



**Early Years
Foundation Stage
Policy**

Reviewed November 2018

Aims

To give each child a happy, positive start to their school life and foster a deep love of learning.

To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences.

To enable each child to reach their full potential.

To encourage independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere.

To support children in building relationships through the development of our school values, such as peace and respect.

The Curriculum

Foundation Stage One (FS1) and Foundation Stage Two (FS2) follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document. This clearly defines what we teach. The following policy details the specific practice of our setting.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for *'igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive'* (DfE 2014: 1.3), they support children's learning in all other areas, they are known as the prime areas. The prime areas are:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Specific areas are:

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

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS document also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The Nursery and Reception teachers plan activities with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics are;

Playing and Exploring, Active Learning, Creating and Thinking Critically

Teaching

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adults and children is essential, as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. By the Summer Term in Reception the children will experience many more adult directed tasks as they prepare for their transition to Year One.

We include directed, carefully planned, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood and taken on. Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place.

This looks quite different in FS1 and FS2 settings. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered together on the carpet as a class. In these slots we focus on our maths, literacy, phonics, and stories. These sessions help to develop vital habits of Learning.

Play

Learning through play is an important part of our setting. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own.

They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child initiated play and adult led activities is very important to us.

Assessment, observations and Tapestry

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. We record all of our observations using Tapestry, an online learning journal. Parents and carers also contribute to this learning journal and can respond to our observations. Every single observation has an assessment attached based on the Development Matters statements, Characteristics of Learning and the Leuven Scale, where appropriate. We include individual next steps for children's learning.

On entry to Nursery and Reception we carry out baseline assessments for each child, covering each of the 17 strands of the EYFS document. Throughout the year we make summative assessments for the children in each strand, please see our assessment cycle for more details. Teacher assessments are recorded on our MIS system, OTrack.

At the end of Reception the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'. This information is communicated to parents and carers in the Reception child's end of year report and can be discussed in the final Parents' Evening in Reception.

Health & Safety and Safeguarding

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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2014).