

The Canterbury Academy Trust

Schools for all the Talents



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In partnership with Simon Langton  Grammar School for Boys to provide a grammar school band for boys and girls in a comprehensive school for all the talents

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Introduction

At The Canterbury Primary School, our Early Years provision provides the nurturing foundation upon which all future learning is built. We believe that children learn best when they feel safe, valued, inspired and supported.

We are committed to providing high-quality education and care that celebrates each child's individuality, curiosity and potential. Through positive relationships, inspiring learning opportunities and a carefully planned environment, we ensure every child feels secure, develops confidence and is supported to achieve their best.

Our Reception provision follows the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and aims to develop confident, independent and resilient learners who are well prepared for their transition into Year 1 and beyond.

Vision and Aims

Our Vision

Our vision is for every child in the Early Years Foundation Stage to flourish academically, socially and emotionally.

We want our children to become:

- Confident, independent learners who enjoy discovering new ideas.
- Curious, creative thinkers who ask questions and explore possibilities.
- Kind and responsible individuals who care for themselves, others and the world around them.
- Resilient learners who persevere, solve problems and take pride in their achievements.

We aim to equip children with the essential building blocks needed not only for Year 1, but for lifelong learning and wellbeing.

Our Aims

We aim to:

- Provide a safe, caring and inclusive environment where every child can thrive.
- Foster positive relationships with children, families and the wider community.
- Develop children's confidence, independence and resilience.
- Promote curiosity, creativity and a lifelong love of learning.
- Support children to make progress from their individual starting points.
- Deliver a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum.
- Prepare children academically, socially and emotionally for the next stage of their education.
- Ensure all children have the opportunity to achieve and fulfil their potential.

Ethos

At The Canterbury Primary School, we are committed to ensuring every child:

- Is safe.
- Is healthy.
- Enjoys and achieves.
- Makes a positive contribution.
- Achieves economic wellbeing.

We believe in nurturing the whole child, supporting their physical, emotional, social and cognitive development equally. Our Early Years provision promotes positive wellbeing, high aspirations and a sense of belonging for every child.

The Canterbury Primary School Promises in EYFS

In the Early Years, our school promises are embedded through everyday interactions, routines and learning experiences.

We encourage children to:

- Respect everybody and celebrate diversity.
- Have high expectations of themselves and be ready to learn.
- Always give their best effort and persevere.
- Ensure everyone has a voice and listen to others.
- Take care of the school and wider environment.
- Be charitable, thoughtful and considerate of others.

These values underpin our culture and help create a positive and inclusive learning community.

Curriculum

The EYFS curriculum is ambitious, inclusive and designed to nurture the whole child. It is delivered through high-quality teaching, purposeful play, language-rich interactions and carefully planned experiences. Learning is carefully sequenced to build upon children's prior knowledge and experiences whilst preparing them for future learning.

The curriculum is based upon the seven areas of learning and development set out within the EYFS Framework.

Prime Areas

The prime areas form the foundations for all later learning and are prioritised throughout the year:

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

Specific Areas

The specific areas build upon the prime areas and broaden children's knowledge and understanding:

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

Our curriculum is designed to ensure children acquire both the knowledge and skills they need to become successful learners and to prepare them for future learning.

Teaching and Learning

Children learn through a combination of:

- Child-initiated play
- Adult-led learning
- Adult-guided activities
- Structured teaching sessions
- Indoor and outdoor learning opportunities

Practitioners provide a balance of adult-directed and child-led experiences, creating opportunities for children to explore, investigate, problem solve and develop their understanding through meaningful play.

High-quality interactions are central to our practice. Staff support children's learning through questioning, modelling language, extending thinking and providing experiences that build knowledge and vocabulary.

Teaching is informed by our carefully sequenced progression of knowledge and skills to ensure learning builds cumulatively across the year.

Children have daily access to a well-planned outdoor learning environment which provides opportunities to develop all areas of learning.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Children learn through the Characteristics of Effective Learning:

Playing and Exploring

Children investigate, experience new things and have a go.

Active Learning

Children concentrate, persevere and enjoy their achievements.

Creating and Thinking Critically

Children develop their own ideas, make links between experiences and choose ways to solve problems.

Practitioners promote these characteristics through carefully planned experiences and responsive teaching.

Communication, Language and Vocabulary

Communication and Language is at the heart of our curriculum and underpins children's success across all areas of learning. Staff provide language-rich environments and use high-quality interactions to develop children's vocabulary, understanding and confidence as communicators.

Children are encouraged to speak confidently, listen attentively and express their thoughts and ideas in a variety of contexts.

Early Reading and Phonics

Early reading is a priority within the EYFS.

We use Twinkl Phonics to deliver systematic synthetic phonics teaching. This supports children to develop:

- Strong decoding skills.
- Early fluency.
- Confidence and enjoyment in reading.
- Secure foundations in writing.

Our phonics teaching is supported by daily story times, vocabulary-rich interactions, high-quality texts and opportunities to develop a love of reading. We work closely with families to encourage regular reading at home and establish positive reading habits from the start of children's school journey.

Writing

Drawing Club plays an important role in developing children's creativity, communication and early writing skills. Through high-quality stories and imaginative experiences, children:

- Build and apply rich vocabulary.
- Develop storytelling and language skills.
- Express ideas through drawing and mark making.
- Build confidence as writers.

Drawing Club supports children's imagination whilst strengthening literacy and communication skills.

Mathematics

We use White Rose Maths to develop deep and lasting mathematical understanding.

Children learn through:

- Practical exploration using concrete resources.
- Developing strong number sense.
- Reasoning and problem-solving opportunities.
- Small, manageable learning steps.
- Mathematical experiences embedded throughout play and daily routines.

This provides strong foundations for future mathematical learning.

Enrichment Opportunities

At The Canterbury Primary School, we believe that memorable experiences enrich children's learning and help them make meaningful connections across the curriculum.

Children in Reception benefit from a range of enrichment opportunities, including:

- A term of Forest School provision.
- Specialist PE teaching for two terms during the academic year.
- The opportunity to participate in Rocksteady music sessions.
- Educational visits linked to curriculum learning.
- Visitors and hands-on experiences that bring learning to life.

Examples of enrichment opportunities include visits to a role-play city to support learning about *People Who Help Us* and visits to a farm to enhance learning within the *Farming* topic.

These experiences help develop children's confidence, curiosity, communication skills and understanding of the wider world.

Children also benefit from regular outdoor learning and first-hand experiences that support curiosity, investigation and a connection with the natural world.

Learning Environment

Our indoor and outdoor learning environments are carefully designed to be:

- Stimulating, purposeful and inviting.
- Rich in opportunities for independence.
- Inclusive and accessible to all learners.
- Responsive to children's interests and experiences.
- Supportive of exploration, collaboration and problem-solving.

Continuous provision is enhanced regularly to reflect children's interests, curriculum priorities and emerging learning needs.

Assessment

Assessment is an ongoing part of teaching and learning and is primarily formative in nature. Practitioners use observations, interactions and day-to-day assessment to identify children's achievements, interests and next steps. Assessment information is used to inform planning and ensure learning meets the needs of all children.

On entry to Reception, children complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). In addition, practitioners complete their own baseline assessments to develop a comprehensive understanding of each child's starting points across all areas of learning.

Children's learning and development are evidenced through observations, photographs and examples of learning recorded on Tapestry. Assessment information is monitored and tracked using Arbor to ensure that children's progress is closely monitored and that appropriate support and challenge are provided.

At the end of Reception, practitioners complete the EYFS Profile in accordance with statutory requirements.

Inclusion and SEND

We believe that every child is unique and entitled to an inclusive education. All children are supported to access the curriculum regardless of need, ability, disability, culture, language or background. Appropriate support and reasonable adjustments are made to ensure children can participate fully in all aspects of school life.

We place a strong emphasis on the early identification of need. Reception staff work closely with the school's SENDCo to monitor children's development and identify any barriers to learning at the earliest opportunity.

Where appropriate, the school works in partnership with parents, carers and external agencies to ensure children receive the support they need. This may include advice and assessment from Educational Psychology, Specialist Teaching and Learning Services (STLS), Portage, Health professionals and other relevant services.

The Early Years team benefits from support from a Link Speech and Language Therapist who works alongside staff to identify needs, provide advice and strategies, and support children's communication and language development.

Where a child has significant and long-term special educational needs, the school will work collaboratively with families, the SENDCo and external professionals to support the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessment process. Where an EHCP is in place, staff will ensure that provision, targets and outcomes are implemented, monitored and reviewed effectively.

Children with SEND are fully included within all aspects of school life and are supported to achieve their full potential.

Safeguarding and Welfare

The safety and wellbeing of children is our highest priority.

The school follows all statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements within the EYFS framework and operates in accordance with the Trust's safeguarding and child protection policies.

We provide a safe and secure environment where children are encouraged to develop independence while learning how to keep themselves safe.

All staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and understand their responsibilities in protecting children from harm.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents and carers are children's first educators and that strong partnerships are essential to children's success. Success in the Early Years grows through effective collaboration between children, families and school staff.

We work closely with families through:

- Regular communication.
- Three parent consultation meetings throughout the academic year.
- Curriculum information sharing.
- Learning updates and celebrations through Tapestry.
- Reading support and guidance to help parents develop positive reading routines at home.
- Parent workshops and information sessions.
- Learning Celebration Assemblies, which parents and carers are invited to attend.
- Opportunities for parents to contribute to their child's learning journey.

We value the knowledge parents have of their children and encourage active involvement in school life.

Transition

We are committed to ensuring smooth transitions both into and beyond Reception.

Before children start school, we work closely with families, nurseries, pre-schools and other settings to gather information and support a successful start. Transition arrangements may include:

- Visits to children's nursery or pre-school setting.
- Home visits.
- Parent information sessions.
- Stay and Play sessions.
- Opportunities for children to visit and become familiar with the Reception environment.
- Information sharing with previous settings and professionals.

Throughout the year, we prepare children for their move into Year 1 by gradually developing independence, resilience and learning behaviours whilst maintaining developmentally appropriate practice.

Reception and Year 1 staff work closely together, and children participate in a structured transition programme, including opportunities to spend time in their new classroom and with their Year 1 teacher, to ensure continuity of learning and support.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Reception team is responsible for:

- Delivering a high-quality EYFS curriculum.
- Maintaining a safe and stimulating learning environment.
- Monitoring children's progress and development.
- Working in partnership with parents and other professionals.
- Ensuring statutory requirements are met.
- Promoting positive relationships and high expectations for all children.

Senior leaders monitor the effectiveness of the EYFS provision and support continuous improvement.

Our Aim for Every Child

By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, we aim for every child to be:

- A successful learner who enjoys learning, makes strong progress and achieves well.
- A confident individual who is able to live a safe, healthy and fulfilling life.
- An active and responsible citizen who contributes positively to their community and the wider world.

We are committed to ensuring that every child leaves Reception with the confidence, knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to flourish in the next stage of their education.