

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

To be reviewed: annually Autumn 2025

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

'Where Children Grow'

All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.

Statutory Framework for EYFS 4th January 2024

This policy has been written alongside the DFE Statutory Framework for EYFS 4th January 2024

1. Introduction

1.1 The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year when they will be 5 years of age.

From the age of 3 years, children will be entitled to a Nursery Education funded place which can be accessed at Thorpe Hesley Primary School in Nursery. Children are entitled to 15 hours a week government funded or 30 hours a week funded with application.

Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday. This is known as Reception. The EYFS is a Key Stage in its own right and is very important for preparing children for later learning and achievement. Teaching follows the principles of the EYFS documentation. It is a statutory framework with non-statutory guidance produced by the Department for Education and can be viewed on the website:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65aa5e42ed27ca001327b2c7/EYFS_statutory_framework_for_group_and_school_based_providers.pdf

The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of children by the end of the EYFS.

1.2 Children starting their early year's education may have already learnt a great deal. Many have been to one of a range of settings that exist in the local community or had rich experiences at home. We aim to build on these by providing quality education and care.

1.3 The early years education we offer is based on the four themes of the of the EYFS and the principles which underpin these:-

- **A Unique Child**
- **Positive Relationships**
- **Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults**
- **Learning and Development**

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During the child's time in the EYFS we ensure that the education the children receive is the best it can be and this is based on the premise that:-

- we have quality and consistency in all early years classes, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- we have a secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly
- we have partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- We have equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported
- We provide a rich and stimulating environment both indoors and outdoors

2. Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

2.1 The curriculum of the EYFS underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:-

- personal, social and emotional wellbeing;
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning;
- social skills;
- attention skills and perseverance;
- communication and language;
- reading and writing;
- mathematical understanding;
- understanding of the world;
- physical development;
- expressive arts and design.

3. Teaching and Learning style

3.1 Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our setting. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1.

3.2 The more general features of good practice in our setting that relate to the EYFS are:-

- The partnership between teachers, practitioners and Parents/Carers, so that our children feel secure at our setting and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;

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- The understanding that teachers and practitioners have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects both what and how they teach;
- The range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- The carefully planned curriculum based on observations of the children's needs and interests that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception;
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional skills;
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- The support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- The ongoing dialogue and partnership with Parents/Carers which involves them in their child's learning through the learning and interests they have at home and through sharing information about the ongoing progress of their child's development at the setting;
- The good relationships between the Foundation Stage and other settings that our children experience prior to starting;
- The clear aims for our work, the weekly planning and the regular monitoring that takes place in order to evaluate and improve what we do;
- The regular identification of training needs and the updating of current practice, of all adults working within the EYFS.

4. Play in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 4.1** Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. Play is vitally important for their development. They practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills, they learn how to problem solve, take risks, and understand the need for self-discipline and rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and set challenges for themselves. They express fears and re-live experiences in a caring and safe environment.

5. Inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 5.1** In our setting we believe that all our children matter and are entitled to enjoy a full life in conditions which will help them to take part in society and develop

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as individuals with their own cultural and spiritual beliefs. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their personalised learning.

5.2 In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. Some children progress beyond this point. We understand how important it is to identify the need for additional support as early as possible. We aim to achieve a fully inclusive environment and practice by planning to meet the individual needs of:-

- boys and girls;
- children with special educational needs;
- children who are looked after;
- children who are more able;
- children with medical needs or disabilities;
- children from all social and cultural backgrounds;
- children of different ethnic groups, traveller communities, refugees or asylum seekers and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds;

5.3 We meet the needs of all our children through:-

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interest, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of activities which provide opportunities to motivate and support children and help them learn effectively;
- Providing a safe, supportive and stimulating environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.

6. The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

6.1 The curriculum for the EYFS complies with the documentation. We follow the statutory

requirements and the non-statutory guidance from this documentation.

There are four Principles –

- **A Unique Child**
- **Positive Relationships**
- **Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults**
- **Learning and Development.**

These are brought together to provide a holistic approach to learning and development in the early years of life. Our children will have the opportunities to

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develop a range of competencies, skills and concepts across all areas of learning.

6.2 There are three characteristics of Effective Learning and these underpin all aspects of planning

Playing and Exploring
Active Learning
Creating and thinking critically

6.3 Learning and Development Considerations

Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development.

Throughout the early years, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, practitioners must discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child.

For children whose home language is not English, providers must take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home.

There are three Prime areas for Learning and Development – these are fundamental, work together and move through to support development in all other

areas. These are:

- **Personal, social and Emotional Development**
 - Self- regulation
 - Managing self
 - Building Relationships
- **Physical Development**
 - Gross Motor Skills
 - Fine Motor Skills
- **Communication and Language**
 - Listening, Attention and Understanding
 - Speaking

There are four Specific areas for Learning and Development - these include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society

These are:

- **Literacy**
 - Comprehension

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- Word Reading
- Writing
- **Mathematics**
 - Numbers
 - 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

7. The Planning Cycle

7.1 At our setting we understand that good Planning begins with observation of the children to determine what they already know, can do and what their interests are. It is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive and enables practitioners to build up knowledge of how individual children learn and make progress.

7.2 Observations

These form the basis of good practice and should be done regularly – they may be incidental or longer and more 'in depth'. Observations will be matched to the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. They provide the practitioner with the information about the child's stage of development, their knowledge, skills and interests. This enables the practitioner to plan the next steps for that child.

7.3 Planning

This is done at three levels:-

- **Long Term Planning**

We accept that it is impossible to plan for children too far ahead since we do not know what their interests or abilities will be, so long term planning forms the basis of '**Continuous Provision**' throughout the environment. This enables practitioners to identify possible learning experiences and opportunities for children to meet developmental milestones through their everyday play. We also plan for umbrella topics where we guide children into areas of interest and this is then repeated to embed learning.

- **Medium Term Planning**

Reception – The children in Reception are taught through more formalised learning which is topic led. Whole school topic work and children's interests are kept in mind when planning this.

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Nursery – The children in Nursery follow a skills based curriculum so planning covers the skills that are required in both the Prime and Specific areas.

Practitioners always use the observations and/or assessments they have made of the children to inform their planning.

- **Short Term Planning**

Reception -

Short Term planning is done on a weekly basis. Each of the seven areas of learning and development are planned for using the observations and/or assessments that have been made of the children. Planning is done for both the indoor and outdoor environments. It will be differentiated where appropriate to take into account the different ability levels and needs of the children and will involve objectives that work towards the early learning goals.

Planning will involve a combination of adult-focused, adult-initiated and child-initiated activities and learning and offer challenge.

Enhancements to Continuous Provision will be made, and intended learning experiences planned for.

Nursery – Short term planning is done on a weekly basis to cover the skills required to be taught. The staff then work around the needs and interests of the individuals. This is more informal and is driven by observations of children and identification of learning needs.

8. Learning, Development and Assessment

8.1 On entry to Nursery and Reception we do a Baseline assessment. Activities within play help us to assess the age band the children are working within the Development Matters statements.

8.2 We make regular observations assessments of children's learning, which involves evaluating and reviewing what is known about each child's development and learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the class teacher and/or other practitioners as appropriate.

8.3 Children's progress and achievements are recorded using an Early Years assessment booklet. This document begins as soon as the child starts in the EYFS, and continues with them until the end of Reception. It tracks the developmental milestones throughout Development Matters and is used to inform judgements against the ELG's.

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- 8.4** Children's progress is tracked throughout the year in order to identify whether they are making the required progress and if they need any form of intervention. At the end of the Reception the final assessments of the EYFSP (Early Years Foundation Stage Profile) are sent to the Local Authority.
- 8.5** Samples of children's work are kept along with any observations that have been made, including photographs of their learning experiences in the classroom. We also keep a more in depth work sample in each class. This is kept for a year after the children have moved to Year One.
- 8.6** Class teachers moderate every half term and then join LA moderation. EYFS lead also moderates within the learning community meetings.
- 8.7** As a school we also moderate internally, as part of our MAT and Learning Community along with annual LA moderation meetings.
- 8.8** Parents/Carers receive an annual report at the end of Reception that gives a record of attainment in each of the Early Learning Goals (Emerging or Expected). It highlights the child's progress, strengths and areas for development in the three areas of effective learning; Playing and Exploring – engagement, Active Learning –motivation and Creating and Thinking critically – thinking. Nursery children receive a short progress report about their progress over the year.
- 8.9** All parents are able to view their child's records on request
- 8.10** If at any point in the year the teacher has a concern about a child then they will discuss will discuss this with their parent/carer and agree the best way to support the child.
- 8.11** All records kept on children remain private and confidential. Parents are allowed to access information kept on their child and follow the whole school policy for this.
- 8.12** Any complaints are dealt with by SLT/ELT.

9. The role of Parents/Carers

- 9.1** We believe that all Parents and Carers have an important role to play in the education of their children. We recognise the role that Parents and Carers

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have played prior to their child starting EYFS as their first educators and acknowledge their future role in educating them.

Our work with parents includes:

- An induction procedure where families can visit school before application.
- Transition meetings with families where they visit the classes and meet the teachers.
- Extra transition visits are available if needed including home visits in Nursery.
- Local nurseries and childminders are encouraged to visit the classes for short sessions
- Staggered start in nursery to enable children to settle. This is tailored to meets the needs of the individual.
- Welcome to class meetings
- Offering families regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in the EYFS and to share the interests and achievements of their child at home; this can be done over the phone and via class email along with informal daily passing of information.
- Encouraging Parents/Carers to talk to their child's class teacher if they have any concerns.
- Regular 'Stay & Learn' sessions with a theme.
- A formal meeting for Nursery and Reception Parents/Carers twice each year at which the class teacher and the Parent/Carer discuss their child's progress individually.
- An annual report at the end of the year.
- Arranging a variety of activities throughout the year that encourage the collaboration between child, setting and Parents/Carers.
- Support the involvement of Parents/Carers at home by providing the children with books to take home to share with them.

10. Resources

10.1 We plan a learning environment both for indoors and outdoors that is inviting, stimulating, motivating and thereby encourages a positive attitude to learning. We aim to develop a desire for lifelong learning by providing the best quality resources and equipment to create an enabling and challenging environment in which children can blossom.

10.2 Resources reflect the community that the children come from, their personal cultures and the diversity of the wider world. We have images around the classroom which reflect those of the children and their ethnicity.

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10.3 We encourage children to make their own choices from the resources and equipment on offer and to use them to initiate and develop their own play and learning. We believe this creates independence and creative thinking.

10.4 We regularly review the resources to ensure they are safe, suitable and fit for purpose. We will change them or add to them as required. Worn out and unsafe materials will be replaced and resources which encourage the interests of the children will be added when appropriate. Resources will be appropriate for the age and stage of the children and will be evaluated in terms of their educational and play value.

11. Safeguarding and Welfare

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.

11.1 The EYFS follows the whole school safeguarding procedures.

11.2 Each class group has an individual Safeguarding and welfare file. Children are only released to adults nominated by parents or carers. We seek written authorisation about special dietary requirements and food allergies, special health requirements, information regarding who has legal contact with the child and who has parental responsibility and permission for emergency medical treatment.

11.3 We have a written medication procedure. We obtain digital permission from parents for each and every medicine before any medication is given. We keep a medical file in all settings with written records of all medicines given. A record is kept for audit and safety purposes.

11.4 All adults hold a current Emergency First Aid certificate. Some adults also hold a current paediatric first aid certificate.

11.5 We keep a record of accidents and first aid treatment. Parents are informed of any accidents and injuries and any first aid treatment that was given.

11.6 We have a written procedure to be followed in the event of a child going missing.

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- 11.7** We have a written procedure to be followed in the event of a parent failing to collect a child at the appropriate time.
- 11.8** Our ratios are 1:13 for Nursery and 1:30 for Reception.
- 11.9** We have a separate Risk Assessment for EYFS which is reviewed annually with the site manager and cascaded to staff.
- 11.10** We write a separate risk assessment if we go on an Educational Visit. This is done in line with the whole school policy.

12. Food & Drink

- Children have access to milk, water and fruit throughout the day. They access the snack table independently.
- Any food preparation is done in the school kitchen for the Reception Children.
- Children in Nursery who have 30 hour funding bring in a packed lunch which they have in a designated eating area.
- A number of staff have completed the food health and hygiene course.