



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

September 2022

Date for Review: September 2023



Early Years Policy 2022/2023

Intent

Our vision is for our children to be the best they can be. Our children are at the heart of everything we do, our curriculum reflects this. We aim to teach our children how to be effective learners and responsible citizens. We believe by focusing on the interests of pupils we will ensure that our curriculum is ambitious, motivating, and stimulating. The foundation stage provides children with their initial school experiences, we want these experiences to be memorable and pleasurable for all. We envision our curriculum to provide learning opportunities which meet the individual needs of all our children.

Curriculum

The Nursery and Reception classes follow the statutory framework as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available at

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are important and included into the curriculum taught. There are three prime areas, which are seen to underpin all of the basics and support the other more specific areas of the curriculum.

The Prime areas are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The Specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the Characteristics of Effective Learning. These are regularly assessed through observations and planned for throughout the EYFS.

The three characteristics are:

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things and events around them and ‘have a go’

- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different experiences and develop strategies for doing things

Teaching Strategies

We ensure that there is a balance between adult led and child initiated activities across the day. We believe that even during child initiated activities the adults' role and interaction with the children is essential as this helps to build the children's understanding and so guides new learning. The role of the adult is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the children are doing, either through participation in the children's game or encouraging the children to participate or complete a task with the adult. The children are taught through a number of different strategies including direct teaching and investigative project based learning as well as play.

- Project Based Learning – This is a whole school approach that provides a real purpose for learning, ensuring all the teaching and learning is real, purposeful, inspiring and immersive for each and every child.
- Exploration – Exploring is an important and integral part of the Early Years curriculum and classroom. We believe that children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. We use prior assessment of the children's skills and knowledge, as well as the project and immersion as the starting points for these experiences. The project and immersive feel of the environment inspires the children to learn and investigate the experiences and opportunities around them. We carefully plan the environment and opportunities within this environment to reflect on what has interested the children, making sure that we provide opportunities to extend and practice the skills they have learned during the project or through direct teaching. We ensure that each of the different areas of learning are represented in the environment and provide different experiences and opportunities to learn. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Achieving and maintaining the balance between child initiated and adult led activities is very important to us.
- Direct teaching – In FS we have opportunities throughout the sessions in which each child is encouraged to participate in an exciting activity led by the teacher or TA. We concentrate on developing children's speaking and listening skills as this lays the foundations for the phonic work. In FS2, the children participate in daily phonics sessions. This focuses more on learning the letter sounds whilst focusing on blending and segmenting words. Children in FS2 also have a daily maths session, which provides a purpose for learning and applying the maths skills they have previously learnt. Children are allocated a reading book from Little

Wandle scheme and also given a gold star (reading for pleasure) book weekly to take home and share with their parents once they are ready. They may also have some words to take home to explore. We encourage lots of games such as snap, flashcards and bingo to help them with their blending and segmenting. All direct taught sessions are carefully planned and tailored for each class using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. Planning is changed and tailored regularly and in response to the result of taught sessions, ensuring all teaching and learning is relevant and challenging for each child.

Classroom Organisation

We ensure that all children are given exploration time within the provision in class and outside. The children are challenged through questioning and new vocabulary in these areas which allows them to feel more immersed into the projects. In addition, these rooms are organised with defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure that children can access these easily and confidently. They then also have key challenges for each area which encourage progression of skills through challenge. All rooms in the Early Years are planned carefully, ensuring that the areas not only continue to immerse the children in the project and also give the children the opportunity to access all seven areas of learning. Classrooms have the opportunity for children to experience writing, mathematics, construction, small world, role play, creative and fine motor skills. The outdoor area is as important as the indoor environment, offering opportunities to continue the project based learning. We aim to create links between the indoor and the outdoor environments. We are continuing to develop the outdoor learning environment.

Assessments, Observations and Learning Journeys

Assessment is an essential and important part of the Early Years for children's learning and development. This involves practitioners observing children in a variety of opportunities to gain an understanding of each child's level of understanding. This happens live throughout any taught session as well as during free exploration times when children are embedding and extending any previous learning. These observations and assessments will then be used to shape and alter any future learning. Observations are taken using photographs, child's work and adult notes. These then recorded in our floor book. We also share learning with parents using our Dojo platform. On entry to Nursery a baseline assessment is carried out for each child, using assessment from taught sessions and observations. This is also repeated in F2 as we have new starters from various providers, this baseline then gives us an accurate understanding of the starting point to build from. The use of the o'track system allows us to collate all the data and assessments for each child measuring progress and highlighting children that are achieving more than expected or less than expected, which then allows us to tailor the project or curriculum accordingly for each individual child. These assessments are input into o'track at the end of each term throughout FS1 and FS2. At the end of FS2 (Reception) each child is assessed against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG). They are assessed as either achieved or not achieved the ELG for each of the areas of learning

and a report is given to parents informing them about their child's learning and progress. Each term the assessments made are collated and provision maps are created for each class, these provide a basis for the conversation during provision meetings with the Head Teacher and Foundation lead, Mrs Bakes, looking at what is being put into place to support or extend any children within the class.

Role of Staff

The role of each teacher is to ensure that each child's care and development is carefully catered and planned for through exploration time, project and other experiences. Each adult aims to develop a positive relationship with each child in the class, as we believe that a happy, nurtured and confident child is a child that is ready to learn. We actively seek positive relationships with the parents as well as the children.

Relationship with Parents and Carers

We believe that Parents and carers are a child's first educator and so we aim to work very closely with Parents. In Foundation stage we encourage parents to add to their child's project portfolios on Dojo to strengthen the link between school and home. Children then proudly share their project files weekly. At the end of each day parents come to the F1 or F2 doors for a safe collection and an opportunity to discuss their child's day briefly. If more time is needed appointments can be arranged easily.

Transitions

We have a close team in foundation stage and Year 1 ensuring that there is significant discussion and support to ensure full information sharing is in place. We are also there to provide support between home and school for children who may find the transition periods daunting.

Safeguarding

Children learn best when they are happy, safe and feel secure. We aim to ensure that all children feel happy, safe and secure through the continuous development of positive relationships between children and staff as well as relationships with their peers. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Guidance. It is important to note that all FS staff have access to a school registered and managed iPad in which they use to take photos for our assessment purposes. All data taken for these assessments are stored on the school server and do not remain in these devices. Our school has a rigorous safeguarding policy and procedures that are used to identify anyone at risk of harm or radicalisation, this sets out a clear procedure for reporting any concerns from minor to major. All staff are regularly trained in safeguarding procedures, which is updated in a regular basis. The school has rigorous checks when employing members of staff, ensuring that they have the relevant qualifications and are DBS checked.

All DBS checks are updated in a rolling basis as required. We have an e-safety policy which stipulates and advises how to keep children safe when online, which is available on our school website. All staff are regularly made aware of how to keep safe online, and have training around this. This is also regularly promoted throughout the school. The school as a whole also has a filtering system that blocks any unknown or suspect websites.

- Healthy school meals – our children when they enter Reception are entitled to a free school meal and are provided with this. The school meals are carefully catered and follow a healthy food model.
- Healthy snack – Fruit and milk are provided and are available throughout Nursery and Reception for children to eat. We also encourage children to try new food/fruit.
- Accidents and First aid – There is a trained Paediatric First aider on site at all times. All first aid cupboards are clearly labelled and regularly updated. All accidents are recorded and parents are informed of any accidents. If a more serious accident occurs (e.g. significant bump, scrape or graze) parents will have a phone call home to inform them of anything that has happened before the end of the session.
- Intimate Care – we follow the schools intimate care policy at all times
- Fire alarms – A fire alarm practice is organised at least once a term and all of these are timed and recorded. We have set fire doors throughout the setting and the caretaker carries out regular safety checks. Child Protection and Safeguarding – We have a very clearly set out safeguarding policy, which is available on our website.