



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year in school. At Lord Deramore's, children join our Early Years (Reception) class in the academic year that they turn five. In partnership with parents/carers we continue to build on previous pre-school experiences, to further the children's learning journey and to develop "the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and in life." (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021)

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years settings. These are:

- 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 with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

A UNIQUE CHILD

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Children are individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and our policy of 'in the moment' planning means that learning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion policy for SEN.

We meet the needs of all our children by:

- Using effective methods of assessment, to provide a baseline for where the children start school, accurate information about progress throughout the year and of end of year achievement
- In the moment planning that builds upon and extends children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develops their self-esteem, well-being, resilience and confidence
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- Providing opportunities and questioning children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Welfare

We educate on boundaries and rules and why they exist. We provide children with opportunities to make choices, in a range of situations, in order for them to put their judgements into practice whilst being supervised by adults. Children are allowed to take manageable risks and are taught how to

recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)

As stated in the Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021, we understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare and safeguarding of children
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children by:

- Talking to parents/carers about their child before their child starts school during transition visits to school and in an initial meeting between the parents/carers and class teacher
- Inviting all parents/carers to an information meeting (New Starters Meeting) during the Summer Term before their child starts school and a second information meeting during the first half term of the child's Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child in reading and phonics
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There are two opportunities for parents to meet with teachers to talk about their child's progress throughout the year. These are linked to focus observations that happen in class. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: stay and play sessions, school visits
- Providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by adding to their Online Learning Journeys (Tapestry) and subsequently informing planning and provision
- Written contact through children's planners/reading record books as well as the acknowledgement that parents can chat to staff informally or make an appointment if needed
- Ensuring all parents know that their child's teacher and teaching assistant are their key workers
- Providing parents an opportunity to feedback on their views on their child's learning through questionnaires
- By providing a quiet and confidential area where parents are able to discuss any concerns.

ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to indoor and outdoor environments that are set up in discrete areas of learning with high quality planned continuous provision. Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interests. We use 'in the moment' planning which means teaching and learning opportunities are taken by the EY team throughout the day while the children are following their own interests. Skills and knowledge are reinforced and extended and new skills and knowledge are introduced through interaction and high quality questioning. A small

number of children are 'focus children' each week. Staff observe and interact with these children during the week. Their learning throughout the week is recorded in their learning journey, Tapestry. This is shared with parents the following week. Play is valued and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities and resources provided by staff. Staff will enhance play in response to children's interests and specific learning opportunities which are identified.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Teachers and teaching assistant deliver and provide the curriculum in the Early Years (Reception class) of up to 30 children.

There are seven areas of learning and development in the Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021. Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. These are the **prime areas**:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

We also support children in four **specific areas**, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

"Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Practitioners need to decide what they want children in their setting to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. Practitioners must stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning. As children grow older and move into the reception year, there should be a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning. This will help children to prepare for year 1.

In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately."
(Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021)

We also continue to build on the children's development of the three Characteristics of Effective Learning, which underpin the above, and describe the different ways children learn rather than what they learn. They begin at birth and are lifelong characteristics which are critical for building children's capacity for future learning.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021)

Teaching and Learning

The timetable in Early Years is organised to allow for extended times when children can access provision in a free-flow manner. At these points, children can access provision both inside and outside and staff interact with the children to support and extend their learning.

There are some discrete teaching sessions, timetabled at the beginning and ends of this extended play. These include:

Maths – We follow the Power Maths teaching programme along with the rest of school.

Phonics – We follow the Little Wandle programme which continues to Year 2 or until an individual has completed the programme if this is later.

Handwriting – Gross and fine motor control, along with letter formation is taught through Dough Disco, Squiggle while you Wiggle and Pen Jitsu as well as through the daily phonics sessions.

Storytime – Books, stories and rhymes are valued at Lord Deramore's and daily story time sessions are prioritised with books being chosen by an adult and linked to a theme (e.g. The Book Cooks) as well as those chosen by the children.

Early Reading Practice - Reading is taught in line with the Little Wandle Phonics Programme.

Helicopter Stories – Children have regular opportunities to tell a story to a member of staff who will scribe it for them. They will have the opportunity the same day to act out the story to the class.

RE – Weekly RE sessions are taught in line with the York Sacre Agreed Syllabus.

PSHE – Weekly PSHE sessions are taught using the whole school PSHE scheme (Jigsaw).

Music – As well as regular opportunities to sing and access instruments in provision, music is also taught using the Music Express scheme.

PE – PE is taught by the Total Sports PE consultant.

Forest Schools – Early Years visit the forest each week to spend a morning exploring, playing and learning new skills.

Assessment

Learning and development are assessed informally on a day-to-day basis, or occasionally in a formative manner as the need arises. Children are assessed during their first few weeks at school and then progress is tracked using the ranges in the Birth to Five Matters document (2021). Records are kept electronically using a tracker.

Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is carried out within 6 weeks of children starting in Early Years.

Progress in phonics is assessed every 6 weeks in line with the Little Wandle phonics programme.

Assessment at the end of the EYFS – the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1.

The Profile reflects practitioners' own knowledge and professional judgement of a child to inform discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. We indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development or if they are not yet reaching expected levels.

Early Learning Goals

Prime Areas

Communication and Language

- Listening, Attention and Understanding

- Speaking

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Self-Regulation
- Managing Self
- Building Relationships

Physical Development

- Gross Motor Skills
- Fine Motor Skills

Specific Areas

Literacy

- Comprehension
- Word Reading
- Writing

Mathematics

- Number
- Numerical Patterns

Understanding the World

- Past and Present
- People, Culture and Communities
- The Natural World

Expressive Arts and Design

- Creating with Materials
- Being Imaginative and Expressive

Equal Opportunities

All pupils are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Health and Safety

There are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school risk assessment policy) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In addition to this there are detailed procedures to ensure the safety of the children.

In line with the Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021, we have the following in place;

- A whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge eg Epipens. We will only accept medication that has been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse prescriber or pharmacist prescriber. We will only accept non-prescribed medication if it is included in an Individual Healthcare Plan or if we have a written procedure in place for that type of medication which has been authorised by CYC insurance.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Children's' dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept. All EYFS staff are paediatric first aid trained.
- A whole school Health and Safety policy which covers identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A Fire and Emergency Evacuation procedure and policy.

- A Safeguarding policy which includes details outlining the use of cameras, mobile phones and mobile technology in the setting.
- A dress code which outlines the expectation that practitioners will wear clothing that supports them in getting to a child's level and playing and engaging with children at floor level.

Transition

From Pre-school settings

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition:

- Parents are invited to a meeting (New Starters' Meeting) to meet staff, gain an insight into the setting and curriculum and to find out about how to prepare for their child coming to school.
- The children are invited to three separate visits to the Early Years class. One visit is with parents/carers, one visit allows parents/carers to leave their child for a short time and one visit is without parents/carers. Parents and children are also invited in to school to have a meal so that they can experience lunchtime routines.
- Early Years staff make visits to feeder settings. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting. Often these children will have been identified as requiring additional support.

Starting School

Children start school, part time for the first week. They stay until the end of the morning session. In the afternoons, parents and children are invited in to school for an informal meeting with the staff to share vital information, ask questions and get to know each other. Children start full time in the second week.

The children in Early Years are paired with a Y6 'buddy' who supports them during their first week staying for lunch. They help with routines, including collecting trays and choosing lunch, eat together and go into playground together. The Y6 children are encouraged to keep a watchful eye on their EY buddy and help them settle quickly into school routines.

From Early Years to Year 1

During the final term in Early Years, a summative record of each child's achievements in the EYFS is completed. The record provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities and their readiness for Year 1. The record includes on-going observations, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. The record indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development or have not yet reaching expected levels. Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between EY and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.