

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth up until the summer after their fifth birthday. The foundation stage unit at Cheetwood Primary School can facilitate up to 56 pupils, 26 pupils in Foundation Stage 1 (nursery) and 30 pupils in Foundation Stage 2 (reception). The unit is staffed by two teachers and four full time teaching assistants.

A rich and stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environment is provided. The children have access to all areas and are supported by careful planning and organisation of staff and resources to enrich their learning.

In EYFS we follow a statutory framework that sets out the learning, development and assessments for children aged birth to 5.

The government recently changed the statutory framework and the non-statutory guidance called Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which supports practitioners in implementing the statutory requirements. These changes became statutory for all early years settings in September 2021. Last year the government offered schools the chance to adopt the framework one year early and as a result Cheetwood took up this offer and became an 'Early Adopter' school in order to begin planning and teaching towards the new Early Learning Goals.

The ***characteristics of effective teaching and learning*** are a key element in the early years' foundation stage and detail the ways in which children learn from their environment, experiences and activities. The characteristics of effective learning are split into three main areas:

- **Playing and exploring** which focuses on how children will be learning to explore and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **Active learning** which focuses on how children will be learning to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements
- **Creating and thinking critically** which focuses on how children will be learning to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

There are also four themes within the EYFS which underpin all of the guidance set out for the care and education of the children. These themes are:

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

The children's learning is divided into seven areas of learning and development under two headings: the ***prime areas*** and the ***specific areas***.

The ***prime areas*** are personal, social and emotional development, physical development and communication and language. The ***specific areas*** are literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive art and design. Within the EYFS the children learn through well planned, structured play, targeted activities, child initiated learning and adult led activities.

Every child's progress is tracked throughout the year using different forms of on-going assessment. We firmly believe that parents and carers have a primary role to play within the care and education of their children and we value and support this.

At the end of each key stage in education there are statutory assessments, the results of which have to be reported to the Local Authority and the Department for Education, this includes the EYFS.

At the end of reception, as children are about to move from the EYFS into Y1, they are assessed on the EYFS profile. For further information on assessment in the EYFS please refer to the assessment page of the website.