



**Early Years
Foundation Stage
Policy
January 2016**

Early Years Policy

Introduction

This document is a statement of aims, principles and strategies for teaching and learning of early years education at Latchford St James Primary School.

Our Head Teacher is Mr Flute and our Deputy Head Teacher is Mrs Swift.

Our Early Years Phase Leader and Reception Teacher is Mrs Yates. Our Nursery Teacher is Miss Leath. In Reception the Teaching Assistants are Miss Peever and Mrs Bates and in Nursery the Teaching Assistant is Miss Brookhouse.

Aims

Our aims for Early Years are as follows:

- All children are introduced to school life in a secure, stimulating and welcoming environment.
- Each child is given an equal opportunity to flourish and develop his/her full potential.
- A broad, balanced, challenging curriculum is offered to develop confident children that have a sense of fair play and sound moral values.
- All children should feel valued and be cared for in a warm, Christian and loving environment.

Principles

We believe that children learn best through the provision of practical experiences; encouraging interaction with others, opportunities to listen, experiment, observe and reflect.

We aim to create a rich play environment that caters for all learning experiences. We promote active, hands-on learning, fostering independence and co-operation. We provide opportunities for children to explore across the curriculum developing concepts, knowledge and acquiring skills. We always aim for children to use their own initiative, self reliance and responsibility. We aim to ensure that children are motivated through a developmentally appropriate curriculum that takes account of how children learn.

We work with parents and carers at all stages of a child's education to enable children to begin the process of becoming active learners and develop a love of school.

We believe that every child has a right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of their Reception year. Children can join our Nursery part time from when they are 3 years old. In reception children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they have their 5th birthday. Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday. The Early Learning Goals set out the expectations of achievement for children by the end of EYFS.

Effective practice in the early years is built on the following four themes.

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development

Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people and the world around them. Development is not an automatic process, it depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments.

The Early Years Curriculum

The curriculum is organised around the seven areas of learning:

Prime areas

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

Specific areas

- Understanding of the world
- Mathematics
- Literacy
- Expressive Arts and Design

The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

Play in the Early Years

‘Play is the work of the young child’.

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences which help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. Children are given the opportunities to explore and discover within a safe and supported environment. Play underpins the delivery of the Early Years curriculum.

Children have the opportunity to think creatively alongside their peers as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences, with opportunities to take risks and make mistakes in controlled and safe situations. Children are involved in group and individual play activities, some self-initiated, and others planned and facilitated by adults.

Learning through play is dynamic and involves many complex behaviours such as exploration, observation, imitation, discussion and imagination.

Learning Outdoors

Learning through outdoor play is highly valued at our school. Our safely enclosed outdoor area has been developed to facilitate all areas of learning throughout the year. We also have access to an enclosed trim trail and forest school area.

Children need space to move around and develop their gross motor skills. The outdoor area makes role play activities more 'real' and exciting.

Planning

- Long term: overall guidance in the EY framework document is followed; overview of themes, calendar of events.
- Medium term: outlines in more detail the overall programme for up to 8 weeks, texts to be covered, etc.
- Short term: informed by assessments and sets out what is to be included on a day to day basis within the broad framework of medium term plans, based on recent observations.

Assessment

Within EYFS we use the following approaches:

- Nursery use a baseline
- Reception use the Early Excellence Baseline Assessment

We make regular observations of children's independent learning alongside focussed observations linked to a learning outcome. We analyse this information to decide what it tells us about the children to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

This assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. The observations and other evidence of achievements (e.g. photographs and drawings, mark making etc.) are matched to the development matters statements. This is then marked off on a child's individual tracker. Progress of children is analysed each half term.

For each learning goal we judge whether a child is meeting the level of development expected at the end of Reception Year (expected), exceeding this level (exceeding) or not yet reaching this level (emerging).

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The characteristics of effective learning are the ways in which a child engages with others and their environment: Playing and Exploring; Active Learning; Creating and Thinking Critically. They underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

- Playing and Exploring:
 - Finding out and exploring
 - Playing with what they know
 - Being willing to 'have a go'

- Active Learning:
 - Being involved and concentrating
 - Keeping on trying
 - Enjoying achieving what they set out to do
- Creating and Thinking Critically:
 - Having their own ideas
 - Making links
 - Choosing ways to do things

Parents/carers contribute to the assessment process by sharing information with us, as part of an ongoing process, through a series of informal discussions, home learning stories and 'wow' moments which are added to evidence collected within school. The information is shared at parents evenings and as part of the annual school report alongside results of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

Data is sent to the Local Authority (LA) to indicate emerging, expected or exceeding levels. The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile evidence is moderated at school, in local school cluster groups and at LA moderation meetings.

The role of parents/carers

Close relationships with children and families are essential in supporting the development of self-awareness and independence; confidence and security; communication and friendship. Parents can share any concerns and information from home on a daily basis. Reception staff are available to speak to parents/carers before school.

A parents' notice board is used to share information with parents/carers, along with termly newsletters. Homework activities enable parents/carers to get involved with topics we are covering at school. Additionally our reading diary enables regular communication between home and school and we regularly provide praise for good behaviour through reward charts.

We have introduced 'come and share' sessions each term where parents/carers can come into class to observe and get involved with activities. This helps parents/carers to learn more about how to support their child's learning at home.

EY Staffing

The nursery and reception class teachers are supported by two teaching assistants, enabling effective teamwork to take place. A good working relationship exists where plans, activities, evaluations and assessments are developed together. Early Years courses and seminars are attended to ensure staff are kept up to date with current issues and are able to put new ideas into practise. We self-evaluate current practise and identify ways to improve our provision.

Induction

- A meeting for the parents/carers of the new children is held during the summer term prior to the child's entry into Reception class. The headteacher, staff and representatives of other agencies are introduced to parents/carers. An outline of the Early Years provision and details of school life are presented.

- A welcome pack containing information is provided.
- Practitioners aim to visit children at nursery, in other pre-school settings or at their own home.
- Workshops are scheduled and delivered to further engage with parents/carers.

Transition

The transition between Early Years and Key Stage One (and between classes) is made as smooth as possible. Activities at the start of the year are planned to be similar to those that have taken place in the previous setting/class. Structured programmes such as 'letters and sounds' are continued and built upon in each class.

Information and assessments are shared through verbal dialogue between teachers and assessment files are passed on to the next class. Children visit their new class in the last few weeks of the summer term.

Inclusion in the Early Years

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our pupils every opportunity to achieve. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning (see our policies and documentation on school inclusion and SEN).

When appropriate we:

- Adapt activities
- Provide alternative activities
- Give additional adult help
- Use specialist aids or equipment
- Show children with EAL that their home language is valued by giving them opportunities and resources to use it.
- Work closely with parents and carers
- Seek advice from other agencies

We work towards meeting the needs of all our children by:

- Planning for opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support/putting in early intervention strategies as necessary

Health and Safety

We comply with all the legal requirements set out in the 'Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage' September 2014. Health and safety issues for early years are emphasised with children being introduced to/reminded of the correct way to use things, behave and move around school.

Weekly health and safety checks take place across the school with the EYFS Leader being responsible for the EY check. This is then reported back at staff meetings and to SLT.

Resources are monitored to ensure they are clean, safe and stored correctly. Risk assessments are carried out for visits and adequate adult: child ratios are put in place.

We have a qualified first aider in Early Years and all staff have basic first aid training and defibrillator training.

Safeguarding

Any child protection concerns are reported to the Headteacher Mr Martin Flute who is the designated person for safeguarding, second named person is Deputy Headteacher Mrs Paula Swift and the responsible Governor is Mrs Kim Yates. All staff have an up to date understanding of safeguarding and are aware of how to respond. See School Safeguarding Policy and appendix 1- inspecting safeguarding in early years September 2015.

All staff are DBS checked and all students are supervised at all times. Staff ensure that children are collected by the appropriate adult at home time.

Healthy Lifestyles

We promote health and well being by providing a healthy snack, fresh fruit each day and free school dinners. We have a tooth brushing programme where children brush their teeth after dinnertime. We encourage physical activity with outdoor play, dance and PE sessions. Children have access to their own water bottle throughout the day.

Links with the community

Links between early years and the community include:

- Health professionals, school health officer and other outside agencies
- Reporting to parents, parent meetings, open door policy, come and share sessions
- Visits and dialogues with nursery school teachers and pre school settings before a child starts in reception class
- Educational visits and visits from people to school, to support children's learning
- Strong links with PTA
- Links with the local church and regular visits to church
- Links with followers of other faiths with visits during Faith Week.

Document 6

Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings (Extracts)

(Sept 2015)

Guidance for inspectors undertaking inspection under the common inspection framework

Published June 2015

Definition of safeguarding

8. In relation to children and young people, safeguarding and promoting their welfare is defined in 'Working together to safeguard children' as:
 - protecting children from maltreatment
 - preventing impairment of children's health or development
 - ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
9. In relation to adults, there is a different legislative and policy base for responding to their safeguarding needs. However, most of the principles and procedures that apply are the same as those for safeguarding children and young people.
10. Safeguarding action may be needed to protect children and learners from:
 - neglect
 - physical abuse
 - sexual abuse
 - emotional abuse
 - bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
 - racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
 - gender-based violence/violence against women and girls
 - radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
 - child sexual exploitation and trafficking
 - the impact of new technologies on sexual behaviour, for example sexting

- teenage relationship abuse
 - substance misuse
 - issues that may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity and youth violence
 - domestic violence
 - female genital mutilation
 - forced marriage
 - fabricated or induced illness
 - poor parenting, particularly in relation to babies and young children
 - other issues not listed here but that pose a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults.
11. Safeguarding is not just about protecting children, learners and vulnerable adults from deliberate harm, neglect and failure to act. It relates to broader aspects of care and education, including:
- Children's and learners' health and safety and well-being
 - the use of reasonable force
 - meeting the needs of children and learners with medical conditions
 - providing first aid
 - educational visits
 - intimate care and emotional well-being
 - online safety¹ and associated issues
 - appropriate arrangements to ensure children's and learners' security, taking into account the local context.

The signs of successful safeguarding arrangements

13.
- Any child protection and/or safeguarding concerns are shared immediately with the local authority or other relevant agency in the area where the concerned professional is working and a record of that referral is retained. There is evidence that any agreed action following the referral has been taken promptly to protect the child or learner from further harm. There is evidence, where applicable, that staff have an understanding of when to make referrals when there are issues concerning sexual exploitation, radicalisation and/or extremism or that they have sought additional advice and support. Children and learners are supported, protected and informed appropriately about the action the adult is taking to share their concerns.

¹ The term 'online safety' reflects a widening range of issues associated with technology and a user's access to content, contact with others and behavioural issues.

Parents are made aware of concerns and their consent is sought in accordance with local procedures unless doing so would increase the risk of or actual harm to a child.

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- Any risks associated with children and learners offending, misusing drugs or alcohol, self-harming, going missing, being vulnerable to radicalisation or being sexually exploited are known by the adults who care for them and shared with the local authority children's social care service or other relevant agency. There are plans and help in place that are reducing the risk of harm or actual harm and there is evidence that the impact of these risks is being minimised. These risks are kept under regular review and there is regular and effective liaison with other agencies where appropriate.

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Inspecting how effectively leaders and governors create a safeguarding culture in the setting

16. Inspectors should consider how well leaders and managers in schools, further education and skills providers and early years settings have created a culture of vigilance where children's and learners' welfare is promoted and timely and appropriate safeguarding action is taken for children or learners who need extra help or who may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

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18. Inspectors will want to consider evidence that:

- leaders, governors and supervisory bodies (where appropriate) fulfil legislative requirements, such as those for disability, safeguarding, and health and safety
- safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and regularly reviewed to keep all children and learners safe
- children and learners feel safe
- staff, leaders, governors and supervisory bodies (where appropriate) and volunteers receive appropriate training on safeguarding that is updated regularly and know their responsibilities with respect to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults

- staff are supported to have a good awareness of the signs that a child or learner is being neglected or abused, as described in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'²
- there is a designated senior member of staff in charge of safeguarding arrangements who has been trained to the appropriate level and understands their responsibilities with respect to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults and the safeguarding of all learners; for designated members of staff in schools and colleges this training should take place every two years³
- the setting identifies children or learners who may be at risk
- absences are followed up, including appropriate checks when children and learners stop attending the setting
- action is taken to raise awareness of children and learners in relation to a range of safeguarding matters, including domestic abuse or sexual exploitation
- there is a clear approach to implementing the **Prevent** duty and keeping children and learners safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism
- the setting takes effective action to prevent and tackle discriminatory and derogatory language – this includes language that is derogatory about disabled people, and homophobic and racist language
- children and learners are able to understand, respond to and calculate risk effectively, for example risks associated with child sexual exploitation, domestic violence, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, substance misuse, gang activity, radicalisation and extremism,⁴ and are aware of the support available to them
- staff, leaders and managers understand the risks posed by adults or young people who use the internet to bully, groom or abuse children, young people and vulnerable adults; there are well-developed strategies in place to keep learners safe and to support them in learning how to keep themselves safe
- staff, leaders and managers oversee the safe use of electronic and social media by staff and learners and take action immediately if they are concerned about bullying or risky behaviours
- appropriate arrangements are made with regards to health and safety to protect staff and learners from harm

² *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners*, Department for Education, March 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2.

³ See *Keeping children safe in education*, paragraphs 36 and 37; www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2.

⁴ This also includes risks associated with e-safety, substance misuse, knives and gangs, relationships (including sexual relationships), water, fire, roads and railways.

- the setting's premises provide a safe learning environment with secure access.

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