



Early Years Policy

Document Adopted By Governing Body	
Signed (Chair):	
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Early Years Foundation stage Policy

Within this document, the Early Years Foundation stage is used to describe children who are in our F1 and F2 provision.

Aim

At Ladycross Infant School 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 which enable children to become confident and independent learners. We value each individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and to enable every child to reach their full potential.

As outline in the EYFS “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 five have a major impact on their future life chances.”

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Admissions Policy
- Health and safety Policy
- Equal opportunities Policy
- Special Needs Policy
- Behaviour Policy

We adhere to the statutory framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years Settings:

- Every child is unique, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;
- Children learn to develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and carers;
- Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates.

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Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as a vehicle for learning;
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support;
- Working partnerships with parents and carers;
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, Informed by observation and assessment;
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-led and child-initiated
- Provide a safe and secure learning environment indoors and out.

Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum, based on our observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the Early Learning Goals at the end of their F2 year.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter- linked.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas are the **Prime** areas.

1. Communication and language
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, social and emotional development.

Children are also supported through the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the world
4. Expressive Arts and Design

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Planning

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

We follow medium term plans using the EYFS based on a series of themes alongside children's interests, offering experiences in all seven areas of learning. Please see our plans for more details. These plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

The Early Years topic planning is divided into key questions, one of each is explored each week of the topic. Knowledge organisers are available to parents on the website at the beginning of the topic. Information to parents also includes speaking and discussion points, research ideas and possible activities to do to support their child with the topic. We also record the children's learning of the week's topic by putting work in our floor books. This could be comments the children have made, pieces of work or photographs from our learning that week. It also includes any work the children have done at home about the topic.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in F1 will focus strongly on the three Prime Areas which are the basis for successful learning in the other four Specific Areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capabilities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years at our school and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Children have whole-group and small-group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS. These include daily phonics and Maths sessions in F2 using the Rocket Phonics Scheme and Power Maths.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS. Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults.

“Children learn as they play. Most importantly, in play children learn how to learn.”

-O. Fred Donaldson

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We create a stimulating environment both inside and outside to engage children in different types of learning and to stimulate a child's curiosity. The organisation of the learning environments reflects the importance that is placed on children learning through play and first-hand experience, developing independence and having opportunities to initiate their own activities.

During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.

Observation and Assessment

Assessment at the start of the reception year – **The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)** is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception.

Assessment at the end of the EYFS – **the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)** In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. Each child's level of development must be assessed against the early learning goals. Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('). The Profile must be completed for all children, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Reasonable adjustments to the assessment process for children with SEND must be made as appropriate. Early years providers must report EYFS Profile results to local authorities, upon request.

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We use I can assessment statements to assess children during each term. The children's progress is regularly discussed with parents. Parents of children in Early Years are invited to attend a parent evening in the Autumn and Spring terms and a written report is given to the parents in July which is based on the child's progress in the profile. Parents of F1 children are invited to attend settling in visit with their child in September. A written report is given to parents in July which is based on the child's progress and their readiness for school using Derbyshire's ten golden keys.

Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety. We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of healthy snacks during the morning

and nutritious food at lunch time for those who choose a school dinner. We also follow set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Please see our separate policies and procedures on Health and Safety, Child Protection and Illness and Injury.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals at Ladycross Infant and Nursery School, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

Please see our separate policies of Equal Opportunities and Special Educational Needs.

Parents as Partners and the wider context

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers, as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning.

We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways. Operating an "open door" policy enables parents/carers to come and discuss concerns and developments with staff in an informal manner. We use class dojo as a way of informing parents about their children's learning and to send information such as phonics and important dates. We also hold termly Parent engagement sessions where parents are invited into classes to join in activities with their child.

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times, we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for, and time given, to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and playgroups.

Children attend an introductory session to F1 to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners at the beginning of September or January. We adopt a "staggered start" approach to children entering F1 for the first time, meaning that a few children start together on the same day, and then groups of children start at staggered intervals throughout the next two weeks. We find this ensures a calm and settled start to F1 life for the children.

When the children are ready to move to F2 we provide a comprehensive transition. Over the final summer term, the children are given several opportunities to visit their class for short periods of time to become familiar with the school and classroom

environment and to meet the teachers and teaching assistants. These sessions often include story times with a chance for the children and teachers to engage in a calm and enjoyable activity. The Foundation teachers also meet to share information and EYFS progress

For children entering F2 who have not been through our F1, we provide opportunities for the teachers to visit the settings, before the children start school, and meet the children. The teachers also have the chance to visit and speak to the practitioners of the child's setting and share information and records.

In the final term of F2, the Foundation teachers and Year 1 teachers liaise to discuss the individual children, their needs and analyse the assessment data to inform planning. The children also have an opportunity to spend a morning with their new teacher, before moving up, to become familiar with the new teacher and classroom.

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