
Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



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Chair of Governors Initials

Introduction

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DfE March 2017

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) usually applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception Year. Children join either in the Nursery, after their third birthday or in Reception at the beginning of the school year in which they turn five. The EYFS is recognised as an important phase of a child's life as it lays out a secure foundation and prepares children for future learning.

We support and adhere to the United Nations Rights of the Child. For example:

Article 28: All children have the right to a primary education, which should be free

Article 29: Children's education should develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest. It should encourage children to respect others, human rights and their own and other cultures. It should also help them learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.

Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- 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 and parents and/or carers; and
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**, including children with special educational needs and disabilities. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in the setting and practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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; and
 3. **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Aims

- To give each child a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to foster a love of learning
- Provide a high quality and consistent programme which ensures that all children make good progress
- Provide a safe, stimulating and caring environment that is sensitive to the needs of all children
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum with experiences created to respond to assessed individual needs
- Support children in building relationships through personal and social development
- Enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self confidence
- Provide opportunities for children to experience challenge and manage risk
- Positively nurture the partnership between home and school, acknowledging the personal contexts of children's families, cultures and communities.

Learning and Development

Planning and provision are informed by the best available evidence on how children learn and reflect the broad range of skills, knowledge and attitudes children need as foundations for good future progress. Practitioners consider the development of children's capabilities with a view to ensuring that they complete the EYFS, ready to benefit fully from the opportunities ahead of them. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply as preparation for the next stage in education.

The curriculum is planned to ensure children develop physically, linguistically, intellectually and emotionally. It builds on what children already know and can do and inspires a confident disposition to learning through relevant, meaningful, imaginative, challenging and enjoyable experiences. Clear and careful planning enables the organisation of learning for the development of the whole child- including their physical, intellectual, social, linguistic and emotional needs.

Planning ensures that all children make progress in learning based on steps towards the early learning goals. Planning is based on direct observations of children's interests and play.

Our communities are culturally and linguistically diverse. Reasonable steps are taken to ensure that opportunities are provided for children to use and develop their home language as well as providing good opportunities to develop their vocabulary and skills in English. When assessing communication, language and literacy skills, practitioners must assess children's skills in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of the English language, practitioners must explore the child's skills in the home language with parents/carers, to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay.

There are seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the *prime* areas, are:

1. Communication and language (Listening and attention, Understanding, Speaking);
2. Physical development (Moving and handling, Health and self-care - including guidance on physical activity); and
3. Personal, social and emotional development (Self-confidence and self-awareness, Managing feelings and behaviour, Making relationships).

These areas are a focus in both Nursery and Reception but have a particular emphasis for the youngest children as they form the basis for successful learning in the specific areas.

The Prime areas are reported on by the end of Nursery and Reception.

The four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied, are:

1. Literacy (Reading and Writing);
2. Mathematics (Numbers and Shape, space and measures);
3. Understanding the world (The world and Technology);
4. Expressive arts and design (Exploring and using media and materials and Being imaginative).

The balance shifts towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the prime areas.

The specific areas are reported on by the end of Reception.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult led and child initiated activity.

Play

Play is essential for children's development. Through play, in a secure environment with effective adult support, children can:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world
- Enjoy learning
- Practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules
- Be alone, be alongside others or cooperate as they talk or rehearse their feelings
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems
- Express fears or relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

The role of the practitioner is crucial in:

- Supporting children's learning through planned play activity
- Extending and supporting children's spontaneous play
- Developing children's language and communication in their play.
- Observing children and adapting provision
- Providing warm, positive interaction

Outdoor Play

Outdoor space and resources can promote playing and exploring, active learning and creativity, critical thinking and problem solving. Movement is a child's most natural form of expression and should be an essential part of their everyday experience.

The opportunity to play outside throughout the year, in all weather, is as important as playing inside. Learning that happens indoors can be provided on a larger scale outside. For many children, the learning that happens outdoors is the most significant.

There is an expectation that children will have access to outdoor play every day – all year round. It is therefore an expectation that children attend school in clothing appropriate for the weather conditions. Children have access to ponchos and wellington boots during wet weather.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

The Early Learning Goals

The level of progress children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the early learning goals. These are outlined in pupils' individual profiles.

Assessment

The assessment system is the cornerstone for ensuring the provision in the EYFS is of high quality and appropriate for all children. Practitioners observe children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles and then shape learning experiences in light of the observations.

A baseline assessment is undertaken when children enter the Nursery and Reception classes to determine each child's developmental starting point.

To ensure that we have evidence of a child's progress and can effectively plan next steps, we use a range of strategies and tools including anecdotal notes, photographs and detailed observations to build a complete picture of achievement. This information is summarised in each child's profile and special book. Parents/carers are invited to share and contribute to special books on a regular basis. Achievement against the criteria in the EYFS profile is shared with parents/carers at least termly.

Assessment at the End of EYFS

The EYFS profile is completed for each child by the end of June in the Reception year. The profile provides information about each child's knowledge, understanding, abilities against expected levels and readiness for Year 1. This assessment is completed against the criteria set out in the Early Learning Goals. Practitioners must assess whether a child has met or exceeded expected levels or whether they have not yet met the expected level (emerging). Profiles are completed for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities with reasonable adjustments made as necessary.

Results from the profile are shared with parents/carers who are provided with an opportunity to discuss the outcomes.

Profiles and additional commentary on characteristics of learning are shared with Year 1 teachers to inform planning and preparation for entry to KS1.

Outcomes from the EYFS profile must be reported to the local authority which then has a duty to return this data to the relevant Government department.

The local authority conducts moderation of the profiles regularly, on a rotational basis, with each school in its catchment.

Safeguarding and Welfare

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. Practitioners need to take the necessary steps to keep children safe and well. The schools' Safeguarding in Schools policy provides detailed guidance and information about safeguarding procedures and responsibilities. A member of staff acts as the Designated Safeguarding Lead in each school.

Child Protection

All practitioners are alert to signs of possible abuse and neglect. Practitioners are trained to understand the schools' Safeguarding in Schools policy and receive annual training in local or topical issues including radicalisation and FGM. All practitioners are required to read and understand at least Part 1 of the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' document.

Staff sign the schools' Acceptable Use Agreement which includes: *I will not use personal digital cameras or camera phones for taking and transferring images of pupils or staff without permission and will not store images at home without permission.*

Practitioners do however use ipads, cameras and other recording devices which are registered to the school to record evidence of children's learning. Many of these are used in children's special books and profiles, class displays and on the schools' websites. All parents/carers are asked for permission to take and use pupil images on admission to school.

Children will only be released from school into the care of adults for whom parental consent is given. Parents/carers are asked to inform the school office of these adults and update as necessary.

Suitable People

All practitioners and volunteers who work in the EYFS have been subject to the relevant checks before working in the setting. Children are taught by qualified teachers and Early Years Practitioners (EYP) who hold an appropriate qualification.

Key Worker

A key worker is a member of staff in an Early Years Foundation Stage who has special responsibility for the education and welfare of a particular group of children during their time at the setting. Every child is assigned a key worker. Their role is to ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual

needs, to become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents.

Ratios

Our schools adhere to the ratios as directed in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' March 2017.

Health

Medical Conditions

The schools promote the good health of children attending the settings by encouraging healthy practices in everyday life.

The policy on *Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions* should be read alongside this policy as it provides a detailed description of procedures which are followed in event of required medical support for individual pupils.

Medication can only be administered to a pupil if it has been prescribed for the child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist. The parents are required to complete a medical form detailing the arrangements for how the medication is to be administered.

Healthy Eating

- Healthy eating is promoted as part of the curriculum.
- Drinking water is available to the children at all times and milk is available in Nursery.
- Parents/carers are asked to inform school about children's dietary needs and any allergies
- Children should be involved in selecting and preparing healthy, balanced and nutritious snacks and drinks. Snacks are prepared in suitable and hygienic facilities.
- Parents/carers in the first instance are recommended school dinners as a healthy lunch option for their child. If selecting a packed lunch parent/carers are informed about what constitutes a healthy packed lunch i.e. wholegrain sandwiches fruit, cheese and vegetables; sweets, sugary drinks, chocolates and crisps are strongly discouraged.

Protecting Children from the Sun

- Parents/carers are strongly encouraged to provide children with sun hats and sun screen (applied before school) and protective clothing during the summer months.
- Areas of shade are provided and children are encouraged to play in them

Accident or Injury

- First Aid equipment is accessible at all times.
- At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate is onsite and available at all times children are present and a staff member holding this certificate will accompany outings offsite.
- A record is kept of accidents and injuries and the first aid treatment applied.
- Parents/carers are notified about accidents or injuries on the same day as, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, and of any first aid treatment given.

Intimate Care

- Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. Some children may need some support, for example, dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear and clothes following an accident.
- It is expected that the vast majority of children are able to independently use a toilet by the time they enter the Nursery and all children are expected to start school without nappies. The school will support children and families who are yet to reach this stage of development.
- Parents/carers should inform the school of children likely to require intimate care and agree a protocol with the school about how this care will be managed. The same procedure will be followed if staff identify a need of this nature.

- Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that home and school work in partnership to give the right support to an individual child.

Managing Behaviour

Positive behaviour management strategies are employed throughout the EYFS to support children's social development. Where specific issues become apparent, staff will discuss the concern with parents/carers and develop a plan to promote positive behaviour choices. Behaviour management plans are most successful when home and school work in partnership to implement them consistently.

The Executive Head Teacher may revoke a placement in non-statutory provision e.g. nursery, in circumstances where a child's behaviour is not manageable in the setting.

Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment

The setting provides a range of furniture, equipment and materials that will meet the varying needs of children. Practitioners continuously review and develop the resources available, with consideration of the principles of the EYFS. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure staff and children are not exposed to risks and those which may present are effectively managed. Where appropriate or necessary a written risk assessment may be made.

- The EYFS premises are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of the children attending the setting.
- Emergency procedures are in place, in line with the schools' Health and Safety policy
- The building and grounds are kept secure at all times
- Smoking is not permitted on the schools' premises
- Health and Safety checks are carried out daily, indoors and outdoors, to ensure the premises are maintained in a suitable state of repair and decoration
- Toys and equipment comply with safety standards and are routinely cleaned and checked for damage before and after use
- Fixed apparatus, large equipment and wheeled toys are checked and maintained regularly
- Practitioners regularly review, through risk assessments, the resources available to assess their value and develop the quality of activities and materials available
- The variety of equipment, books and resources promotes positive images of all children and families using the school and the local community
- Children have sufficient choice and quantity of equipment to allow them to develop their own ideas
- Suitable storage facilities are provided so equipment can be accessed by children and tidied away after use

Outings

- Educational visits and outings are a valuable resource to support learning and enrich the curriculum
- All visits are planned and risk assessments are completed prior to each visit
- Parental support is requested on most visits to ensure adequate supervision ratios

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

When a concern is raised, by either parents or school staff, in relation to Special Educational Needs (SEN), observation, assessment and additional support are provided as appropriate. If following intervention, a Special Educational Need is considered likely, a referral is made to the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) who will ensure further referrals or support as required.

If a child enters the setting with an already identified/diagnosed SEN, arrangements will be made as soon as possible and often before admission to ensure continuity of support and a smooth transition. Parents/carers are key partners in the planning and arrangements for the child.

Information and Records

Practitioners keep records on children to:

- Ensure identification, contact details, parental responsibility information is accurate
- Find out about children as individuals leading to a deeper understanding of different learning styles, interests and developmental levels
- Share children's learning with their parents/carers and enable parents/carers to contribute to the assessment process
- Allow children to be involved in their own assessments
- Monitor progress
- Inform curriculum planning
- Enable staff to evaluate and adapt provision
- Provide a focus for communication with others including practitioners, parents/carers, SLT, Ofsted Inspectors and Local Authority colleagues

Records are stored so that they are easily accessible to staff to share with a child's parents. Confidential information is stored securely. Staff are sensitive to issues of confidentiality.

The schools provide information for parents/carers on a range of topics including

- How the EYFS is being delivered and where to find more information
- The range and types of activities and experiences provided for children
- How children with SEN are supported
- Food and drinks provided for children
- Details of policies and procedures
- Key staff and communication protocols

Partnership with Parents and Carers

Children benefit most from Early Years Education and care when parents, settings and services work together in partnership. Practitioners work in partnership with parents, carers and external agencies to meet the needs of the children and families, both individually and as a group.

The Early Years settings aim to achieve this by:

- Conducting home visits to families prior to admission (September entry) to enable children to meet key staff in the familiarity of their own home
- Ensuring that arrangements for settling in are flexible enough to give time for children to become secure and for practitioners, parents and carers to discuss each child's experiences, interests, skills and needs
- Encouraging parents/carers to share information regarding the family background and culture. The knowledge and expertise of parents/carers and other family members is used to support the learning opportunities provided by the setting
- Providing a variety of formal and informal opportunities for parents and carers to meet practitioners/key workers on a regular basis to ensure that they are fully informed about their child's progress e.g. Open Evenings, Special Books, informal meetings
- Encourage all parents/carers to contribute to and participate in activities in the school
- Parents/carers are encouraged to work in partnership with the EYFS team to teach their child to show respect and care for resources in the setting. Damage to resources incurred because of intentional misuse must be addressed with the parent/carer by the class teacher in the first instance and then reported to the appropriate school leader.

Transition

Practitioners will aim to:

Ensure a smooth transition for children from Nursery to Reception and Reception to Year 1.

Smooth transitions are supported by:

1. Effective communication between teachers on each side of the transition
 - Transition meetings between relevant staff take place in the Summer Term to share information about each child's learning and development.
2. Parental engagement
 - Home visits for new families to the settings
 - Welcome packs given to all parents to inform them about the setting and key information they need to know to support their child
 - Open days to invite parents into the setting, to meet the staff and address any questions they may have
 - Parent information meetings before the start of Reception
 - Consultations with parents/carers about the best way to settle their child into a new environment
3. Familiarity
 - Visits to the new setting
 - Visits from staff to setting
 - Taking part in whole school activities such as singing assembly (Reception-Y1)
 - Reception children join lunch-time and play times on the school playground
4. Focus on both continuity and progression
 - Sharing of personal information about the child e.g. What is their preferred name, likes/dislikes etc.
 - Shared understanding of the EYFS and National Curriculum.
 - Clear communication between staff, particularly Reception and Year 1 practitioners, to ensure that levels of progress and attainment are moderated and next steps planning appropriately meets pupil needs.

Complaints

Should pupils or their parents/carers be dissatisfied they should discuss their concerns with the school following the communication procedure (details available on the schools' websites). If, for whatever reason, this does not resolve the issue, they may make a formal complaint following the Complaints Procedure which is available on the schools' websites or in hard copy from the school office.

Documents working alongside the EYFS Policy:

- ✓ Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage March 2017
- ✓ Development Matters
- ✓ Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy
- ✓ Safeguarding in Schools policy
- ✓ What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused
- ✓ Equality Policy
- ✓ Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy and SEN Information Report
- ✓ Positive Behaviour policy
- ✓ E Safety protocol
- ✓ Acceptable Use Agreement
- ✓ Health and Safety Policy
- ✓ Physical Activity Guidance
- ✓ Educational Visits Policy
- ✓ Complaints Procedure