



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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1. Aims

Through a positive caring environment, we provide the opportunity for every child to reach their full potential. We embrace Christian values and ensure all children are ready for their next steps. Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage is used to describe children who are aged three to five and in the mixed Nursery and Reception Class. The Early Years class provides every child with a feeling of security, being valued and the confidence to explore new learning. The Nursery and Reception years are unique in that they can set the tone for later school life.

“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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early 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, Department for Education, March 2017

Early Years practitioners should:

- Ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued.
- Provide a relevant curriculum with tasks that make sense to the children and are both practical and purposeful.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that children plan or initiate themselves.
- Consider the individual needs and interests of each child, and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences in all areas of learning and development.
- Acknowledge the holistic nature of young children’s learning and natural links will be made between different areas of the curriculum, with the emphasis on learning through play and the importance of developing skills in communication and language, physical development and PSED.
- Create a learning environment that develops children’s imagination and encourages children to explore and express their ideas and feelings.
- Respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests by guiding development through positive interaction.
- Involve parents and carers as they are the child’s first and most enduring educators. When Parents/carers and practitioners work together in the Early Years, the results have a positive impact on the child’s development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

2. Objectives

The curriculum for the Early Years forms the first stage of our Whole School Curriculum. It covers children in the Nursery and Reception Class.

The EYFS is based on four overarching 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;
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

2. Objectives (Continued)

There are seven areas of learning and development that must provide a framework for planning, teaching and assessing in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are inter-connected. These are split up in to prime and specific areas of learning. There are four specific areas of learning through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

The three prime areas are:

- *Communication and Language* – children will be given lots of opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- *Physical Development* – children will be provided with opportunities to be active and interactive; to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children will be taught the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- *Personal, Social and Emotional Development* – children will develop a positive sense of themselves and others; forming positive relationships and develop respect for others; develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and have confidence in their own abilities.

The four specific areas are:

- *Literacy* – children will be taught to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of experiences to ignite their interest.
- *Mathematics* – children will be provided with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe and use shapes, spaces and measures.
- *Understanding the World* – Children will make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- *Expressive Arts and Design* – Children will explore and play with a range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

3. Teaching and Learning

Our learning environment is accessed through a series of themes that reflects and responds to the children's interests. It offers experiences in all areas of learning which carry equal importance to provide a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities for play and child-initiated activities indoors and outside.

4. **Planning**

The long term plan is the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. This is an overarching framework that informs all other stages of planning. It shows the range of experiences and learning opportunities that are available while children are in the early years supported by the Development Matters document. Medium term planning takes the form of a theme based upon the children's interests and a half termly or termly topic. It is evaluated weekly to respond to other emerging interests that the children may have. Short term plans select activities and learning objectives from the medium term plan as appropriate to meet the needs and interests of the children. Plans are extended and differentiated accordingly. Planning provides a clear balance between challenging the most able children, in some cases to exceed Early Learning Goals, whilst recognising that an attempt to implement the more formal work style before a child is ready could damage a child's disposition to learn.

5. **Assessment and Recording**

The Early Years Foundation Stage is assessed in accordance with the school's assessment policy and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage document. We assess the children's progress while observing them learning throughout the day. This enables the teacher to make regular formative and summative assessments of progress for each child and is an integral part of their learning and development progress. We use the Tapestry on-line learning journal to record day to day observations/assessments and use this information to support tracking towards their achievement of the Early Learning Goals.

In the final term of the year in which a child reaches five the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile must be completed for each pupil. The profile provides parents, carers and practitioners with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels of development and their readiness for Year 1. The profile must reflect on going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the practitioner, parent or carer judges can offer a suitable contribution. Each child's level of development must be assessed against the Early Learning Goals and practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting the expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding them, or not yet reaching them (emerging).

6. **Inclusion**

The Early Years Foundation Stage implements the school curriculum policy of providing a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details see links to separate policies.

7. **Resources**

Our school has a wide range of resources both indoors in the Early Years classroom and outside in the Secret Garden to support the delivery of teaching within the Early Years curriculum. The organisation of the classroom reflects the importance that is placed on children learning through play and first-hand experience, developing independence and having opportunities to initiate their own activities.

8. **Health and Safety**

In this area of the curriculum the general teaching requirement for health and safety applies. We teach children how to follow proper procedures for managing risk, hygiene and food safety.

9. **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Occasionally, extra-curricular activities are provided by outside providers and clubs.

10. **Staff Development and Training Opportunities**

In addition to whole school INSET and weekly teacher staff meetings the Early Years Staff have specific meetings to develop the pedagogy of Early Years. Staff are also encouraged to share information from courses and health and safety updates.