



DOLPHINHOLME CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

December 2021

Mission Statement:

With God at the heart of everything we do, we educate by encouraging a sense of wonder, praise and mutual respect. We offer every child opportunities for success, making them confidently equipped for life's journey.

Intent

Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their schooling. It is a holistic education that encompasses all learning and development. This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Little Dolphins and Dolphinholme CE Primary School.

Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

In the EYFS we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential.

We aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- recognising that all children are unique and special
- understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates
- providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know they are valued by staff looking after them
- fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community
- teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways
- encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes
- developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously
- supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions which differ to their own
- understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development
- providing learning experiences which reflect children's interests to encourage and develop

INSPIRING SUCCESS, CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENT

I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.
John 15:5

their natural desire, excitement and motivation to learn

- providing experiences which build on children`s existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development
- providing effective learning opportunities in the whole environment, both inside and outside

Implementation

Structure and Curriculum

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021.

Children may be admitted to Nursery from the age of two years.

All children are eligible for 15 hours per week Universal Funding the term after their third birthday. The Universal Free Entitlement is offered over 38 weeks of the year. Some 3 year olds are entitled to 30 hours free childcare. 'Free Entitlement' funding is calculated on a daily basis, based on the number of days booked to attend each term, and the number of school weeks per term – so it will vary each term depending on the length of the term.

Sessions

Little Dolphins (FS1)

Monday to Friday 08.45 to 11.45

Lunch 11.45 to 12.15

Afternoon session 12:15 to 15:15

After School session available until 18.00 (alongside other year groups from school)

Reception (FS2)

Monday – Friday Children are expected to arrive at 08:50 for registration at 09:00

The end of the school day is 15:15

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children`s capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are: Communication and language; Physical development; Personal, social and emotional development. The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas: Literacy; Mathematics; Understanding the world; Expressive arts and design.



In addition to these areas of learning, we strive for our children to develop effective '**Characteristics of Learning**', which will enable them to become learners for life.

Children will play and explore their environment showing engagement by finding out and exploring, play with what they know and be willing to 'have a go'.

Children will be active learners, showing motivation by being involved and concentrating, keeping on trying and enjoying achieving what they set out to do.

Children will be creators and think critically by having their own ideas, making links and choosing ways to do things.

Teaching and learning

A core part of Early Years learning at Dolphinholme is based on teaching children from a young age about the importance of using Christian Values in their own lives. Through Values based learning in active acts of worship and taught sessions, children are given the means to use Values to drive their thinking and behaviour. This supports pupils with beliefs about themselves, their actions, relationships and positive behaviour, which is reflected across the whole school.

As adults we support our children by:

- Fostering a desire to learn by nurturing active questioning and an awareness of the world around them
- Encouraging children to express their thoughts and ideas in a variety of situations
- Helping children to become competent speakers and listeners
- Developing confidence by praising success and encouraging effort
- Learning through play and experience learning first hand

Each area of learning and development is implemented through a focus upon holistic enquiry, planned, purposeful play, and a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. As educators we look for creative ways to capture children's natural curiosity and shape their exploration in meaningful and purposeful contexts. All staff are responsive to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their learning and development through warm, positive and focused interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

'Children at play are able to stay flexible, respond to events and changing situations, be sensitive to people, to adapt, think on their feet, and keep altering what they do in a fast-moving scene. When the process of play is rich, it can lead children into creating rich products in their stories, paintings, dances, music making, drawings, sculptures and constructions, or in the solving of scientific and mathematical problems.' (Bruce, 2001, p.46)



Planning

Unique child

We pride ourselves in providing the best possible start to a child's education. All children within the early years learn through play: exploring their surroundings; and, developing their characteristics for learning, with support from attentive and experienced adults.

Each child is considered 'unique' and their individual learning is catered for within the natural beauty of the Dolphinholme.

Positive Relationships

We believe it is vitally important to develop a partnership between all the adults involved with each child. By working together, we can provide knowledge of the 'whole child' to assist their future learning and needs.

Positive relationships are key to every child's education. We pride ourselves in developing excellent working relationships with parents; understanding their role as first and most enduring educators of their children. And with the children by helping them to share, care and learn together.

Enabling Environment

We provide a stimulating 'enabling environment' both indoors and out, where children can experiment and explore through first hand experiences, encouraging a sense of awe and wonder, whilst being able to ask questions and solve problems. We provide a safe, welcoming, emotional environment where children may be helped to exceed their potential. We develop children's independence, self-belief, confidence and a positive growth mindset.

Learning and Development

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience.

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.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

Assessment

At Dolphinholme, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the 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 take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA, May 2021).

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, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.



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John 15:5

Working with parents

Key to ensuring high quality early years experience is to ensure continuity between all settings and to ensure that the children's social, emotional and educational needs are addressed appropriately. At Dolphinholme, transition is seen as a process, not as an event and is planned for and discussed with parents, children and practitioners of the pre-school settings that the children of Dolphinholme attend. We acknowledge that parents are the children's first and most enduring educators and that when parents and practitioners work together the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning.

We encourage parent partnership through:

- Showing respect and understanding for the role of the parent in the child's education
- Listening to accounts of their child's development and any concerns they may have
- Making parents feel welcome by being friendly, approachable and having an open door policy
- Maintaining an on-going dialogue
- Being flexible in arrangements for settling children in
- Meeting with parents of Reception children regularly to discuss progress
- Through the use of Evidence Me, an online learning journal which parents can access at home
- Encouraging parents of reception children to make use of the home/school communication book which is looked at daily by an EYFS staff member

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is 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. Each child in Pre-school 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.

Inclusion

At Dolphinholme, we understand that Inclusion is meant in the widest sense. It incorporates children and young people as well as the rights of parents/carers, students and all staff. It includes individual children with special educational needs and / or disability, as well as those from minority groups; Travellers; and any other diverse cultural groups. It also includes those with English as an additional language and Children in Public Care (looked after children). Those with specific medical needs; suffering from low self-esteem: or experiencing mental health difficulties are also included. It also incorporates the rights of the child and equal opportunities, as well as any other groups at risk of exclusion or social exclusion.

We will seek advice from our EYFS leader, SENDCO or SLT if we have any concerns over a child's progress.

Monitoring

The coordination and planning of the EYFS curriculum will be the responsibility of the subject leader. This will be addressed through regular planned staff meetings to ensure progression of knowledge and skills.

The early years foundation stage will be monitored and evaluated in the following ways:

- Monitoring of teaching and learning by the SLT and subject leader through observations, learning walks, monitoring of planning/displays/pupil progress
- Sampling children's work and assessments
- In school and local cluster moderation sessions
- Analysis of data
- Parent and pupil questionnaires
- Curriculum governors to join in lessons/talk to the children



Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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. We know that children learn best when they are healthy and safe, when their individual needs are met and when they have the chance to build positive relationships with the adults around them and their peers.

Impact

The impact of the EYFS curriculum at Dolphinholme is reflected in having well rounded and happy children who transit confidently into Year One. Our children embrace the 'Golden Rules' which link to our Christian Values and demonstrate these by acting them out in daily life.

We measure progress and children's learning across the year through formative and summative assessment which are based on the teacher's knowledge of the child, photographs and videos on Evidence Me. At the end of EYFS our children;

- have strong communication skills, both written and verbal. Our children also listen respectfully and with tolerance to the views of others,
- take pride in all that they do, always striving to do their best,
- demonstrate emotional resilience and the ability to persevere when they encounter challenge,
- develop a sense of self-awareness and become confident in their own abilities, are kind, respectful and honest, demonstrate inclusive attitudes and have a sense of their role in our wider society.

Subject Leader: Colette Dunne

Reviewed: December 2021

Policy to be reviewed at least every two years, unless changes in the EYFS Curriculum.

