



Early Years Foundation Stage

Policy

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To be reviewed April 2020

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. Our Early Years Foundation Stage accommodates children from the age of 3 to 5 years.

In our school we have one nursery class and two reception classes. Our nursery class has 24 available places and children are offered a place in the September following their third birthday.

In nursery there is one full-time teacher, one deputy manager and two nursery practitioners.

Whilst we are adjoined to the rest of Langley Park Primary Academy unfortunately attendance at our nursery does not guarantee a reception place and parents/carers must reapply for a school place.

Each reception class has a full time teacher and a learning support assistant. To ensure best practice and continuity our foundation stage classes work closely together and share planning, activities and an outdoor learning environment between the reception classes.

Aims

At Seedlings Nursery we aim to give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life, in which they can establish solid foundations on which to develop into independent and fearless lifelong learners.

We will encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere; to support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing; to help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and by developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

Our high expectations will enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally and to achieve their full potential. We offer a range of learning opportunities for children across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, both within our purpose built nursery and also our outdoor environment, which includes a garden, climbing area and forest school site.

The Curriculum

The Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the 2014 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available to download at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>.

This clearly defines what we teach. The following policy details the specifics of our setting.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

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 assemblies and rewards, encouraging children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Positive relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families. Within nursery we have a key person system that allows all children and their families to build a secure relationship with our staff to enable a two-way discussion about your child's progress and what can be done to best support the development of each individual child.

Enabling environments

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests and stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning. We ensure the activities within the nursery are engaging, exciting and capture the interests of the children within our care.

Learning and development

Our foundation stage has one nursery classroom, two reception classrooms and a large outdoor classroom which the reception classes share and a separate outdoor classroom for the nursery children. All our learning environments are 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 seven areas of learning are defined so that children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of **three prime** area of learning:

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

There are **four specific areas** of learning:

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

At Seedlings Nursery all areas of learning are delivered through a well-planned play approach, with a balance of adult led and child led activities, which we refer to as 'ChIL' time. Throughout the foundation stage our long, medium and short-term plans ensure that every child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum appropriate to their developmental level.

Within the EYFS we deliver our curriculum through the Primary Years Programme as part of the IB (International Baccalaureate). Through this approach to learning which develop children's inquiry skills and questioning about the world around them. This helps to create confident, capable children who have a thirst and love of learning.

Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the foundation stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. In doing so we can provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning and to help them make sense of the world. Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics are;

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.

Inclusion

Our whole school ethos, as well as that of Seedlings nursery, embraces inclusion. We recognise and respect the abilities and strengths of our children at all levels of development and the wealth of knowledge and experience that they bring from their differing backgrounds and cultures.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning and we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of individual children, so that children are able to reach their full potential. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more-able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We aim to build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, developing their self-esteem and confidence using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs

We will provide: a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively; a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued; resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping; challenging activities for all children and for those whose ability and understanding are advanced. We will monitor children's progress and take action to provide support as necessary. Where a specific need is suspected we will liaise with the Inclusion Leader and seek advice from outside agencies, such as the speech and language service, the educational psychologist and the bi-lingual support services amongst others.

Assessment

Throughout nursery and reception children knowledge, understanding, skills and achievements are assessed and tracked using the developmental stages set out in the document 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)'.

Our assessment depends on us getting to know our children very well and to this end we gather information from a range of sources; observations of the children in play, in adult led activities, through discussions with parents and carers and through talking to the children. We keep written and photographic evidence to help us build up a picture of children's strengths and achievements and to help us to plan for children's next steps in learning. Every child in nursery and reception has a 'Learning Journal' in which we record our observations and keep samples of the children's work. Within these learning journeys we record each child's observations, next steps as well as when their next steps have been met.

At the start of both Nursery and Reception children are assessed to determine a baseline, or starting point, for their future learning. Judgements will be based on the adults' observations of children during activities and play.

Throughout the Foundation Stage both written reports and parent's meetings will happen regularly to ensure that parents are aware of their child's

Throughout the year children's knowledge, skills and understanding will continue to be tracked throughout the foundation stage and assessed against the document 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)'.

Transitions

At Seedlings nursery we recognise that starting school and moving up classes has the potential to be a stressful time for both children and parents. To this end we have established a strong procedure for transitions to ensure that our children and parents are as confident and secure as they can be when facing the challenges of each year group.

When a child first starts at Seedlings nursery they will have taster sessions to allow them to familiarise themselves with the setting and staff. It is during this time that the child's key person will work with the family to discuss any specific needs your child may have or how we can support them settling into nursery life. If a child has additional needs that may need further support, transition may be gradual and this will be planned with the key person and reviewed regularly. We withhold the right to make the final decision as to when children start full-time Nursery if it's in the best interests of the child, but we will take into consideration the views of the parent(s)/carers.

We understand the need for children to feel secure and safe within a setting to allow them to develop. With this in mind we have a criteria by which all children must meet to allow them to progress to more hours in the setting. This will be in conjunction with discussion with the nursery teacher/principal.

The child should be able to:

1. Separate from carer easily.
2. Move independently around the garden and class.
3. Stay awake and energetic throughout the session.
4. Be able to independently feed themselves.
5. Be able to express their needs and wants to an adult.
6. Be able to independently access areas of the nursery.
7. Behave appropriately (and non-aggressively) for the majority of the time.
8. Attempt to manage their own personal hygiene.

Partnership with Parents

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what their child does at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child and to feel comfortable in our setting.

We want parents to play an active role in their child's time in Seedlings, with this in mind we run 'play and stay' sessions which give our parents the opportunity to explore life in the nursery as well as regular opportunities to contribute to your child's learning journey, through such things as proud clouds.

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We provide every child in nursery and with a 'Nursery Home Journal'. The purpose of these books is so that parents can share information about their child's experiences and achievements outside school with nursery and contribute to their child's learning journey.

We also have 'Proud Clouds' which parents can complete to share something that their child has done at home with their friends in nursery.

Health & safety and safeguarding

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 the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2014) and we adhere to the school's safeguarding policy.

We encourage a healthy lifestyle within nursery and our children are able to receive free milk and all children have access to fresh water and free fruit from a Government scheme. Children have the option of a cooked school dinner or to bring in a healthy packed lunch.

The nursery has its own toilets within the unit and we teach children the importance of hygiene, hand washing techniques and throughout the year we plan cooking activities to give children experiences of a range of healthy food and regularly encourage the children to make their own snacks during the sessions.