



# Diocese of Coventry Multi Academy Trust



## EARLY YEARS POLICY

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### **Purpose**

This policy has been written to outline the philosophy, aims and principles of early years teaching and learning in Diocese of Coventry Multi Academy Trust. The document is to be used as a guide and framework to support the individual academy settings.

### **Aims**

The early years phase in our Trust secures the foundation for learning, development and care of each individual child to ensure their future personal and academic success.

The aim is to enable every child to fulfil their full potential and that no child will be left behind. All children will be taught the learning behaviours that will be the foundation required for them to succeed in their primary and secondary learning and beyond.

In our early years setting these learning behaviours will be achieved through:-

- High expectations for learning;
- Using assessment information to plan for progress across all areas of learning;
- Clear routines and procedures that help build self-assurance for children;
- Purposeful and challenging experiences;
- An enabling environment;
- Inspiring teaching that will enable the children to display a thirst for knowledge and understanding and a love of learning;
- The formation of a strong partnership with parents/carers;
- An individualised approach to the pastoral care and needs of every child who is unique.

### **Early Years learning phase must:**

- Give the children security and confidence within an atmosphere of respect for others;
- Support and extend knowledge, skills and understanding of the children helping them to overcome any barriers to learning;
- Develop a strong sense of self and high levels of confidence for each child;
- Ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued;
- Work in partnership with parents/carers to support the children's rapid development, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially;
- Work in partnership with multi- agencies including the Early years settings that children have transferred from;

- Build upon what the children already know and can do and extend their interests to encourage a positive attitude towards learning;
- Deliver the curriculum using varied approaches and teaching methods with relevant and appropriate content that matches the different needs of young children;
- Encourage the children to learn for themselves by providing opportunities for them to engage in activities planned by the teacher alongside those that they plan or initiate themselves;
- Allow time for the children to become engrossed, work in depth and complete activities;
- Develop basic skills through well-structured activities.
- Enabling children to take appropriate risks and try new activities.
- Explore Christian Values through play, worship and stories as appropriate for this stage

### **Organisation**

Our Trust follows the curriculum as detailed in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage [September 2021].

### **Admission**

All children must be offered full-time learning in the Early Years setting by the start of the second full week of the academy year in September.

Home visits are an essential part of the transition period so that staff can fully understand the relationship between the child and the parent/carer and build on this aspect of the child's learning, as well as any pre-school experiences that the child has received. Staff will do home visits in pairs. The recommendation is that home visits be completed before the child starts at the academy; however, this is not always possible, so all home visits must have taken place by the beginning of the third full week in September.

### **Inclusion/Equal Opportunities (Including SEND)**

Children will be taught to respect the cultural and religious differences and abilities of all the children and their families and to recognise feelings involving other people. When appropriate, advice and guidance will be sought from outside agencies and professionals to support individual children. No child will be excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability. The staff will differentiate the work to meet the abilities and aptitudes of the children, offering support and extension work as required. In the case of children with special needs or disability, reference must be made to the SEND Policy.

All children will be given equal access to and are encouraged to participate in all curriculum activities.

### **Baseline and on-going assessment**

Baseline assessments across all areas of learning must be carried out and moderated by at least one other Trust Academy by the end of September.

The Diocese of Coventry Multi Academy trust has agreed to judge typical achievement on entry as 'beginning Reception'. This will be based on evidence from the National baseline Assessment which is completed as soon as possible when children start Reception.

Assessment is an ongoing process and the checkpoints shown below were agreed at a MAT EYFS leads meeting to give some reference points throughout the year.

Half termly phonics assessments also occur in line with our chosen Phonics Programme.

The progression and development of all the children will be monitored and aligned to the Trust’s assessment calendar and procedures.

We expect in our MAT that checkpoints will be reviewed by the school every term and that at the end of each term, EYFS data is included in the end of term academy review with the DSIP and other parties such as LA LIO’s or Governors. Schools can present this data in their chosen format though as a MAT, we highly recommend academies use an electronic system of recording and analysing data to be able to identify the progress of groups of pupils quickly. We also expect headline data to be provided for the MAT board twice a year (Autumn and Spring).

<b>EYFS – Pupil Achievement Data</b> <i>(in-year tracking using average prime areas)</i>					
Academic Year	On Entry	End of Autumn	End of Spring	End of Summer	Year Target
% Below					
% At					
% Above					

This format provides a useful overview for SLT and Governors to track progress headlines. However, similar information will need to be provided for groups of pupils in the cohort. In school tracking should show jumps each pupil makes in each area of learning across the year.

**Learning in the Early Years**

The early years phase must provide the potential for learning in every activity and situation that arises. The aim is to provide a secure and stimulating environment in which children flourish and learn to make sense of the real world. Children will feel valued and in turn this gives them the confidence to become active learners. The activities devised must provide first hand experiences through learning and discussion where children are encouraged to interact with their peers, to move with purpose and explore a wide variety of learning situations. To facilitate this there must be well-planned and clearly defined areas of provision and a wide range of activities, resources and materials available supported by adults modelling the learning. These are non-negotiable in our Trust. Opportunities must be provided for sustained activity, as well as spontaneous, self-chosen activities. Therefore, to support this there must be learning environments that are language rich in order to stimulate the children to develop good speech and language and communication skills. This will ensure that the children will become skilful and confident communicators.

Every child within the setting is entitled to quality teaching and learning that includes taught learning behaviours to ensure that at the end of the early years phase they will be school ready. The ‘Characteristics of learning’ are central to ensuring that quality teaching and learning is taking place. These underpin learning and development across all of the prime and specific areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

Each staff member will ensure that all children will receive valuable adult time and that there are effective interactions between children and adults which upgrade their quality of play and learning.

Children will be taught daily systematic, synthetic phonics following a programme of the school’s choice. Home reading books will reflect the phonics phase that the child is currently working on.

Letter and numeral shapes will be taught and practised with correct posture and pencil grip with further opportunities to explore letter and numeral shapes through multi-sensory activities.

Number skills will be explicitly taught daily in order to provide children with the skills they need to achieve the number early learning goal.

### Our Trust Non-Negotiables in Early Years

The enabling environment provides stimulating resources which are accessible and open-ended so that they can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways. The list below is a guide of the resources examples for areas which are purposeful, readable and enable our children to be independent in their learning.

All examples of children’s work will be captured in an individual maths and writing/English book to ensure that progress from the baseline for every child is clearly visible.

### Learning Behaviours

These must be intentionally taught and modelled so that they will stand each child in good stead for their future. These behaviours must focus on the ability to actively listen, take turns, learn appropriate behaviour for all contexts, take risks, understand failure, adopt a growth mindset, follow direct instructions, show respect to self, others and the environment.

### School Ready

Defining what school readiness means is an essential factor in ensuring that children can be well prepared for starting school, which is defined as Year one.

The details on the next page are set out as a guide as to what children should be able to do in order to be ready to begin Year one.

Communication and Language	Baseline Checkpoint	End of Autumn Term Checkpoint	End of Spring Term Checkpoint	End of EYFS Checkpoint
<b>Listening, Attention and Understanding</b>	Follows a series of instructions. Listens to stories and can recall the main events. Contributes sensible comments to discussions and conversations.	Listens carefully at story time and can retain what has been heard and recall key points. Responds to a series of instructions and responds to a range of questions. Contributes relevant comments in discussions.	Can switch attention from one task to another. Follows complex instructions. Responds to discussion with comments and questions. Is able to listen in whole school Collective Worship and recall some of the themes and comments at a later stage.	Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions. Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding. Hold conversations when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

<b>Speaking</b>	Engages in conversation with adults and peers. Uses plurals and some tenses correctly. Can ask questions.	Communicates confidently with peers and adults. Uses talks to communicate needs, news, feelings and ideas. Uses new vocabulary.	Enjoys being part of conversations and discussions and uses new vocabulary in context. Uses talk in different ways, in imaginative play, to develop thinking, to collaborate and plan with others and to express ideas.	Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary. Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate. Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.
<b>Personal, Social and Emotional Development</b>	<b>Baseline Checkpoint</b>	<b>End of Autumn Term Checkpoint</b>	<b>End of Spring Term Checkpoint</b>	<b>End of EYFS Checkpoint</b>
<b>Self-Regulation</b>	Can focus attention in a group situation for a short period of time and can follow a series of instructions. Is able to talk about feelings in simple terms, e.g. happy and sad, and give reasons if upset.	Can become engrossed in an activity and finds it difficult to switch attention to another task. Can identify a wider range of feelings, e.g. scared, excited, angry, frustrated, nervous, worried and joyful. Can focus attention in a whole class group for a teaching session, e.g. phonics.	Can label and talk about own and others' emotions. Responds well to more complex instructions in smaller groups, but can need visual reminders in larger groups. Completes set challenges/tasks independently. Is able to talk about ways that skills can be improved and to demonstrate pride in achievements.	Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly. Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate.

		Is willing to keep trying if something is difficult or challenging.		Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in an activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.
<b>Managing Self</b>	Confident to access the environment with minimal support and follows the rules as part of the new routine. Reliably toilet trained and just needs some reminders to wash hands and help with fastenings.	Makes independent choices and is confident to try new things although prefers to choose activities that are within their capability. Perseveres with fastenings on coats and follows instructions to dress and undress for PE and Forest School. Washes hands without reminders.	More confident to tackle new challenges and with encouragement will keep going. Follows school and class rules and can talk about their importance. Knows some ways to keep healthy.	Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge. Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly. Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.
<b>Building Relationships</b>	Can play with other children as part of a game or activity, without adult support. Can take turns and share sometimes with adult support. Makes new friends in the class, and talks to adults to share news or as part of an activity.	Is aware of the needs of others but can find it hard to let others take the lead. Interacts with a variety of children and is building good relationships with adults and other children. Is able to identify when another child is upset and respond appropriately.	Can cooperate with others, listening and sharing some ideas and will listen to advice about how to solve disagreements. Uses words to solve conflicts. Takes turns in group activities. Identifies how others feel and responds appropriately.	Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others. Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers. Show sensitivity to their own and others' needs.
<b>Physical Development</b>	<b>Baseline Checkpoint</b>	<b>End of Autumn Term Checkpoint</b>	<b>End of Spring Term Checkpoint</b>	<b>End of EYFS Checkpoint</b>

Gross Motor Skills	<p>Has good coordination and balance when negotiating equipment and other people. Is able to tackle parts of the climbing frame, e.g. low climbing wall, steps, ladder.</p> <p>Uses trikes and scooters confidently.</p> <p>Uses brooms to brush and spades to dig in sand and soil.</p>	<p>Uses a range of ways to move appropriately, e.g. jumping, hopping, sliding.</p> <p>Can climb over, under and through obstacles, e.g. climbing frame and large construction obstacle courses.</p> <p>Uses large construction to build.</p>	<p>Can throw, kick, pass and catch a large ball.</p> <p>Able to balance on and off equipment.</p> <p>Can jump safely from a piece of equipment.</p>	<p>Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others.</p> <p>Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing.</p> <p>Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.</p>
Fine Motor Skills	<p>Can use scissors to make snips and cut lines, holding scissors in one hand.</p> <p>Can copy some recognisable letter shapes from name.</p> <p>Holds pencil in fingers rather than a whole hand grasp.</p> <p>Shows a preference for a dominant hand.</p> <p>Uses drawing equipment to draw a figure (this may be simply a circle with stick arms and legs).</p>	<p>Attempts to use a tripod grip with some consistency. Often chooses to draw, representing recognisable objects or shapes in work.</p> <p>Use scissors to cut along curved lines, holding scissors in the correct position.</p> <p>Is able to mould and shape clay with fingers and tools.</p>	<p>Sits at a table to write.</p> <p>Holds a pencil in a tripod grip.</p> <p>Uses scissors to cut around more complex shapes, e.g. split pin characters.</p>	<p>Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases.</p> <p>Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery.</p> <p>Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.</p>
Literacy	<b>Baseline Checkpoint</b>	<b>End of Autumn Term Checkpoint</b>	<b>End of Spring Term Checkpoint</b>	<b>End of EYFS Checkpoint</b>
Comprehension	<p>Enjoys listening to stories and retell a simple story using story vocabulary using visual clues, e.g. talking through a familiar book.</p>	<p>Has a love of stories and listens attentively to story time.</p> <p>Enjoys talking to others about favourite stories.</p> <p>Is able to talk about the main events in the story and</p>	<p>Has a good understanding of story structure and can retell and make up own stories using vocabulary that has been learnt.</p>	<p>Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently</p>

	Joins in with familiar rhymes and songs.	predict what might happen. Can retell a story using role play or small world resources, using some story language.	Identifies non-fiction texts, remembering facts.	introduced vocabulary. Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories. Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.
Word Reading	Can discriminate between sounds. Can keep a simple rhythm and match rhyming words. Is able to recognise own name. Can say the initial sound in a word. Can orally blend some simple cvc words.	Can match Phase 2 graphemes and phonemes. Can blend and read Phase 2 cvc words. Can read Phase 2 captions. Can read Phase 2 tricky words.	Reads books with a range of Phase 2 and 3 cvc words and tricky words and shows a good understanding of what has been read. Reads all Phase 2 and 3 tricky words. Says the sound for each Phase 2 and 3 grapheme.	Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs. Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending. Reading aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.
Writing	Can say the initial sound in a word. Uses some recognisable letter shapes when writing own name. Can orally segment some simple cvc words.	Can segment and spell Phase 2 cvc words. Can match Phase 2 graphemes and phonemes. Writes cvc words and labels. Is starting to write simple captions. Says a simple sentence for writing (oral and count words). Writes some lower case letters correctly. Uses some upper case letters, e.g. for own name, Mum and Dad.	Writes some upper case letters correctly. Writes most lower case letters correctly using a tripod grip. Says the sound for each Phase 2 and 3 grapheme. Writes cvc words and labels using Phase 2 and 3 phonemes. Spells some tricky words. Write captions. Is starting to write short sentences. Uses finger spacing between words.	Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters. Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

			Reads sentences back to an adult.	
Mathematics	Baseline Checkpoint	End of Autumn Term Checkpoint	End of Spring Term Checkpoint	End of EYFS Checkpoint
Number	Have a good understanding of numbers to 5 and knows that the amount stays the same however objects are arranged. Rote counts to 10 and subitises to 3.	Can subitise to 5 and is beginning to talk about the different ways that amounts of 5 can be made.	Developing sense of numbers beyond 5 and can subitise to 6. Confidently talks about the different ways that numbers can be made to 5 and is now applying this knowledge to numbers to 10. Links subtraction facts to composition of numbers to 5. Recalls some double facts to 10.	Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number. Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5. Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.
Numerical Patterns	Compares amounts using the language of 'more'. Reads numerals to 5 and matches to an amount. Orders numbers to 5.	Counts objects accurately to 10 using one to one correspondence and can identify when objects have the same, less than or more than. Recognises numbers to 10 and puts them in order.	Can count beyond 10 and is starting to recognise the pattern of the counting system to help count beyond 10. Recognises patterns within number.	Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system. Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity.
Shape, Space and Measure	Uses some everyday language to talk about and compare size and shape. Recognises a repeated pattern and is beginning to create own patterns and arrangements.	Uses some shape names appropriately and understands prepositional language. Creates a repeated pattern with colour and shape.	Uses mathematical language to compare and talk about shape and size.	Has a developed range of mathematical language to describe and compare size, shape, length, weight and position.

Understanding of the World	Baseline Checkpoint	End of Autumn Term Checkpoint	End of Spring Term Checkpoint	End of EYFS Checkpoint
<b>Past and Present</b>	Talks in detail about family, identifies relationships within the family and recognises the difference between self now and as a baby.	Understands the difference between past and present and is building up knowledge of key historical events through topics, stories and community events, e.g. Bonfire Night, Remembrance Day.	Talks about significant historical events and how things were different in the past.	Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society. Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their own experiences and what has been read in class. Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.
<b>People, Culture and Communities</b>	Talks about the world around and the people are places that are familiar.	Listens carefully to stories about different places and is beginning to recognise that different places have different features, e.g. recognising the difference between life in this country and other countries. Knows about some celebrations and is able to talk about how they might be celebrated, e.g. Christmas, Advent, Diwali. Knows that Collective Worship is part of the life of the school community.	Has a wider understanding of the wider world and draws comparisons between own local environment and other places. Looks at, and makes maps, of local environment. Describes a journey within the local environment. Talks about some features of a Christian Church and knows that the school is connected to the churches in Moseley.	Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observations, discussions, stories, non-fiction texts and maps. Know some similarities between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and –

				when appropriate – maps.
<b>The Natural World</b>	Explores the natural world and talk about out the things that are noticed. Recognises change and can describe what is happening.	Describes some features of plants and animals and identifies when things are the same and different. Notices, observes and talks about seasonal changes.	Has a good general knowledge about living things and the natural world and can describe features of different plants and animals recognising when they are the same and different. Understands and uses some language related to animals, e.g. camouflage, predator, nocturnal, diurnal.	Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants. Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.
<b>Expressive Arts and Design</b>	<b>Baseline Checkpoint</b>	<b>End of Autumn Term Checkpoint</b>	<b>End of Spring Term Checkpoint</b>	<b>End of EYFS Checkpoint</b>
<b>Creating with Materials</b>	Uses a range of different techniques and variety of materials, e.g. paint, collage. Can cut continuously with scissors to make lines or snips and uses a paintbrush to form lines and circles. Uses drawing materials to create pictures with a range of lines and shapes.	Makes some independent choices about the resources needed and talks about creations. Uses different textures in creations and will combine media. Cuts along curved lines with scissors and uses moulding tools with malleable materials. Uses a range of shapes and colours to represent	Uses different techniques and materials to achieve the desired effect and can talk about what has been created. Mixes colours to produce different shades and combines materials to create different textures. Is beginning to plan a design before starting. Uses a range of tools and equipment and selects the most	Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function Share their creations, explaining the processes they have used Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narrative and stories

		observational drawings.	appropriate tool or joining material for the job.	
<b>Being Imaginative and Expressive</b>	Experiments with a range of percussion instruments. Joins in with singing in a familiar group. Accesses role play and small world resources, sometimes playing with others to develop storylines.	Plays alongside others to develop storylines in role play or small world. Sings familiar songs. Rehearses for, and performs in, the nativity play. Moves in response to music.	Plays a range of percussion instruments and glockenspiel. Uses instruments to compose own music. Along with others, collects resources to develop own role play storylines.	Invent, adapt and recount narrative and stories with peers and their teachers Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music

### Outdoor Education in the Early Years

Opportunities to learn outdoors are essential for the development of all children. The outdoors offer experiences and provocations that cannot be replicated anywhere else. All strands of learning can be developed through both planned and child-initiated play. All academies must offer children a sustained time outdoors to play and develop their learning. This is imperative for the vital development of the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' To ensure that this learning takes place all year round children need to have access to appropriate clothing such as wellington boots and waterproofs for inclement weather.

Outdoor learning contributes to and promotes a positive response to personal health, safety and well-being. It helps children gain an awareness of the need for sustainable relationships between people and the environment and encourages the growth of self-esteem, cooperation with others and personal responsibility.

In our Trust Early Years setting the outdoor area must:

- Give children the freedom to explore, use their senses and be physically active. Provide opportunities for large mark making and writing and include writing resources such as chalks, paintbrushes with water, pencils and clipboards. Reading opportunities in the forms of signs, labels and simple stories and sequences.
- Provide opportunities for mathematical development such as opportunities for counting natural objects, comparing of length and weight with real life objects such as sticks and stones. Be able to solve problems using mathematical knowledge and understanding.
- Include a quiet area for activities such as reading and observation.
- Provide opportunities for large scale construction and gross-motor development through sports equipment and other open-ended resources.
- Include an area for sensory mud/water play ideally a 'mud kitchen' with free access to water.

In our Trust, it is recommended that children must be involved in **purposeful** physical learning for 25% of the day.

### **Training/Professional Development**

The early years staff are supported and encouraged to continue their development and the aim is that all early years' teachers and support staff, through training and experience, will observe and respond appropriately to the children, building upon their knowledge and understanding of how children develop and learn. Inter and intra school moderation should be undertaken regularly with the EYFS leader and teachers accessing any available LA training to ensure rigorous procedures to produce reliable end of year data.

### **Health and Safety**

Priority will be given to children's safety at all times. The teacher will be responsible for teaching and implementing safety rules and practices as referenced in the academy's Health and Safety Policy, including use of mobile phones and storage of images via electronic assessment systems and Learning Journals. Each setting must have named and trained Paediatric first aiders.

### **Academy Procedure and Accountability**

The EYFS leader is responsible for the daily implementation of this policy.

The Academy Head teachers and Local Governing Body hold delegated responsibility for discharging sound application of this policy.

### **Policy Status**

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. The MAT, SLT, EYFS team or LGB may suggest modifications to the policy following evaluation of impact and usefulness.

### **Appendix 1**

The person/s responsible for the Early Years is/are:

Name Rebecca Richards (Head of School)  
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#### **EYFS team:**

Name Karen Burnett (Monday – Wednesday lunchtime)  
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Name Gemma Townend (Wednesday lunchtime – Friday)  
Email [school.office@longitchington.covmat.org](mailto:school.office@longitchington.covmat.org) (fao Mrs Townend)