



Early Years Policy

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life to fulfil their potential.

A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up."

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DFE, 2012

Aims

Teaching in the early years follows The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, DFE 2012 and is planned and delivered by committed practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements. Practice in The Foundation Stage is underpinned by four themes.

- A Unique Child + Positive Relationships + Enabling Environments = Learning Development

These themes ensure that our practice supports the children to enjoy, achieve, grow up safe, be healthy, make a positive contribution and understand economic well-being.

Through the EYFS our practitioners aim to deliver individualised learning and care to give our young learners the best possible start in life. Our learning environments are well planned providing opportunities for the children to work both inside and outside. We ensure we offer the same opportunities within our outside environment as we do inside. These areas encourage and support our children's independent skills. Throughout the day practitioners provide opportunities for both child initiated, directed child initiated and teacher lead learning. We place a high value on structured and unstructured play. We aspire to develop the full potential of all children whatever their gender, race, or belief, building on what they know and can do, and work hard to ensure all children feel confident, secure, safe, valued and special. We ensure that we evaluate our practice and environment in line with our current cohorts. We review our practice in line with children who may need extra support, have special educational needs or any individual specific needs. We believe strongly that every child has the right to have access to the full curriculum. We have a disability equality scheme and accessibility plan.

We believe strongly that parental involvement is key to our children's successes and they are encouraged to attend initial parent 1:1 meetings, parents evenings and support their child/ren with home learning activities. We work in partnership with the whole school to ensure a smooth and effective transition between the key stages. We aim to utilize other key publications, such as 'Letters and Sounds' and Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) to support planning, learning and development.

Our Expectations

Our children are expected to attend regularly and arrive on time to ensure the best continuity for the child. We support and encourage our parents to be actively involved in their children's learning and share some activities together such as reading, practising sounds and home learning activities. We expect our practitioners to make sure the children feel valued and know they are part of the whole school community. We have a high expectation for the children's behaviour (see behaviour policy) and develop appropriate attitudes to learning and school life.

Legal Responsibilities

From September 2008, the EYFS became statutory for all schools and Early Years providers. It was reviewed in 2011 and a revised curriculum was put in place in September 2012. There are a number of standards set out in the EYFS Statutory Guidance booklet, 2012, which our school adheres to ensuring that our provision is of a high standard. These standards cover the learning and development and welfare requirements.

Child protection

Safeguarding children within our care is of high priority. We endeavour to make our children feel safe within their environment and we build strong relationships from the very beginning. Our children behave in ways that are safe for themselves as well as others (See behaviour policy). We teach the children about possible dangers, how to keep themselves safe and how to keep themselves clean and prevent the spread of illness and disease. This is carried out through our PSHE sessions (see PSHE planning). All staff (who come into contact with the children) have the relevant qualifications and checks.

Please see schools Child Protection Policy for additional information.

Arrangements for admission

We work together with our feeder Pre-schools and liaise with them during the Summer Term ready for the next intake. We work on the class lists to ensure a balance of boys and girls (where possible), and a balance of Autumn, Spring and Summer born children across the 2 classes. We also consider any special needs that a child may have. (See Admission Policy for induction process).

Organisation

The school day begins at 8:45am where there are morning activities for the children until 8:55 am. There is a morning playtime from 10:30am - 10:45am. The lunchtime period starts at 11:50 and ends at 1:00. All children eat in the school hall. The school day ends at 3:00pm.

The Early Years team review their practice and the curriculum at weekly PPA planning sessions and a weekly planning session with the Teaching Assistants. Reception is made up of 2 classes of 30 children, although we work together across the reception classes during our PDR sessions. During this time the children have the freedom to explore all the Early Years areas, working wherever their interests take them. The children are also grouped across the classes for phonics.

Our outdoor classroom space is securely fenced and provides a safe learning environment where children can develop their independence skills and enhance and extend their learning. We believe that outdoor play is vitally important to a child's development and therefore they have access to it everyday, in safe weather conditions for child initiated, directed child initiated and adult led activities. The outdoor space is set up into areas that replicate the indoor classrooms. There are trolleys with a variety of resources appropriate

for that area to encourage independence skills and an opportunity for the children to develop their own and each other's learning.

The Curriculum

Our children follow a broad and balanced curriculum with the EYFS underpinning it all. The learning and development requirements are set out into Prime and Specific areas. There are three Prime areas of learning:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) - here the children learn how to work and play, cooperate and function in a group, develop personal and moral values, understand themselves and others.

Communication and Language (CL) - here the children are encouraged to listen attentively in a range of situations, giving attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity, allowing them to become competent talkers.

Physical Development (PD) - We aim to develop physical control, mobility, awareness of space, and manipulative skills. We also aim to develop positive attitudes towards a healthy and active way of life.

There are then four specific areas:

Literacy Development (Lit) - here we develop early literacy skills through reading, writing and phonics activities.

Mathematical Development - (MD) - here we develop mathematical understanding and the foundations of numeracy, with a focus on practical mathematics and problem solving. We develop their knowledge of shape, space and measure.

Understanding of the world (U of W) - this covers finding out about the world around them, other people, and features of the natural and man made world. This area of learning is the foundation for History, Geography, Design Technology and Science. We develop children's experiences of technology offering them a range of equipment and skills.

Expressive Arts and Design (EA&D) - we aim to foster the children's creativity through exploring and using media and materials, developing and using their imaginations.

Our curriculum is planned through a variety of different topics, each of which offer experiences in all 7 of the areas. Topics are planned with the children's current interests and abilities in mind, and vary in length depending on where the children take their learning journey. Children are encouraged to pursue their own interests daily, through child initiated play and are actively encouraged to share aspects of home life through our 'Family bag' and weekly base class assemblies. We review our curriculum and environments annually in line with our new cohorts and any individual specific needs that a child has. We believe strongly that every child has the right to have access to the full curriculum.

Assessment

Assessment is vital in ensuring that children are encouraged to follow their own interests and are supported at their individual stage of development. Therefore, all Early Years Practitioners use a range of formative and summative assessment methods throughout the year. These include:

- Baseline assessment at the beginning of the year

- Ongoing observational assessments and half termly 5 minute observations to inform planning for each child's continuing development through play-based activities. These are recorded in the children's individual profile files
- Annotated sample of work
- Annotated photographs
- Individual class teacher mark books
- Scrap books - Parents and child can contribute to their assessments
- E profile is used to track children's progress and inform teachers of their end of year achievement. This data is also sent to the LA at the end of the Reception year by 30th June for analysis.

All foundation stage assessments are kept in individual files know as 'special books'. These files are kept and updated by the class teacher and Early Years Assistants. These are then passed up to Year 1 when the children move to the next key stage.

Parent's evenings take place in the Autumn and Spring terms. These give parents the opportunity to formally discuss their child/ren's progress. An end of year written report is sent out in the Summer term. This highlights the children's achievements in the 7 areas of learning.

Staffing

We are committed to staff development through comprehensive professional development. Early Years Teachers have two performance management meetings and the Early Years Assistants have a performance review once a year. We keep a training record for every staff member of the team and work towards the 20 hours training each for the year.

We have a termly meeting to review and discuss our practice and routines and highlight any areas for improvement.

Partnership with parents

We start this process very early on in the induction of our new children. We have introductory meetings with our new parents, where they meet the Early Year's team, Head teacher and Deputy Head teacher. We then have afternoon activity sessions for each of the 2 classes in the July. This is where the children can meet other children who will be in their classes and the parents can liaise too. We also have 2 Teddy Bear's picnics with our pre-schools. See Admissions Policy

A home/school visit takes place with the child's class teacher and Early Years assistant in July. The parents can choose between the two. The home visit gives the staff the opportunity to meet the child/ren in the comfort of their own surroundings and talk to the parents about their child. This is with a particular interest into their likes and dislikes, home life, allergies, toileting issues, medical conditions etc.

Parents are invited into school to attend our open door celebrations at the end of each topic so their child/ren can share their achievements. They are also invited to our Christmas Celebration play and class assembly.

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Staff member responsible for Implementation and review: Headteacher, Early Years team

Supporting policies

Disability policy

Child Protection Policy

Admissions Policy