

## EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

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### 1. Introduction

*'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to 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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'* (EYFS, Statutory Framework 2021)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year (Foundation Class). EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

### 2. A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others.

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*Our vision is to provide a superb village school, delivering a great education for one and all.*

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We will use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### *Inclusion*

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of differences. In our school, we believe that all our children matter. All children will be treated fairly, regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families will be valued within our school.

We will give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We will do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

We will set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We will 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 and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We will meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning 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 wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- 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 as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We will educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help the children understand why these exist. We will provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children (see Whole-School Safeguarding Children Policy).

### *Welfare*

*"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them."* (EYFS, Statutory Framework 2021)

We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the EYFS Statutory Framework Stage 2021.

We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.

- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe and efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We will endeavour to meet all these requirements.

### **3. Positive Relationships**

We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. All staff involved with EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

#### *Parents as partners*

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators. We value the contribution they make and the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating their children. We will support them in doing this by:

- Inviting all parents to a welcome meeting during the term before their child starts school, with opportunities to chat to school staff and class teachers. This also involves the teacher speaking on a 1-1 basis with each parent, which includes completing an initial meeting form, permission forms for Tapestry (an online Learning Journey, where parents can respond to observations and add their own, from the beginning of the academic year) and discussing an overview of the Early Learning Goals and Expectations.
- Sending each family an EYFS Class booklet before they start school with lots of relevant information about the EYFS and what to expect. This is for the children to help them become familiar with the school before they start.
- Establishing good links with and smooth transitions for the many children who come from local Pre-schools. Once the school knows which pre-schools the children are based at, the class teacher arranges to visit each child in their setting prior to the Learning Together sessions, if this is possible.
- Offering additional meetings with parents and individual transition sessions if required.
- Inviting children who have not attended Pre-school to visit the school before they start in September. The teacher will arrange a home visit if necessary.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in EYFS Class and allowing parents to look at their child's learning journey. The class teacher holds termly 1-1 meetings with the parents and Tapestry is used as an ongoing communication between school and home.
- Use Class Dojo to share whole class learning and communicate with parents.
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher if there are any concerns. The teacher will be available to have meetings outside of termly review meetings as necessary.
- Parents can download the Learning Journey through the Tapestry Programme. Where a parent is not able to download this document, the school will provide a printed copy for a small fee.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: topic talks, class assemblies, sports day, family day, etc. These can also include any additional pictures of comments parents upload on to the Tapestry Programme and any Home Learning Challenges that children bring in to share in school

### **4. Enabling Environments**

We recognise that the environment, both inside and outside, plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their

interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

### *Observation, assessment and planning*

Planning within EYFS usually starts by introducing a theme, which normally lasts about half a term or less. The EYFS teacher will use these plans as a guide for weekly planning. However, the teacher will alter teaching in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. Weekly planning is then changed to reflect the children's needs and interests.

Assessment in EYFS takes the form of observation and interaction with the children. This will involve the teacher and other adults as appropriate. Tapestry, an online assessment programme, is used to record observations. However, assessments will not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with the children. Tapestry can also be accessed by parents who can add/share their observations of any learning their child may demonstrate at home. This helps to give an overall picture of the child's interests, development and learning. This information is used to inform future planning.

We make best-fit judgements at the end of year about achieving the Early Learning Goals (emerging or expected). We also use 'Development Matters' throughout the year. Within the final term of EYFS, we comment on the Characteristics of Effective Learning, as well as the attainment of the Early Learning Goals. These are shared with parents in the end of Year School Report.

### *The learning environment*

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom allows for a transient set up where learning areas are created where and when they are needed to allow for the mixed age approach. Resources are very clearly labelled and easily accessible to enable the children to find equipment and resources independently.

The outside space offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that will help them to develop in all areas of learning.

## **5. Learning and Development**

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter-connected.

### *Teaching and learning style*

Our teaching and learning will be informed by:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement - this is achieved through ongoing close communication with parents, face to face each day, using the online Tapestry Programme on a weekly basis and Class Dojo.
- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching - through knowing the expectations of children at different stages of their development, the teachers are able to assess and plan to ensure all pupils continue to progress.
- The range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication - all EYFS children are given access to continuous provision that is carefully structured to enable them to develop at their own rate and

provide evidence towards their Early Learning Goals. This includes access to the indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.

- The good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school – through visits to the pre-schools, the teacher is able to discuss each child with their key worker.

### *Playing and Exploring*

*“...children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’ (EYFS Statutory Framework 2021)*

Through play our children will:

- Explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world.
- Practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules.
- Have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own.
- Communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.
- Express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

### *Active Learning*

*‘Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.’ (EYFS, Statutory Framework 2021)*

Active learning occurs when:

- Children will be are motivated and interested.
- Children will have some independence and control over their learning.
- Children will develop their confidence as they learn to make decisions.
- Children will achieve a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

### *Creativity and Critical Thinking*

*‘Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.’ (EYFS, Statutory Framework 2021)*

- Children will be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts.
- Adults will support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions.
- Children will access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS comprises 7 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 will be delivered through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

## 6. Monitoring and review

The EYFS teacher is responsible for implementing the requirements of this policy.

All teachers are observed by the head teacher on a regular basis.

The EYFS governor also observes practice within the Early Years.

The governors will review this policy annually and receive a report by staff on its implementation.