

EYFS DEPARTMENT

EYFS Learning and Development Policy

This Policy applies to the Early Years Department and is published to staff and parents.

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Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of three prime and four specific areas of learning:

PRIME AREAS

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

SPECIFIC AREAS

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. As practitioners, we focus strongly on the prime areas which are the basis for successful learning in the four specific areas. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Provision for the different areas of learning is made during both morning and afternoon sessions so that children who attend the setting on a part time basis have equal opportunity to experience the whole curriculum.

As an independent early years provider we have regard to the SEND Code of Practice 2014 (Updated 2015). Children who are exceeding age related expectations in any of the areas of learning will be provided activities of an appropriately challenging nature.

Policy Statement

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often linked.

EYFS Key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.1 Child development 1.2 Inclusive practice	2.2 Parents as Partners 2.3 Supporting Learning 2.4 Key person	3.1 Observation, assessment and planning 3.2 Supporting every child 3.3 The Learning environment	4.1 Play and exploration 4.2 Active Learning 4.3 Creativity and critical thinking 4.4 Areas of learning and development

Teaching and Learning Style

Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teaching staff have, of how children develop and learn and how this affects their teaching;
- 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;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout the EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning:

Playing and Exploring - engagement

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.”

(Early Years Foundation Stage, 2007).

- Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world;
- They have the opportunity to practise skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually;
- The children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems;
- They have the opportunity to express fear or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning - motivation

“Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.”

(Early Years Foundation Stage, 2007).

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Thinking Critically - thinking

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

(Early Years Foundation Stage, 2007).

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

The Importance of Play

Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.

(Section 1.8, EYFS Statutory Framework)

We believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is the fundamental way in which young children learn. Through play, children will be developing skills across all the Prime and Specific areas of learning, working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.

In a secure environment with effective adult support, children will be able to:

- explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world;
- take risks and make mistakes;
- think creatively and imaginatively;
- learn about and understand the need for rules;
- practise and build up concepts, ideas and skills;

- communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems;
- express fears to relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Adults in the setting will support play by:

- planning and resourcing a stimulating environment;
- supporting children's learning through planned play;
- extending and supporting children's spontaneous play;
- extending and developing children's language and communication in their play;
- asking questions about children's play.

All children must attend school on a full-time basis at the beginning of the term after they have turned five in line with statutory requirements.