

Early Years Foundation Stage

Introduction

This policy outlines the provision we offer to all our children aged six months to five years. Children within this age range are taught in The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to his/her full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and staffs know that learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

This policy has been informed by DfES documentation and Hertfordshire Local Authority.

Effective Early Years Education

Effective education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements. Therefore, staff ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued. Early years experiences build on what the children already know and can do. We ensure that no child is disadvantaged, and that parents and staff work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

To be effective, our curriculum is carefully structured (recognising different starting points; relevant to levels of need). Staff observe and respond appropriately to all children through the knowledge of how children develop and learn. We do not make a distinction between work and play. We support children's learning through planned activities, and decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for staff to support children's learning through play, by getting involved in the play ourselves and modelling by example. We plan, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention where staff engage children in the learning process throughout each day. We ensure that the learning environment reflects the children's needs and they have rich and stimulating experiences. Above all, we ensure effective learning and development for young children through high quality care and education by staff.

The Early Years Framework

The Early Years Framework in its current form became statutory in September 2012. At our nursery we adhere to this new framework. All children in the EYFS have access to a broad, rich topic based curriculum both indoors and outdoors. The seven areas of learning and experience, ages and stages, and the Early Learning Goals now provide a National Framework for individual schools and other pre-five settings in planning, teaching and assessing the early year's framework. We have adopted these areas of learning and experience and the national ages and stages, as the basis for our planning as they provide a framework which enables us to achieve our aims for under five provision.

The Seven Areas of Learning

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. Through play and practical experiences children learn about the world and their place in it. They learn through first hand experiences, talk, books and equipment. We set realistic yet challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities; children from all social backgrounds, children of all ethnic groups and those from all linguistic backgrounds.

The seven areas of learning covered by the framework are:

PRIME AREAS

PRIME AREA: Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

This area has three sub sections. These are Making Relationships, Self-confidence and Self-awareness and Managing Feelings and Behaviour.

The outcomes focus on children learning how to work, play, co-operate with others and function in a group beyond the family. Children are encouraged to be independent and make choices for themselves. Also being encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of others and respect other cultures and beliefs. They cover important aspects of personal, social, moral and spiritual development including the development of personal values and an understanding of self and others.

PRIME AREA: Communication and Language (C and L)

This is broken down into three sub sections. These cover Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking. These outcomes cover important aspects of language development and provide the foundations for literacy. Children's developing competence in speaking and listening is supported. We aim to extend and enrich the children's vocabulary through story time, rhymes, role play and group discussions. Older children are encouraged to share their own experiences through speaking in imaginative activities and talking about their own ideas. Other areas of learning also make a vital contribution to the successful development of literacy.

PRIME AREA: Physical Development (PD)

This covers both fine and gross motor development and keeping healthy. Physical development is implicit in all areas of the EYFS framework. Staff supports children's developing physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulative skills in indoor and outdoor environments. Positive attitudes are encouraged towards a healthy and active way of life by helping children to understand how their body works and what it needs to be healthy.

SPECIFIC AREA

SPECIFIC AREA: Mathematics (M)

This is broken down into two subsections. These are Number and Shape, Space and Measures. These outcomes cover important aspects of mathematical understanding and provide the foundation for Mathematics. They focus on achievement through practical activities and are using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas. Older children are given opportunity to learn about number, shape, space, position, pattern and measurement through daily activities, with younger children beginning to learn through nursery rhymes and suitable equipment available to them.

SPECIFIC AREA: Literacy (L)

This area of learning has two subsections of Reading and Writing. The objectives ensure success in early reading and writing skills. Phonics plays a big part in this area. We have a variety of resources for the children to help the children develop early literacy skills. We encourage children to treat books and other resources with respect and they are given many opportunities to listen to stories told by staff who use interactive resources when appropriate (story sacks, props etc) Children are also encouraged to use mark making areas and equipment indoors and outdoors to support their development in the early stages of writing in accordance with their age, ability and competence.

SPECIFIC AREA: Understanding the World (U the W :

This is a major area of learning and enquiry focussing on children's developing knowledge and understanding of their environment, other people and features of the natural and made world. All children are given opportunity to solve problems, investigate, and make decisions and experiment. They learn about living things, their environment, the world around them and the people who are important in their lives. Children are also given opportunity to develop computing skills and to use modern technology.

SPECIFIC AREA: Expressive Arts and Design (CD)

This covers art, music, and drama.

We provide opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, technology, music, movement, dance and imaginative play activities. Children are able to make paintings, drawings, collages, models and use basic musical instruments. We learn new songs and rhymes and enjoy singing them with each other. Older children begin to recognise different colours and mixing paints to explore what happens.

Planning

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. All the areas of learning provide a basis for our planning, where we set a specific activity each day. With addition to planning we encourage all children to make choices throughout the day selecting resources appropriately.

Our planning is divided into long term, medium term and short term.

Long term plans is an overview of learning using the EYFS by the whole team to give value to all ideas, reflecting the ethos of the setting. It includes themes/topics and activities celebrate festivals and cultures, outings and visitors. These topics are always relevant to our children and their interests. We also encourage parents to share topic planning and support us by offering help in areas they feel confident to do so.

Medium term plans address particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail for each month. We include links between areas of learning. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities and activities and experiences for each area of learning and development are identified.

Short term identify specific activities planned to achieve the objectives and highlight children's interests. Including differentiation of activities, staff deployment and resources, to meet the needs of the children, on a weekly and day-to-day basis. This allows for flexibility in response to individual children's needs and interests.

Staff ensure that all children are encouraged to experience all areas of activity during the week, although they may not experience them each day. A mixture of directed and free choice activities are planned and children's choices are carefully monitored to ensure a balanced programme.

The children begin by having free choice of activities for most of the session. This free programme is gradually directed by staff as children get older and more mature, so that as they approach transfer to Key Stage One, they are prepared for the Key Stage One framework.

Organisation of rooms

Please see our daily routines on display

Outdoor Play

We have a separate outdoor policy which gives more information about the principles behind outdoor learning and our vision for outdoor space.

Information for Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to attend our six monthly Parent's Evenings, open days, celebration assemblies and special events. Through your child's learning journal your child's achievements are recorded and inform us of

your child's next steps of learning that need to be planned for, we share these journals on a regular basis to inform the parents and carers of their child's progress through the curriculum.

Each room has a parent's notice board where information is displayed.

Home to school books are also used to share your child's daily experiences and makes further suggestion to support your child's development. This also provides opportunity for parents to provide us with their observations, photos and knowledge, therefore contributing to their child's learning journals ensuring that it is a shared document.

Links with the Community and other Agencies

We use every opportunity offered by the local community to enrich the children learning by visiting local parks, shops and other attractions such as museums, galleries and places of worship. People within the community are invited in to school to talk to the children these include, the police, fire officers, ambulance technicians, nurses, and dentists.

External teachers are often invited to work with the children to enrich the curriculum, such as our Forest School leader.

All visitors hold the relevant documentation and clearance to work in school.

We work closely with other professionals to ensure our children have the best support in their learning and development. These can include: Hertfordshire County Council, Learning Mentor; Children Centres; Health Visitors; and Social Services.

Assessment & Record Keeping

In accordance with the EYFS Framework, regular observations of the children are carried out. All children are assessed on entry and a baseline is known this then enables staff to monitor both the learning that is taking place and the provision to support each child's future learning needs. This enables us to plan for the next steps to meet individual development and learning needs. Early Years value the complete child; therefore, all subjects are treated equally. No child is subjected to testing in the Early Years. Each key person keeps an assessment folder and data is recorded both electronically and in the child's individual assessment file, all of which can be viewed by parents and carers when requested.

All children in the nursery have a Learning Journal that provides evidence of a child's time in the Early Years, progress throughout the curriculum and next steps in their learning. All parents, carers, staff and children are encouraged to contribute to these.

Also see out Two year Check Policy in place