



**Early Years
Foundation Stage
Policy
January 2018**

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.

Aim

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:

A baseline assessment when each child starts Nursery or Reception and at least an overall termly assessment of each child in each of the 17 areas of learning.

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 monitored regularly and an overall judgement in each area of learning is made at least termly.

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. Early Years staff are available to speak to parents/carers before and after 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.

EYFS Staffing

The nursery and reception class teachers are supported by 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' April 2017. 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. Staff receive training each year and follow the School Safeguarding Policy and Ofsted guidance 'Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings' August 2016.

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 at school. 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
- Links with the local church and regular visits to church
- Links with followers of other faiths with visits during Faith Week.
- Links with local care home