

Education

EYFS Policy

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13/7/2020	1.0	Policy written
05/09/2022	1.1	Amendments to Observation and Assessment, Transitions
01/09/2024	1.2	Review and academy name change

EYFS Policy

Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is used to describe children who are in our Nursery and Reception classes.

Aim

At Leigh Academy Dartford 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.

As outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage framework: '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 Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings covering the education and care of all children including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

- Every child is a **unique child**, 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 and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.**

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced, inquiry-focused curriculum, based on the EYFS Framework and the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Provide early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers within the wider context.
- 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-initiated

and child-initiated, supported by the adult.

- Have a key person approach, in nursery, to develop close relationships with individual children.
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out.

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.

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

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.

These three areas are the **prime** areas:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

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:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

We use the **educational programmes** of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework to create enabling environments that support all seven areas of learning and development, across all of our indoor and outdoor classrooms.

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.

As a school, we also follow the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (PYP) and this runs alongside the EYFS curriculum. Our transdisciplinary themes offer experiences in all seven areas and support the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Children have inputs, usually as a whole class, as well as smaller group times to extend and challenge them on an individual basis. In Reception, there are daily phonics sessions using 'Read, Write, Inc' and teaching of aspects of Mathematics and Literacy.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS:

'Practitioners must stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning.'

We plan a balanced range of activities to include children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During play, early years practitioners continuously interact with the children to stretch and challenge them further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and implement these in our practice.

Observation and Assessment

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. The practitioners use their knowledge and observations to track the children's development and use this to inform future planning whilst taking into account their age and abilities.

In the Nursery, we offer time for parents and carers to speak with their child's key worker. At the end of the year, they also receive a report about their progress across the year and their next steps in preparation for starting reception.

In Reception, parents receive feedback about their child's progress at parent consultations. At the end of the year, they also receive an end of year report which includes their child's profile scores and information about their Characteristics of Effective Learning. This information is also shared with the Year One teachers.

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. This includes educating children about online safety, road safety and stranger danger.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals at Dartford Primary Academy, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, disability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace so that all children have the opportunity to achieve 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.

Parents as Partners and the wider context

We strive to create and maintain partnerships 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.

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.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting.

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 childminders. Children attend introductory sessions, to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. Where possible, practitioners visit the settings from which the child is coming into the school to have an opportunity to share information with the child's key worker.

In the June prior to the children starting at DPA, all parents are invited to meet with a member of the Early Years team to discuss their child in more detail and ask questions of their own.

In the final term, the new teachers will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the development matters statements (Nursery) or Early Learning Goals (Reception) in order to support a smooth transition into their new class. This discussion helps the teachers to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.