

# Policy Review

Governors Policy Review Record	
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Responsible Staff member(s)	Deputy Headteacher – EYFS Lead
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Reviewed by Sarah Jardine June 2022	Amendments made and returned for Governors to read
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Darnhall Primary School



# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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## 1 Introduction

Early childhood forms the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Darnhall Primary School, we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development; however, we also believe early childhood is valid in itself, as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of the practitioners to take on the task of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents/carers, support staff and teachers work effectively together to support children's learning and development.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

1. **Every child is a unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
3. Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
4. Children **develop and learn at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years' provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

## 2 Aims

- To provide a happy, safe, stimulation and challenging programme of learning and development for the children.
- To provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum to give firm foundations for future learning, fostering independence, self-confidence and decision making.
- To assess and value each individual child's abilities and help them progress.
- To develop excellent relationships with parents/carers in order to build a strong partnership.
- To provide a caring and inclusive environment, with sensitivity to all children.
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop to their full potential socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.

## 3 The Curriculum

Our curriculum encompasses seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving.

These are called the prime areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social, and emotional development.

Four areas help children to strengthen and apply the prime areas.

These are called the specific areas:

- literacy
- mathematics understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

All areas are delivered through a balance of activities that lead towards the expectation that most children should reach the ELGs by the end of EYFS. Throughout their time in Reception our children partake in an ambitious curriculum which is designed in a sequential way to ensure progress towards the end of Reception goals. These goals are defined as Early Learning Goals (ELGs). The descriptors for these can be found in the appendix.

Play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms. Our curriculum incorporates learning through play, learning by adults modelling, by observing each other and through guided learning and direct teaching. We believe children learn best through activities which interest and inspire them. It is also important to highlight that our plans are flexible to allow us to respond quickly to children's new interests and/or needs.

The children are able to engage in activities using the characteristics of learning to challenge and extend their knowledge. Getting the right balance of child initiated and adult led activities is very important to us.

### 3.1 Characteristics of effective learning

Weaving throughout the EYFS curriculum are three **Characteristics of Effective Learning**. Activities are planned with these in mind to highlight the importance of the child's attitude to learning, being an active learner and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

- **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

These elements underpin how we reflect on each child's development and adjust our practice accordingly. Supporting children in their individual learning behaviour and observing the context of children's play is essential.

**'What children learn is important, but how children learn is even more important if they are to become learners in today's society.'** Helen Moylett, *How Children Learn*, Nancy Stewart (2011)

### 3.2 Planning and Observations

Teachers use the curriculum and the children's interests to plan exciting and challenging activities. The learning environment provides a key element of planning with enhancements being used to develop and extend the children's learning through play alongside the adult led activities. Planning is based on themes with some discrete teaching, for example in phonics.

Staff in the EYFS will observe and work alongside children, supporting and responding to their individual interests and needs to help build their learning over time. Through this close working with children, practitioners will gain a wealth of knowledge about a child. Observations of the children help to inform the teacher's planning and the children's next steps for learning. In line with the new revised EYFS framework, only observations of 'WOW' moments will be recorded individually for children online via 'Tapestry'. Parents/carers are invited to view their child's 'Tapestry' and to contribute observations from home. Other evidence, including adult led activities are recorded in floor books. In preparation for transition to Year 1, guided maths and English books will be used in Reception from the Summer Term.

## 4 Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process and involves all adults working with the children in the foundation stage environment. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, staff will draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement rather than physical evidence.

An informal baseline assessment will be completed when a child joins our setting. In addition, children who enter into reception will complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

All assessments are recorded on our whole school tracking system 'Insight.' Assessments are made on a half termly basis to provide a summary of attainment for each child. Assessments are recorded as: just below, on track, above and working at greater depth in each birth to 5 age band. At the end of the EYFS the children's levels are reported to the LA for analysis and comparison with other settings, indicating if a good level of development (GLD) has been made. Children are defined as having achieved a 'good level of development' if they have met the expected level in all 17 areas of learning.

## **5 Transition**

Transition to the Foundation Stage is carefully supported through a variety of systems.

- Close links across phases, including moderation
- Staff handover and discussion about individual children
- Class visits and stay and play sessions
- Shared theme days between ages and across phases
- Starting school story book sent home for parents/carers to share with their children before starting Reception
- School readiness sessions for Reception starter parents/carers and children delivered by the 'Starting Well' centre
- Parent/Carers' meetings to discuss the transition process including 'All About Me' documents being completed by parents
- FS2 teachers visit external nursery children in their existing setting where possible
- Open door policy for any parent/carer queries or concerns

## **6 Monitoring**

Regular monitoring of planning, teaching and progress occurs through the whole school monitoring system.

### **6.1 Responsibilities**

The Headteacher and Governors will:

- Monitor the implementation of the Early Years Policy
- With the Early Years Leader, monitor teaching, learning and standards in the foundation stage

The Early Years Leader will:

- Monitor the school's Foundation Stage progression and data
- Support teachers with planning and use of resources

- Undertake appropriate professional development to ensure an up to date knowledge and report to staff
- Liaise with external providers including the CWAC Early Years team.
- Lead staff professional development
- Manage the early years' team in the school
- With the Headteacher, monitor teaching, learning and standards in the Foundation Stage
- Produce and action plan for the Foundation Stage, setting out the priorities which will be incorporated in any school improvement plan
- Carry out any risk assessments and follow health and safety guidelines

Teachers will:

- Follow the principles set out in this policy
- Plan opportunities for relevant and creative use to extend and challenge children
- Plan for differentiation so that all children develop as individuals. This includes SEND, higher ability children and those with any other additional needs
- Use their knowledge of the children and adult led activities to inform planning and next steps
- Ensure the appropriate time is given to maintain a suitable environment for learning
- Report pupil's achievement in the 7 areas of learning and the characteristics of learning in the annual reports to parents
- Follow health and safety guidelines

All staff will:

- Ensure all adults and children handle and use equipment in an appropriate way
- Follow the health and safeguarding requirements set by the school
- Contribute as appropriate to the children's assessments through professional knowledge of the children any observations on 'Tapestry.'

## EYFS Early Learning Goal Descriptors (2021)

### Communication and Language

#### **ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding**

- 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.

#### **ELG: Speaking**

- 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.

### Personal, Social and Emotional Development

#### **ELG: Self-Regulation**

- 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.

#### **ELG: Managing Self**

- 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.

#### **ELG: Building Relationships**

- 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.

## **Physical Development**

### **ELG: Gross Motor Skills**

- 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.

### **ELG: Fine Motor Skills**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- 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.

## **Literacy**

### **ELG: Comprehension**

- 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.

### **ELG: Word Reading**

- 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.

### **ELG: Writing**

- 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.

## **Mathematics**

### **ELG: Number**

- 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.

### **ELG: Numerical Patterns**

- 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.

## **Understanding the World**

### **ELG: Past and Present**

- 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.

### **ELG: People, Culture and Communities**

- 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.

### **ELG: The Natural World**

- 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.

## **Expressive Arts and Design**

### **ELG: Creating with Materials**

- 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.

**ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive**

- 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.