

Early Years Policy

Version	1
Created	October 2021
Approved by Governors	June 2022
Review Cycle	1 Year
Next Review	June 2023
Source	DJT/SM

This policy is a working document and is related to the following legislation:

- Childcare Act 2016
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2011
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015
- 2021 EYFSP handbook

'The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early year's providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.' (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE))

Introduction

We recognise that early years' education is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives. This policy therefore acknowledges the role of parents and carers as the child's first educators and affirms the values of continuing parental involvement in education.

The EYFS, which refers to children from birth to five years of age, is based upon the following four principles:

- **a unique child**
- **positive relationships**
- **enabling environments**
- **learning and development**

It seeks to provide:

- **quality and consistency**
- **a secure foundation**
- **partnership working**
- **equality of opportunity**

The Early Years education we offer to our children, is based upon the principles set out in the DfE EYFS Statutory Framework September 2021

Principles:

- 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 have a major impact on their future life chances.
- The curriculum should promote teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and give children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

Children joining school do so with varied experiences, but whatever their prior learning, for all children within the EYFS we have a duty to:

- shape activities and experiences (learning and development)
- help children work towards acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding (Early Learning Goals - ELGs)
- provide assessment arrangements for measuring progress
- report to parents on their children's progress
- safeguard children and promote their welfare

Curriculum

The curriculum is planned in accordance with EYFS guidance in seven areas of learning and is based on agreed opportunities for learning appropriate to the development of young children. We believe that the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile should be used as a guide to inform our practice rather than to define what we teach.

Areas of learning

The areas of learning are divided into prime and specific.

Prime Areas of Learning

These begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas. The prime areas continue to be fundamental throughout the EYFS.

They consist of -

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication and language
- Physical development

The prime areas of learning are a key focus throughout the pre-school year in order to develop firm foundations. These are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. It is very important for children to develop the three prime areas first as they are most essential for a child's healthy development and future learning. This then enables the children to progress on to the specific areas of learning within their Reception year.

Early Learning Goals - the Prime Areas	
Communication and language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Listening, Attention and Understanding ▪ Speaking
Physical development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gross Motor Skills ▪ Fine Motor Skills
Personal, social and emotional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-Regulation ▪ Managing Self ▪ Building Relationships

Specific Areas of Learning

These include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas, and provide important contexts for learning.

They consist of -

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

Early Learning Goals - the Specific Areas	
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comprehension ▪ Word Reading ▪ Writing
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number ▪ Numerical Patterns
Understanding the world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Past and Present ▪ People, Culture and Communities ▪ The Natural World
Expressive arts and design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creating with Materials ▪ Being Imaginative and Expressive

The seven areas of learning and development must be delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult led activities and child-initiated activities.

Our children learn by playing and exploring, by being active and through creative and critical thinking. We use both the indoor and outdoor environments so that children can develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally.

We recognise our responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and will take all reasonably practicable steps to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions (on the school premises and during school-sponsored activities), equipment and systems of work for all our pupils, school personnel and visitors to the school.

Aims

- To give every child the best possible start in life and the support necessary to enable them to fulfil their potential
- To work closely with parents and carers in a joint partnership
- Ensure children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe
- To give children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life
- To share good practice within the school and with other schools
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.

Learning and teaching strategies

Practitioners support children's development through -

- Careful and regular observation to assess each child's progress and needs
- Embedding new learning in what is known or familiar
- Using a variety of teaching strategies and organisation
- Offering a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors
- Ensuring a balance between adult directed and child-initiated activities
- Providing opportunities for experimental learning
- Providing opportunities for both imaginative and role-play
- Providing a wide choice of tools and materials to encourage children's planning and decision-making skills and their sense of autonomy;
- Providing materials, artefacts and information when appropriate to enhance understanding;
- Encouraging positive dispositions towards learning
- Minimising routines that interrupt concentrated involvement in activities
- Using observational assessments to inform planning and the provision of activity differentiated to individual need
- Involving children in the planning of topics

Responsibilities

Role of the Governing Body

- appoint a member of staff to be the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage who:
 - provides leadership in the development and management of the teaching and learning of the EYFS;
 - has a teaching responsibility and undertakes other associated responsibilities.
- responsibility for ensuring full compliance with all statutory responsibilities;
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- nominated a link governor to:
 - visit the school regularly;
 - work closely with the Headteacher and the coordinator;
 - attend training related to this policy;
 - report to the Governing Body as necessary;

Role of the Headteacher

- work in partnership with parents / carers to promote the learning and development of all children, and will ensure they are ready for school;
- ensure that the seven areas of learning and development are used to shape educational programmes:
- ensure all teachers consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences in all areas of learning and development;
- ensure all teachers provide opportunities to learn and reach a good standard of English language during the EYFS, for those children whose home language is not English sufficient;
- ensure that pupils within the EYFS reach a good level of development as defined by the early learning goals:
- ensure that assessment is on-going and used effectively to plan activities and support learning;
- ensure the EYFS Profile is undertaken and completed at the end of the key stage;
- ensure the results of the EYFS Profile are sent to the local authority;
- develop positive relationships with parents;
- ensure good practice is shared;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy by:
 - monitoring learning and teaching through observing lessons
 - monitoring planning and assessment
 - speaking with pupils, school personnel, parents and governors

Role of the Early Years Foundation Stage Leader

Leadership and Management

- To lead and manage the EYFS working in conjunction with the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and governors
- To undertake leadership and management responsibilities
- To co-ordinate and be responsible for the organisation and management of the EYFS
- To advise and work closely with the Headteacher and the nominated governor
- To develop an EYFS development plan and to monitor its effectiveness
- To ensure all EYFS policies are in place and regularly updated
- To lead and develop an effective EYFS team
- To provide and manage a stimulating EYFS environment
- To monitor all planning in accordance with the EYFS and school policies

Role of the Parents

- To support their child with their education through the guidance given by school.
- To support their child with early reading for example phonic sounds and reading everyday for at least 20 minutes.
- To enhance their child's learning by giving them additional experiences for example visiting the local library or art gallery etc dependent on the topic being covered in school.
- Use the parent rep on the Parents Forum to voice any concern or queries they may have.

Role of the Child

- To follow the school values of REACH
- Be ready, respectful and safe.
- Learn more, remember more.

Assessment and Data

- To ensure assessment procedures are in place for recording, reporting and tracking pupils' progress (including any statutory Baseline assessment)
- To use pupil data effectively
- To undertake thorough and accurate tracking of pupil progress
- To present termly pupil progress reports
- To ensure EYFS Profiles are completed

Resources and Budget

- To make effective use of resources and budget allocation

Transition

- To ensure smooth transitional arrangements between phases

Support

- To provide guidance and support to all EYFS staff
- To provide training for all staff on induction and when the need arises
- To co-ordinate and oversee EYFS teaching staff and support staff
- To coach, mentor and develop all EYFS teaching staff and support staff

Research

- To make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy
- To keep up to date with new developments and resources

Health and Safety

- To undertake risk assessments when required