

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

We believe that good education supports every child in accessing the best possible start in life and maximises opportunities to reach their full potential. This policy reflects The Education Fellowship values for teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and should be used in conjunction with the policies for Accessibility, Child Protection and Health and Safety.

Children learn best through play-based activities and first-hand experiences. We believe that learning should be lively and active, where children are not only learning but also having fun. We believe that when children are motivated and engaged that deeper learning occurs. In our EYFS settings, we will:

-  recognise that all children are unique and special;
-  understand that children develop in individual ways and timescales including socially/emotionally, physically/cognitively and linguistically/academically
-  provide a happy, caring, safe and secure environment for learning which meets the individual needs and interests of the children;
-  develop warm and secure relationships between children and adults;
-  provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum;
-  provide firm foundations for future learning and development;
-  provide a high quality curriculum, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, from qualified, experienced and committed staff;
-  encourage children to become self-motivated and independent learners with a positive attitude to learning;
-  ensure positive home-school links, working with parents as partners;
-  provide opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play;
-  provide an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experiences.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

Teaching in the EYFS is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (2017). The Development Matters document (DfE 2012) states that "the

ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment 'playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically' underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner." These form the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning', which move through all areas of learning and need to be reported to parents at the end of the EYFS.

Within the EYFS, there are seven areas of learning. The **prime** areas 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. The **specific** areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas, and provide important contexts for learning:

(Ref: DfE Strategy Framework for EYFS " Securing the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to 5" published March 2017.)

Prime Areas of Learning	Specific Areas of Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal, Social and Emotional Development • Communication and Language • Physical Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy • Mathematics • Understanding the World • Expressive Arts and Design

The Learning Environment

We believe that the learning environment should stimulate, excite and extend children whilst providing familiarity and security. We aim to provide an environment where children are challenged to develop their independence and includes access to outdoor space. Our EYFS settings ensure that children are able to find and locate resources and equipment independently, and they are encouraged to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigations.

Learning through Play

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for 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 solve problems. There is a balance between adult-led and child-initiated play-based activities.

Preparation and delivery

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective planning builds on and extends what children know and can do. In our EYFS settings, planning is informed by observations of children's learning; taking note of their needs and interests. Medium term planning provides further detail of topic ideas and opportunities and takes into account the individual children's learning and developmental needs. Long term planning and delivery provides a framework to ensure a balanced and exciting curriculum for all children.

All of our planning and delivery is flexible and adapted to respond to children's needs and interests through ongoing assessment. Our planning for continuous provision, for both the indoor and outdoor area, is carefully planned to provide breadth of experience as well as allowing children to follow their interests and provide for children's individual needs.

Observation and Assessment

On-going formative assessment is at the heart of effective EYFS practice. Practitioners in our settings observe children as they act and interact in child-initiated play, through both incidental and focussed observations. This allows them to assess children's skills and knowledge. This information is used to plan activities and experiences which strengthen and deepen children's current learning and development. Children's achievement is tracked at three points within the year, using the EYFS Development Matters, to enable interventions to take place when necessary.

All practitioners are involved in observing children, using the information obtained to support their developing knowledge of children and informing them of individual abilities, needs, learning styles and interests. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make their next steps and progress. Learning profiles record children's progress in all areas of learning and development of the EYFS framework. Samples of children's work are gathered, along with photographic evidence and observations.

Staffing and the Role of Adults

Within Fellowship EYFS settings, adults act as facilitators of children's learning. We aim to provide stimulating learning activities, which are supported and extended by both teachers and teaching assistants. Adults lead small and large group focussed teaching activities, observe children engaged in child-initiated play and extend this where possible by playing alongside them.

There will be a designated leader with responsibility for the assessment and curriculum, to include:

-  organising the delivery of the EYFS and ensure progression and development
-  monitoring the planning and quality of delivery within the curriculum
-  keeping up-to-date in all developments within the EYFS
-  organising training to staff as appropriate
-  monitoring and updating resources
-  organising and monitoring assessment and moderation
-  analysing data for the cohort and providing reports as appropriate

Partnership with Parents

We recognise that parents/carers are the child's first and most enduring educators. We believe that when parents/carers and staff work together, the results have a positive impact on children's development. So, practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

Transition

Successful transition is key for the children's experience from nursery to Foundation and into Year 1. During the summer term transition activities for all children will begin to ensure that transition is seamless. This will include story swaps in both the children's old and new settings and activity session swaps. All children will visit their new setting or class for longer periods. Transition discussions between practitioners will take place prior to the end of the summer term.