EYFS Policy

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Caedmon Primary School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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1 - Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) extends from 0-5 years. Entry into our Foundation Stage (Nursery) is the day after a child's third birthday and ends at the end of the Reception year. At Caedmon Primary School, we offer 15 hours provision in Nursery for children aged 3 or 4 under the 'universal offer'. These 15 hours are provided over 5 sessions – either 8:40-11:40 or 12:15-3:15. We also offer 30 hours provision for those working parents who qualify for it, and who provide us with a code from the government website. Most of our Nursery children start as N2 age (4 years old), with a smaller number of N1 (3 years old) each academic year.

Entry into our primary school is at the beginning of the school year in which the children are 5 (although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday).

The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and also in preparing children for later schooling. At Caedmon Primary School we follow the government guidance 'Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework'.

The early years education we offer our children is based on the following 'Principles of the EYFS':

"A Unique Child" – we build on what our children already know and can do.

"Positive Relationships" - our children learn to be strong and independent from a base of caring, secure and respectful relationships.

"Enabling Environments" – our children enjoy a rich and stimulating environment which supports their learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in secure, safe yet challenging indoor and outdoor areas.

"Learning and Developing" – we provide a variety of opportunities for our children to develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

2 - Our Vision and Values for EYFS at Caedmon – our intent

We actively promote the Caedmon Characteristics (Confident, Ambitious, Respectful and Engaged) to ensure our pupils enjoy learning. Our curriculum in the EYFS aims to:

- Establish the foundations that underpin all future learning.
- Place speech, language and communication at the heart of learning.
- Promote and develop personal, social and emotional well-being.
- Encourage the development of self-confidence and positive self-awareness.
- Ensure that our children have positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning.
- Develop positive behaviour and social interaction skills.
- Promote healthy and safe physical development.
- Enable children to develop the skills of attention, concentration and persistence.
- Lay the foundations for developing reading and writing.
- Develop early mathematical skills and concepts.
- Develop an understanding of the world in which children live.
- Enable children to be creative in their responses to their world and in their development of skills.
- Encourage children to develop their imagination.

and that they are prepared to move into Year 1 where we will continue to prepare them for life in modern Britain:

- Respect others
- Be well mannered
- Be friendly
- Be happy
- Never give up
- Work hard
- Be confident and try new things
- Be well behaved
- Work well with others
- Enjoy and be interested in learning
- We also offer our pupils new and exciting experiences through a range of extra-curricular activities that are designed to build resilience, confidence and self-esteem.

3 - The EYFS Curriculum, including Characteristics for Effective Teaching and Learning – our intent

The EYFS Curriculum, which precedes the National Curriculum for Key Stages 1-4 (5 to 16 years), consists of seven areas of learning - three "Prime" and four "Specific". These seven areas of learning and development shape educational programmes in EYFS. All the areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

The **'Prime areas'** are fundamental, work together, and move through to support development in all other areas. They are:

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

The **'Specific areas'** include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. They are:

- Mathematics
- Literacy
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Educational Programmes

The 'Educational Programmes' for EYFS (taken from the Statutory Framework for the EYFS, September 2026) are as follows:

Communication and Language

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, storytelling and role play, where children share their

ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development
Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

Physical Development
Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, coordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

Literacy
It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

Mathematics
Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in

mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Understanding the World
Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

Expressive Arts and Design
The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning (CoETL)

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning and the prime and specific Areas of Learning and Development are all interconnected. The focus of the CoETL is on how children learn rather than what they learn i.e. process over outcome. Underpinning the CoETL is the understanding that during their earliest years, children form attitudes about learning that will last a lifetime.

At Caedmon, we ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

Playing and exploring - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'. Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world around them. They practise and build on their own ideas and those presented to them. They 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 and how to communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Active learning- Children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements. Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between them and develop strategies for doing things. Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely

and purposefully to extend their learning. This learning allows children to develop their abilities to play and explore, take an active role and think creatively.

4 - Planning, Teaching, Learning and Play in the Foundation Stage – our implementation

At Caedmon Primary School the Educational Programmes are delivered through the 7 areas of learning. Planning is divided into long term, medium term, and short term.

- Long term plans state the sequence of the curriculum to be covered each year and show each strand of the curriculum. Where possible, we make links with the subject areas taught in the rest of school.
- Medium term plans illustrate objectives being taught each term including key core texts, role-play areas, trips and visitors into school.
- Short term, or weekly plans, show specific activities and planned for objectives for the cohort of children. These will include a variety of adult-led activities and provision to inspire and support child-led learning. Staff ensure that all children are encouraged to experience all areas of activity throughout the week. This is carefully monitored and altered as the year progresses and we begin to support children's transition into Year One.

Planning Process

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practise and is informed through observations we make of the children within our environment. All staff who are in the EYFS team are involved in the process of planning to consider current interests, development, and learning needs within the cohort. The planning within the EYFS is based around the children's interests but also reflects that some of our children have had limited experiences before joining our school. These plans are used by the whole team as a guide for weekly planning. However, we may alter these in response to the needs and interest of the children which helps create a high level of motivation for their learning.

Planning our environments

At Caedmon Primary School we have a 16 place nursery on the morning and on the afternoon, a 1 form entry Reception class and a large shared outdoor space, including a dedicated space for 'forest schools'. Our EYFS environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn safely and securely. Each classroom has defined learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. These areas can be active, quiet, creative, imaginative etc. The outside area and Forest School is important within our Foundation Stage and all children in the EYFS access this area at different times throughout the day. Being outdoors offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when inside. As well as offering opportunities for physical activity, freedom and movement and promoting a sense of well-being. They can explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources for both indoor and outdoor environments, enabling children to develop all areas of their learning within both environments.

5 - Monitoring, assessment, record keeping and reporting – our impact

At the start of the year

During the first term in Nursery and Reception, class teachers assess the ability of each child using our own baseline assessments. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

Baseline assessments are made when watching the children play, by completing play based activities with them and by seeing what they know. Staff will talk with parents as appropriate/when needed to discuss a child's strengths or areas for development. Parents will also be invited into school during the Autumn Term for a parent consultation appointment.

National Baseline Assessment (NBA)
In September 2021, a national, statutory 'Reception Baseline' was introduced and is completed alongside our own teacher-devised baseline activities. The statutory baseline is completed with each child individually and will usually take 20 minutes. The activities will be play-based, using resources, pictures and completing activities using an iPad. Teachers will ask the children different questions and the children will be expected to point, show or say their answer. Teachers use a laptop to record a yes/no answer for each activity. The baseline assessment activities are 'routed'; this means that it prevents the children accessing too many activities where they may be unsuccessful (i.e. the assessment stops if it becomes too difficult). All children must complete the NBA. Scores for each child are automatically calculated and sent to the Standards and Testing Authority (STA). School does not have access to these scores/data until the cohort reach Year 6, when the data can be used as a progress measure. This means we will be unable to discuss the scores/data from the RBA.

Throughout the year
Assessment in the early years takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence, and planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves all staff within the EYFS setting. The collection of assessment data allows staff to adapt planning to suit the needs of the cohort.

At Caedmon, each child has a digital learning journal this includes some examples of work compiled as a range of evidence to be shared with parents at each parent consultation meeting. Tracking grids and pupil progress meetings are updated and take place at key points throughout EYFS years and are moderated carefully by Early Years staff. The data collected is shared with the Senior Leadership Team. In Reception, parents receive a mid-year report and can request a parent consultation meeting.

At the end of the year
End of year assessments in Nursery are shared with the next class teacher and with parents during parent consultation meetings and in the child's end of year report.

At the end of Reception, the EYFS requires practitioners to compete the Foundation Stage Profile. The Foundation Stage Profile consists of Early Learning Goals. The Early Learning Goals (ELGs) are:

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

ELG – Self Regulation
ELG – Managing Self
ELG – Building Relationships

- **Communication and Language**

ELG - Listening, Attention and Concentration
ELG - Speaking

- **Physical Development**

ELG – Gross Motor Skills
ELG – Fine Motor Skills

• **Mathematics**
ELG – Number
ELG – Numerical Patterns

• **Literacy**
ELG – Comprehension
ELG – Word Reading
ELG – Writing

• **Understanding the world**
ELG – Past and Present
ELG – People, Culture and Communities
ELG – The Natural World

• **Expressive arts and design**
ELG – Creating with materials
ELG – Being Imaginative and Expressive

The Profile is an assessment tool for teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage and to summarise the progress made by individuals towards the Early Learning Goals. During the Summer Term, a summary of these assessments are sent to the local authority for analysis. This data is also shared with the next teacher and with parents during parent consultation meetings and in the child's end of year report.

Also see the school 'Assessment policy'.

Seesaw
Seesaw is used to create, and share observations made of the children's learning and as a communication tool for parents. We also share regular home-learning activities on the children's individual Seesaw accounts to support their learning within school. We appreciate that children are constantly learning and that this is not specific to the hours within a school day. We value observations shared from home of children's life experiences and hobbies and activities, which ultimately contribute to their overall learning. Permission is obtained from parents upon starting Reception in line with meeting GDPR guidance and expectations.

6 - Inclusion in the Foundation Stage

We believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning and by providing a high staff to pupil ratio.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations matched to the needs of our children, so that our children work towards achieving the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the end of the stage and have a Good Level of Development (GLD). We help them to do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;

- Using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Seeking advice from the school SENDCo and other professionals as needed;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress, and providing support (such as speech therapy) as necessary.
- Writing SEN support plans when necessary following advice given by other professionals.
- Adapting provision when necessary.

7 – Transition

Transition into Nursery

Parents of children due to come into Nursery are contacted prior to their child's third birthday. They are offered a Nursery visit where any information about the child is shared. This is also a chance for the parent and child to look around nursery together. Admission into Nursery takes place on/after the child's third birthday. Parents are encouraged to visit the setting with the child and stay until the child settles. We invite children into the setting one at a time in order to settle them and help them to feel safe and secure. We welcome children into school from other settings at any stage throughout the year. Children are invited to come for a short visit before joining.

Transition into Reception

New Reception parents and their child are invited to attend a transition meeting in the Summer Term to provide them with essential information for the next academic year. During the Summer Term prior to the children starting school the following September, the transition process will include the following:

- Every child will visit their new classroom for at least morning or an afternoon to meet their new teacher. Children will spend regular amounts of time in their new class in the summer term (during their normal Nursery session) in order to ensure they become familiar with staff, routines, and environments before settling into a full-time start.
- The new classroom teacher/s will meet the current staff in order to build a picture of every child as a learner.
- Every child will get the chance to try a school lunch with their parent before starting the new school year.

Transition into Year 1

During the Summer Term, we begin to prepare children for transition into Year 1 and the Key Stage 1 curriculum. We have put provision and opportunities in place to support this transition period. These include:

- Every child attends at least one 'Meet your new teacher' mornings or afternoons during the last week of Reception summer term.
- The children will take part in Opal sessions during the summer term to familiarise themselves with the outdoor area and playtimes.
- They will visit the Year One classroom and outdoor space regularly, with their Reception teacher during the summer term for stories and rhymes.
- A thorough hand-over between teachers ahead of the summer holiday.

- A transition meeting with the EYFS lead, KS1 lead and Reception parents takes place in the Summer Term to inform them of the expectations in Key Stage 1, to meet their new classroom teachers and to answer any questions they may have.

8 – Safeguarding

At Caedmon, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021.

Key Workers

Children are assigned 'Key Workers' during their time in EYFS. Taken from the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021, a Key Worker's role is:
'to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs (in accordance with paragraph 1.16), to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents'.

At Caedmon, teachers and support staff are key workers for the children. These staff members are:

- Miss Beard- Reception teacher
- Miss Hunt – Reception teaching assistant
- Mrs White- Nursery teacher
- Miss Beadle- Nursery teaching assistant

The Key Workers work closely with the children to ensure that they settle well into school and can achieve their full potential. Key workers also foster good relationships with parents and carers.

Keeping Safe

In the Early Years we recognise the importance that all children are 'safe'. Our curriculum and learning environments help children to learn boundaries, rules and limits and aim to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards.

Our PSHE curriculum teaches the children about keeping safe.

The EYFS Phase Leader is also a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Good Health

All children are provided with a healthy snack (fruit) each day. The children are offered milk every day at snack time when they have fruit. All children have access to water.

As part of our Understanding of the World and Physical Development curriculum we cover keeping healthy and making healthy choices, the importance of exercise, the importance of hand washing and looking after our teeth.

Children in Reception are offered a daily healthy school meal under the Universal Infant Free School Meal scheme. Children are encouraged to try different and new foods and we work hard with parents and children to make school lunch time a positive experience.

Children in Reception take part in oral health practices and complete tooth brushing each day after lunchtime play. Staff undertake annual training provided by Tees Community Dental Service for this.

We recognise that some children may struggle with toileting during their time in EYFS. We support and work with parents and their child to toilet train, referring to the School Nurse if appropriate.

Also see the school's 'EYFS Continence and Changing Policy'.

9 - Working in partnership

At Caedmon, we understand the importance and benefits of working in partnership with staff, parents, carers and other professionals and how this has a huge impact on the effectiveness of our EYFS setting.

We value our partnerships and endeavour to actively maintain these by sharing information, ideas, expertise, and our knowledge within our team and with parents, carers, colleagues, and other professionals.

Within our role of enabling partnerships we:

- Meet regularly as an EYFS team to discuss assessments, planning, individual children, research
- Hold regular parent workshops on relevant areas of their children's development e.g. maths, reading, phonics
- Work closely with Steel River Academy Trust (SRAT) moderation groups to share practice and support colleagues across the local area.
- We moderate work with Nursery and Year 1
- Attend moderation meetings with our Trust schools
- Hold regular EYFS Lead meetings with the EYFS Leads from within our Academy Trust to share best practise and to discuss relevant issues.
- Work closely with the school nursing team, health visiting team, speech and language team and social care teams.

9 - The role of parents

We believe that all parents and carers have an important role to play in the education of their child. We therefore recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating their children. We do this through:

- Meeting with and talking to parents before their child starts at Caedmon;
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting when their child starts Nursery and then again when their child starts Reception class;
- Offering parents daily opportunities to talk about their child's progress
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- Offering a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children, school and parents;
- Offering parent consultation meetings.
- Mid-year and end of year reports
- Holding regular opportunities for parents to come into school including; reading picnics, 'Families in School' events, Celebration of Learning Performances and Christmas nativities, writing workshops.