**EY Policy Flowery Field (updated 23-24)**

**Our aim:**

Is to provide the very best learning environment for every child for them to reach their full potential. This includes children reaching a Good Level of Development (GLD) by the end of the Reception year and therefore providing a solid foundation to build upon, for the start of Year 1. We recognise that we have high levels of disadvantage and actively seek to diminish gaps through our provision and day-to-day practice.

The Early Years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

* it builds on what our children already know and can do
* it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged
* it offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors
* it lays solid foundations for literacy and numeracy learning
* it provides a rich and stimulating environment
* it encourages children to play and explore
* it promotes active learning
* it offers rich cultural capital to help diminish the disadvantage gap
* it fosters creative and critical thinkers

We equip all our children with the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding for future learning, so they leave Early Years as empowered, independent and resilient individuals that have the confidence and ability to **communicate effectively, problem solve, develop ideas** and **think creatively.**

We are committed to working in partnership with our families to ensure an active and flourishing learning community.

All development and learning is guided by the **EYFS Framework**; our setting and provision reflects the four themes:

* **Unique Child**
* **Positive Relationships**
* **Enabling Environments**
* **Learning and Development**

Early Years staff plan together to ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced across the following **areas of learning**:

* Communication and Language
* Physical Development
* Personal, Social and Emotional Development
* Literacy
* Mathematics
* Understanding of the World
* Expressive Arts and Design

The **Characteristics of Effective Learning** are evident throughout all activities.

**Play and Exploring** = Engagement

**Active Learning** = Motivation

**Creative and Thinking Critically** = Thinking

We plan own **unique curriculum** which draws on a number of influences, educational theory and links with whole school curriculum themes.

What and how we teach is in direct response to the needs of the children.

Learning is planned and built on the familiar. What the child can do is the starting point of their education.

Practitioners establish a clear understanding of children’s **strengths**, **interests** and **learning** **styles** so that they can respond accordingly, delivering a curriculum that builds sensitively and effectively upon starting points.

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. Our Early Years settings help our youngest children to continue to do this by providing a wide range of experiences that are **appropriate for their age and stage of development**.

Practitioners understand that each age phase has special qualities, strengths and needs, and their reflective practice supports these.

Practitioners plan all learning through **active**, **first-hand experiences** where time is given for **sustained play** to **explore**, **experiment** and **discover** within a social environment which emphasises what the child thinks and enjoys.

Practitioners offer each child the opportunity to learn indoors and outdoors by planning the most appropriate curriculum for their stage of development.

For our youngest children, practitioners focus strongly on the **three prime areas** – communication and language, physical and personal, social and emotional development, and gradually shift towards a more equal focus on all areas, as children grow and develop.

Curriculums are relevant to local surroundings and draw upon the resources available in the community to **strengthen cultural capital** and help **diminish any disadvantage gap**.

In the Nursery and Receptionchildren have **daily direct teaching of mathematics**, **literacy** and **phonics.** There is a strong emphasis on **laying the foundations of literacy and numeracy**.

**Teaching and Learning**

Each area of learning and development is implemented through **planned**, **purposeful play**, and through a **mix of adult-led** and **child-initiated activities**. Staff respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

**Features of our good EY practice includes:**

* 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 teachers 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 achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.
* 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 and self-management, extending their vocabulary.
* 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, which are regularly shared with parents.
* the **clear aims for our work**, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do.
* the **regular identification of training needs** of all adults working within the EYFS.

Children learn best through the use of **effective pedagogy** – a mix of different approaches. Our practitioners understand that children learn through **play**, by **adults modelling**, by **observing each other**, and through **guided learning** and **direct teaching**.

Practitioners carefully organise **enabling environments** for high-quality play. Sometimes, they make time and space available for children to invent their own play. Sometimes, they join in to sensitively support and extend children’s learning.

Children also learn through group work, when practitioners guide their learning. We recognise that older children need more guided learning.

A **well-planned learning environment**, **indoors** and **outside**, is an important aspect of our pedagogy.

Highly skilled adults support, extend and challenge learning, and develop knowledge through the **provision of continuous** and **enhanced play**, and by offering **new experiences**.

Where a child may have a **special educational need** or **disability**, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

**Play**

Play is important because it is the elemental learning process by which humankind has developed. Children have an instinctive desire to play whatever culture they are born into.

Play encompasses children’s behaviour which is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. It is performed for no external goal or reward and is a fundamental and integral part of healthy development. Physical, social, mental, emotional and creative skills, all of which underpin academic development, are all developed through play. It also allows the beneficial exposure of children to some levels of risk and challenge, giving them the chance to learn about the real consequences of risk taking. Play provides the opportunities for children to apply skills taught formally into real life situations.

In our Early Years settings, we do not see teaching as separate from play or infer teaching to mean one fixed view of how things should be done. We see teaching as the many ways in which adults, consciously or otherwise, help children to learn. Our Early Years seek every opportunity to support play and create an environment that fosters it.

**Enabling Environments**

The Characteristics of Effective Learning underpin everything that we do in our EYFS environments. They are rooted in the science of how children learn, and therefore guide and support the ways in which we create our learning spaces.

Our Early Years setting we:

* Foster environments that actively encourage children to play and explore. Not only to play freely, but support children’s learning through implicit and explicit challenge.
* Have lots of elements of ‘ambiguity’ and ‘open-endedness’ where resources are open to interpretation and exploration depending on who is holding them.
* Present interesting and relevant learning opportunities within the environment in order to support children to be ‘active learners’, demonstrating engagement, concentration and resilience when attempting a task. This includes creating environments led by children’s interests.
* Enable children to think, puzzle and work things out on their own and with others.
* Are great thinking environments! Where adults and children are developing and applying thinking strategies, accepting differences, hypothesising and extending thinking using ever-expanding vocabularies.
* Encompass both indoors and outside. Outdoor provision is such a crucial part of the EYFS curriculum and receives equal weighting in terms of planning and resourcing as indoors.

**Assessment**

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also consider observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks thata child starts **Reception class**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

In Nursery and Reception classes staff review progress through formative and summative data recorded on our Bromcom system and staff use this to identify areas of strength and need to establish next steps of learning so gaps are narrowed and learning is extended. This data is moderated across year groups to ensure a consistent approach is undertaken. It is then

discussed in termly pupil progress meetings with SLT and interventions are put in place and monitored by the EY Lead and AHT.

We offer parents/carers a consultation meeting after school in autumn and spring then a written report at the end of the summer term. These highlight the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed. In Nursery we discuss the child’s development in the 3 prime areas and CoEL initially, in Reception we look at all areas of learning to reach ELGs and Y1 readiness.

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

* Meeting expected levels of development
* Not yet reaching expected levels (‘emerging’)

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools and academies within the ELT, to ensure consistent assessment judgements.

EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

**Role of Parents/Carers**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there’s a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child’s progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child’s knowledge, understanding and abilities. We have parent/carer evenings twice a year and various open events throughout the year after school to share information and how we teach so families can support their children at home.

**Each child is assigned a key person** who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child’s development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

**Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures**

We recognise that 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.

We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We make sure that the appropriate statutory **staff:child ratios** are maintained in our settings to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

For children aged 3 and over:

Where there is a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another approved level 6 qualification, an instructor or another suitably qualified overseas trained teacher:

* + - For classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5 or older within the school year, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 30 children.
    - For all other classes, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children
    - Where a person with the above qualifications is not working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 8 children.

Settings have always at least one person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general by talking to the children about:

* The effects of eating too many sweet things
* The importance of brushing your teeth

We will reintroduce supervised tooth brushing in Nursery from Sept 24. Here we follow the [Public Health England guidance on supervised toothbrushing](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-oral-health-supervised-tooth-brushing-programme-toolkit) to make sure that it is evidence-based and safe.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school’s child protection and safeguarding policy.

**Transition**

Our Assistant Headteacher shows prospective parents around school in the autumn term and then contacts new families in spring when places are offered. She also meets with Nursery/pre-school settings to build communication and get to know families well before they start at Flowery Field. This transition process is smooth and helps to provide consistency and progression between settings and identifies children with additional needs so that we can put in place the best possible support.

SEMH/SEN/health issues are identified as early as possible so that we can attend meetings with families and other agencies or plan a more detailed, personalised transition plan to meet individual needs so that families are reassured that we can effectively meet need before they start school.

90 new pupils are then organised into 3 Reception classes, balanced as carefully as possible to effectively meet need and 52 pupils are placed in 2 Nursery classes at school, again, balanced as carefully as possible.

Our AHT organises visits for new families to look around school throughout the year.

An open afternoon is organised in early July for these families starting in Nursery and Reception so they can meet their new teachers and take part in activities in our setting. Information packs are given to families so they can find out details about school and sign data forms etc.

Our website is updated so that new families can access this with their children to become more familiar with school and our staff.

Ready, Steady …Go club is offered to families who may need support in transition once a week in the last half term in summer by our AHT and EY practitioner who can support with readiness for school.

Families of pupils with additional needs will have meetings with relevant agencies attended by our AHT and other relevant staff (teacher/pastoral/SEN staff).

A staggered entry system operates in September so that pupils can have a calm start to school.

An induction evening is organised in September for families to explain how our day works and how we teach reading, writing and maths at school.

Throughout the year we endeavour to hold information/workshop events to support families to help their children at home.

In the summer term we hold after school events for Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 to inform families about transition to their next year group. A ‘moving on afternoon’ happens in July when children go to their new teacher/TA and parents are invited for an information sharing event by the new teacher at 3pm. In the last half term all pupils have story time with their new teachers/TAs and in Nursery pupils join in Reception provision to become more familiar and confident with it.