



Early Years Policy

Originator	Jen Langtree
Issue Date	September 2023
Agreed by staff	September 2023
Ratified by Governors	
Signed	
Date	
To be reviewed	September 2024
Monitored by	Jen Langtree and Louise Duncan

'Learning Together We Can Reach For The Stars'

This policy is a working document and is related to the following legislation:

- ✦ Childcare Act 2016
- ✦ Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- ✦ Equality Act 2010
- ✦ Education Act 2011
- ✦ Children and Families Act 2014
- ✦ Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015
- ✦ 2021 EYFSP handbook
- ✦ Statutory Framework 2023

'The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early year's providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.'
(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE))

Introduction

We recognise that Early Years' education is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives. This policy therefore acknowledges the role of parents and carers as the child's first educators and affirms the values of continuing parental involvement in education.

The EYFS, which refers to children from birth to five years of age, is based upon the following four principles:

- **a unique child**
- **positive relationships**
- **enabling environments**
- **learning and development**

It seeks to provide:

- **quality and consistency**
- **a secure foundation**
- **partnership working**
- **equality of opportunity**

The Early Years education we offer to our children, is based upon the principles set out in the DfE EYFS Statutory Framework September 2023 (Revised)

Principles:

- Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to understand and fulfil their potential.
- Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.
- The curriculum should promote teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and give children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.
- Within the Early Years we want the children to develop a love and thirst for learning that will carry them through the rest of their school lives.
- That the environment should enable teaching and learning, promoting curiosity, exploration, creative thinking and active learning.

Children joining school do so with varied experiences, but whatever their prior learning, for all children within the EYFS we have a duty to:

- shape activities and experiences (learning and development)
- help children work towards acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding (Early Learning Goals - ELGs)
- provide assessment arrangements for measuring progress
- report to parents on their children's progress
- safeguard children and promote their welfare

Curriculum

The curriculum is planned in accordance with EYFS guidance in seven areas of learning and is based on agreed opportunities for learning appropriate to the development of young children. We believe that the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile should be used as a guide to inform our practice rather than to define what we teach.

Areas of learning

The areas of learning are divided into prime and specific.

Prime Areas of Learning

These begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas. The prime areas continue to be fundamental throughout the EYFS.

They consist of -

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication and language
- Physical development

The prime areas of learning are a key focus throughout the pre-school year in order to develop firm foundations. These are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. It is very important for children to develop the three prime areas first as they are most essential for a child's healthy development and future learning. This then enables the children to progress on to the specific areas of learning within their Reception year.

Early Learning Goals - the Prime Areas	
Communication and language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Listening, Attention and Understanding ✧ Speaking
Physical development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Gross Motor Skills ✧ Fine Motor Skills

Personal, social and emotional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Self-Regulation * Managing Self * Building Relationships
---	--

Specific Areas of Learning

These include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas, and provide important contexts for learning.

They consist of -

- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Early Learning Goals - the Specific Areas	
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Comprehension * Word Reading * Writing
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number * Numerical Patterns
Understanding the world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Past and Present * People, Culture and Communities * The Natural World
Expressive arts and design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Creating with Materials * Being Imaginative and Expressive

The seven areas of learning and development must be delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult led activities and child-initiated activities.

Our children learn by playing and exploring, by being active and through creative and critical thinking. We use both the indoor and outdoor environments so that children can develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally.

We recognise our responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and will take all reasonably practicable steps to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions (on the school premises and during school-sponsored activities), equipment and systems of work for all our pupils, school personnel and visitors to the school.

Aims

- To give every child the best possible start in life and the support necessary to enable them to fulfil their potential
- To work closely with parents and carers in a joint partnership

- Ensure children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe
- To give children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life
- To share good practice within the school and with other schools
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.

Learning and teaching strategies

Practitioners support children's development through -

- Careful and regular observation to assess each child's progress and needs
- Embedding new learning in what is known or familiar
- Using a variety of teaching strategies and organisation
- Offering a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors
- Ensuring a balance between adult directed and child-initiated activities
- Providing opportunities for experimental learning
- Providing opportunities for both imaginative and role-play
- Providing a wide choice of tools and materials to encourage children's planning and decision- making skills and their sense of autonomy;
- Providing materials, artefacts and information when appropriate to enhance understanding;
- Encouraging positive dispositions towards learning
- Minimising routines that interrupt concentrated involvement in activities
- Using observational assessments to inform planning and the provision of activity differentiated to individual need
- Involving children in the planning of topics
- Providing opportunities freedom of choice within their learning

Responsibilities

Role of the Governing Body

- appoint a member of staff to be the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage who:
 - provides leadership in the development and management of the teaching and learning of the EYFS;
 - has a teaching responsibility and undertakes other associated responsibilities;
 - has responsibility for ensuring full compliance with all statutory responsibilities;
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- nominated a link governor to:
 - visit the school regularly;

- work closely with the Co-Headteachers and the Early Years Leader;
- attend training related to this policy;
- report to the Governing Body as necessary;

Role of the Co-Headteachers

- work in partnership with parents / carers to promote the learning and development of all children, and will ensure they are ready for later years in school;
- ensure that the seven areas of learning and development are used to shape educational programmes;
- ensure all teachers consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences in all areas of learning and development;
- ensure all teachers provide opportunities to learn and reach a good standard of English language during the EYFS, for those children whose home language is not English sufficient;
- ensure that pupils within the EYFS reach a good level of development as defined by the early learning goals;
- ensure that assessment is on-going and used effectively to plan activities and support learning; including the completion of the National Baseline Assessments;
- ensure the EYFS Profile is undertaken and completed at the end of the key stage;
- ensure the results of the EYFS Profile are sent to the local authority;
- develop positive relationships with parents;
- ensure good practice is shared;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy by:
 - monitoring learning and teaching through observing lessons
 - monitoring planning and assessment
 - speaking with pupils, school personnel, parents and governors

Role of the Early Years Foundation Stage Leader

Leadership and Management

- To lead and manage the EYFS working in conjunction with the Co-Headteachers, Senior Leadership Team and Governors
- To undertake leadership and management responsibilities
- To co-ordinate and be responsible for the organisation and management of the EYFS
- To advise and work closely with the Co-Headteachers and the nominated governor
- To work with the Co-Headteachers to develop an EYFS development plan and to monitor its effectiveness
- To ensure all EYFS policies are in place and regularly updated

- To lead and develop an effective EYFS team
- To provide and manage a stimulating EYFS environment
- To monitor all planning in accordance with the EYFS and school policies

Role of the Parents

- To support their child with their education through the guidance given by school.
- To support their child with early reading for example phonic sounds and reading everyday, for at least 20 minutes.
- To enhance their child's learning by giving them additional experiences for example visiting the local library or art gallery etc dependent on the topic being covered in school.
- To speak with their child's class teacher, in the first instance, if they have things to share about their child's well being or needs within the school.

Role of the Child

- To be ready, respectful and safe
- To follow the school values
- Learn more, remember more.

Resources and Budget

- To make effective use of resources and budget allocation
- To encourage children to be **respectful** of the resources and learning environment to support teaching and learning.

Transition

- To ensure smooth transitional arrangements between phases.

Transition is key to early success in our school and we ensure that we meet with the children, parents and existing support staff prior to the children starting school.

Support for developing the EYFS aims to...

- Provide guidance and support to all EYFS staff
- Provide training for all staff on induction and when the need arises
- Co-ordinate and oversee EYFS teaching staff and support staff
- Coach, mentor and develop all EYFS teaching staff and support staff

Research

- All staff will make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy and the working of the EYFS
- Teachers will keep up to date with new developments and resources

Health and Safety

All staff will undertake risk assessments when required.

The team will make daily checks of the classroom, corridor and outside learning spaces prior to the children entering.

Water for the water play will be emptied and cleaned daily, with equipment being sterilised weekly.

All equipment will be checked regularly and any items deemed unsuitable / unsafe will be removed.

Assessment in EYFS

Early Learning Goals

The level of development children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the early learning goals (ELGs) as set out below. The ELGs should not be used as a curriculum or in any way to limit the wide variety of rich experiences that are crucial to child development, from being read to frequently to playing with friends. Instead, the ELGs should support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development, and their readiness for year 1. When forming a judgement about whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, teachers should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. This is sufficient evidence to assess a child's individual level of development in relation to each of the ELGs. Sources of written or photographic evidence are not required, and teachers are not required to record evidence.

In Race Leys Infant School, we have created our own Milestone Document which allows us to assess and monitor at key times throughout the year. Our Milestones have been developed alongside professional colleagues and consortium EYs Members in order to see who is 'On Track' to meet the ELGs by the end of the academic year. We also use this to create a Baseline Assessment of where our children are when they join us in September. These Milestones are split into the seven areas and move from Milestone 1 to 6 with 1 - 3 being Pre-school/Nursery expectations and 4 - 6 being Reception expectations. We use these in a 'Best Fit' capacity.

Assessment and Data

- To ensure assessment procedures are in place for recording, reporting and tracking pupils' progress (including any statutory Baseline assessment);
- To use pupil data effectively;
- To undertake thorough and accurate tracking of pupil progress - Pupil Progress Meetings will take place termly in order to discuss the children's progress and understanding. These meetings will help to inform school and parents of the child's next steps in learning;
- To present termly pupil progress reports either in person or as a written report;
- To ensure EYFS Profiles are completed.

<p><u>Communication and Language</u></p> <p>ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions; • Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding; • Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers. <p>ELG: Speaking</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary; • Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate; • Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher. 	<p><u>Personal, Social and Emotional Development</u></p> <p>ELG: Self-Regulation</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly; • Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate; • Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. <p>ELG: Managing Self</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge; • Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly; • Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices. <p>ELG: Building Relationships</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others; • Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers; • Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs. 	<p><u>Physical Development</u></p> <p>ELG: Gross Motor Skills</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others; • Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing; • Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing. <p>ELG: Fine Motor Skills</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing - using the tripod grip in almost all cases; • Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery; • Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing. 	<p><u>Literacy</u></p> <p>ELG: Comprehension</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary; • Anticipate - where appropriate - key events in stories; • Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play. <p>ELG: Word Reading</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs; • Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending; • Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words. <p>ELG: Writing</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed; • Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters; • Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.
<p><u>Mathematics</u></p> <p>ELG: Number</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number; • Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5; • Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts. <p>ELG: Numerical Patterns</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system; • Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity; • Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally. 	<p><u>Understanding the World</u></p> <p>ELG: Past and Present</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society; • Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class; • Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling. <p>ELG: People, Culture and Communities</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps; • Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class; • Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and - when appropriate - maps. <p>ELG: The Natural World</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants; • Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class; • Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter. 	<p><u>Expressive Arts and Design</u></p> <p>ELG: Creating with Materials</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function; • Share their creations, explaining the process they have used; • Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories. <p>ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive</p> <p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher; • Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs; • Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and - when appropriate - try to move in time with music. 	