

Larkhill Primary School

EYFS Policy

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The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Larkhill Primary School, children join the Reception class in the school year that they turn five. We aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential and prepare them to become active learners for life.

As outlined in the EYFS (2017)

'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.'

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- **A unique child** – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- **Positive relationships** – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- **Enabling environments** – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- **Learning and developing** – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

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; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEND)

All children and their families are valued at Larkhill Primary School. Children are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking into account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the schools SENDCo is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion policy for SEND.

We 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 to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.
- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.

Positive Relationships

At Larkhill we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Inviting all parents/carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school to share routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers might have. In 2020 this will be done virtually due to the pandemic.
- Talking to parents/carers about their child on entry to reception.
- Providing a handbook of information prior to starting Reception at Larkhill Primary School.
- Outlining the school's expectations in the home-school agreement.
- Offering both parents/carers and children the opportunity to spend time in the Foundation Stage before starting school. In 2020 due to the pandemic this will not be possible so we will provide videos to parents and children so they are able to see the Foundation Stage Environment.
- Holding a parent/carer consultation early in the academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- Liaising with the children's prior setting to find out how best we can support the children as they transition to Larkhill Primary School.
- Operating an 'open door' policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if the Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Using an online journey 'Tapestry' which enables both parents/carers and school staff to record observations and special events during their child's Reception Year.
- Offering three parent/teacher consultation evenings per year.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in Reception.
- Regular workshops held for parents to support children's development in all areas of learning.
- Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers. (If no restrictions are in place from the COVID-19 pandemic).
- Parents/Carers are invited in to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, Christmas productions and sports days. (If no restrictions are in place from the COVID-19 pandemic).
- Regular newsletters to inform parents of the activities their child will take part in during a theme of learning. These also outline ways in which parents can support their child's education at home.

Staff

Currently in Reception there is 1 Class Teacher and 2 Teaching Assistants.

All staff in the foundation stage aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking the time to listen to them.

Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The Foundation Stage classroom is organised to enable children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classroom has defined learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Reception classroom has an enclosed outdoor area, and children are able to free-flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Being outdoors offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. They are able to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interest. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests, experiences and learning needs. Play based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning. Assessment in Reception takes the form of both formal and informal observations. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways and contribute to the child's individual 'Learning Journey' profile book.

Learning and Development

At Larkhill Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in Early Years settings. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often inter-connected. Learning experiences will be child initiated or adult led with a balance between the two approaches in order for most children to reach the expected level of development required at the end of EYFS. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Prime Areas:

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

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Children's development is assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Reception pupils take part in daily phonics sessions, following the guidance from the Read, Write Inc programme and in line with school policy.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

Playing and Exploring – Children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things and 'have a go'.

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. We deliver learning for all of the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Active Learning – Children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.

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 Critical Thinking – We encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Children should be given an 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.

Observations

Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Relevant and significant observations are recorded on Tapestry to be shared with parents and then collated into a Learning Journey book. Tapestry is an electronic learning journey which holds your child's observations. You can log into this through an app or website and see the progress your child is making. In addition to this you can upload your own observations of your child's achievements from home.

Assessment

During the first term in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each of the children through observation and activities. These observations form a baseline assessment of the children. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching program for individual children and groups of children.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are 'exceeding' expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Children will receive a 'good level of development' if they achieve the expected level for the early learning goals for the prime areas and in the specific areas for literacy and mathematics.

Teaching and Learning Styles

We recognise that features of effective teaching and learning in 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 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 work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout 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 regular identification of training needs of all adults working in the Foundation Stage.

Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Safeguarding and Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We 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 well-being of all children.

“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.”
DFE ‘Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage’ 2017, pg 16)

At Larkhill Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017. We understand that we are required to:

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence.
- Promote the welfare and safeguarding 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 the purpose it was intended for;
- 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 efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of all children.

Health and Safety

We follow the TWHF ‘Health and Safety’ policy which all staff and students are familiar with and we have designated people responsible for first aid in school. Children are taught the safe and appropriate use of equipment and materials. Children are taught to be mindful when moving around the school and are aware of safety issues. Our health and safety policy is available on the school website. No hazardous substances are used within the setting.

Medicines and First Aid

We follow the TWHF ‘First Aid and Medication’ policy which is available on the school website.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher, Early Years Leader, SLT, and Governors will monitor standards in the Foundation Stage in line with identified priorities. This policy will be reviewed in October 2021.