forgiveness, courage** and **truthfulness** are like golden threads that are interwoven into everything that we do in our EYFS environment. We want our children to understand the importance of these values, be considerate of others and develop social and emotional intelligence.

Underpinning our EYFS curriculum are our five school drivers:

- **Belonging:** When children start in our EYFS setting we take the time to really get to know them, we want them to feel safe and secure and very much part of our class and the school community. Our curriculum intends to educate them about their place in the world: developing an understanding of their place in society; within school, their local community, our country and the wider world. Through this, they will learn about inclusivity, diversity and equality of opportunity.
- **Well-being:** Research shows that children learn best when they have strong self-esteem, a sense of belonging, emotional intelligence and resilience. Children need self-awareness, social awareness, self-management and relationship management skills. Consequently our EYFS environment intends to nurture, support and develop each individual child's well-being. Our children need to become resilient to be able to deal with different challenges across the curriculum and in the wider world. We recognise the importance of promoting healthy lifestyles in school and want our pupils to develop an increasing understanding of the many different factors that contribute to keeping healthy. Our curriculum provides opportunities for our pupils to learn about their physical health, what constitutes a balanced diet and about how exercise benefits the body. In addition, we want our pupils to have a developing understanding of how to maintain good mental health. Our curriculum, therefore, teaches an understanding of emotions, promotes resilience and encourages an open approach to discussing worries or concerns. Our curriculum also includes opportunities for our pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe in all areas of life. An important element of this includes safety on-line and when communicating using technology.
- **World Aware:** We aim to support and develop our children's 'cultural capital' by providing them with a wide range of experiential opportunities that excite, stimulate and build on each child's prior knowledge, experiences, individuality and uniqueness. We

recognise that many of our children do not have exposure to experiences that children in other areas would take for granted, so it is important that we provide as many of these experiences as possible. We want our children to grow up with a secure understanding of the local community, our national context and the wider world. Through a growing appreciation of different cultures and traditions, we want our children to develop respect; we want them to embrace and celebrate diversity and know what it takes to be a good citizen. We also want our children to broaden their horizons, to have an awareness of global issues and to take responsibility for the environment.

- **Possibilities:** Our curriculum intends to raise children's aspirations and set high expectations for ALL pupils. We recognise that a large proportion of our children are from backgrounds where the long term aspirations may be hindered by previous educational experience or understanding. Children cannot aspire to things they have never encountered. We aim to broaden our children's horizons, expanding their knowledge of the world by nurturing their interests, as well as encouraging fearlessness of what is new or unknown. We want our children to become confident, independent learners, who persevere in the face of challenge. They will be given opportunities to set and achieve their own goals across all areas of learning and we will help them to develop an understanding and appreciation of how we help each other to be the best that we can be.
- **Spirituality:** Our final curriculum driver ensures that we give our children the opportunity to grow spiritually, morally, socially and emotionally and to become aware of the world in new ways. The roots of spirituality are founded in early experiences of awe, wonder and mystery. We will give our children opportunities to experience the 'awe and wonder' of the world, whether this be observing changes in nature, having a quiet reflective moment or simply blowing and popping a bubble. They will have time to reflect on their experiences, to think about life's big questions and consider some possible answers. Spiritual development encourages children's deeper understanding of themselves and empathy for others and helps children gain appreciation of the wider impact their behaviour and actions have upon themselves, other people and the world itself.

At Lydney C of E Primary School the child is central to all that we do, their happiness and wellbeing is at the heart of our curriculum. Our aim is for all children to be confident communicators, inquisitive, independent, and happy learners.

Implementation

Our teaching is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory document, 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (March 2021). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through four overarching principles:

- **Unique Child** – Every child is a unique child and a competent learner who can be resilient, capable and self-assured.

- **Positive Relationships** – Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure positive relationships.
- **Enabling Environments** – Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and carers.
- **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.

We believe that optimum learning takes place for our children in an environment that is safe, and secure with rich opportunities for enjoyment, exploration and positive relationships. Our curriculum provides a play-based and experiential learning environment, combined with focussed teaching and basic skills, giving them a secure foundation upon which they can grow and develop as they move up through the other key stages and on into the wider world. The children are provided with ample opportunities accessible in both our indoor and outdoor provision. They engage in planned, focussed whole class and small group activities, as well as self-initiated and free flow activities. The learning experiences within our Early Years are linked to the seven areas of learning and development within the EYFS. These areas are split into three prime areas and four specific areas. The three prime areas are those which the children should develop first and are considered most essential for the healthy development and future learning of our children. These include:

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.
- **Communication and Language** – involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical Development** – involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

As children grow and make progress in the prime areas, this will help them to naturally develop skills within the four specific areas. These are:

- **Literacy** – the early teaching of literacy involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics** – the early teaching of mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating, describing shapes, space and measure and understanding numerical patterns.

- **Understanding the World** – this involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – this involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

When activities are planned, careful consideration is given to the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning, so that these activities reflect on the different ways that children learn. These are:

1. **Playing and exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’.
2. **Active learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
3. **Creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing this.

At Lydney C of E Primary School, we believe that Early Years education is important in its own right and should not be viewed simply as preparation for the next stage of children’s education. We believe that the EYFS framework not only helps children to build firm foundations in the seven areas of learning and development, it also allows a natural progression into the National Curriculum at the beginning of KS1.

Ongoing assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of our EYFS learning environment. Regular, planned and focused observations and assessments are made of children’s learning and individual needs in different learning contexts, including in adult focussed activities and child initiated play. Observations are used to support our developing knowledge of individual children. They inform us of the children’s abilities, needs, interests, play schemas and learning styles. These observations and assessments are evaluated, children’s learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps in all areas of their development. Prior to children starting with us, practitioners spend time speaking to the child’s parents/carers, previous settings and read their nursery transfer records to gain an understanding of the whole child and where they are in terms of all areas of their development and learning. During the first 6 weeks of starting in the Reception year, the RBA (Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment) is also completed. This assessment focuses on ‘Language, Communication and Literacy’ and ‘Mathematics.’ The purpose of this assessment is to show the progress children make from Reception until the end of KS2. As the children move towards the end of their time in our EYFS setting, we monitor how each child is progressing in terms of their development and learning achievements in all seven areas of the EYFS curriculum.

Impact

At Lydney C of E Primary School, we aim to ensure that all children across the EYFS achieve their full potential by providing a broad and balanced curriculum. Our creative and balanced provision of learning experiences enables our children to develop as happy, motivated, and independent learners. We anticipate that our EYFS curriculum will ensure that all children get the best possible start to their school life and it will help them to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to succeed as they continue their learning journey into Key Stage One. Any children not making sufficient progress are identified early, so that we can adjust our provision or provide additional intervention. The overall impact of the curriculum will be to enable our children, from their different starting points, to make good progress across all seven areas of learning, academically, emotionally, creatively, socially and physically. We strive to ensure that the vast majority of our children achieve the Early Learning Goals which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all children should have gained by the end of the Reception year in the seven areas of learning and development.

With the successful implementation of both an enriched, rounded and balanced curriculum and a well-structured, safe, active and challenging learning environment, both indoors and outdoors pupils will be able to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding that enables them to be successful learners. Pupils will be actively engaged in learning and their enjoyment of this learning will be apparent to all. We aim to help pupils make sense of the world around them, to develop tolerance, compassion and an understanding of their rights and the rights of others in an ever evolving world.

Impact is also evident through our successful transition into Year 1. EYFS staff have a good understanding of how ELG's link to the National Curriculum, and through our robust planning and delivery across the spectrum of subjects – both core and foundation – our pupils develop into well rounded individuals who embody our values and carry with them the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will make them lifelong learners, valuable future citizens and the very best that they can be.

"Every child deserves a champion: an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connections and insists they become the best they can possibly be."

-Rita Pierson, Educator