

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Low Ash Primary School



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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

“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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, March 2017)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, all Foundation Stage 1 (FS1) children begin attending nursery part time or full time at the start of the school year in which they turn four and FS 2 children begin attending school full time at the start of the school year in which they turn five.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Low Ash Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

Aims & Objectives

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. At Low Ash Primary School, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments

- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At Low Ash Primary School 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 circles and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Low Ash Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion, gender, social background or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. 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.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

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 and learning 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 for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

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. (See Whole School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy)

Welfare

"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."

(3.1, Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2017)

At Low Ash 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:

- promote the welfare 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 purpose
- 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 the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

At Low Ash Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognise the role that parents/carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this by:

- talking to parents/carers about their child before their child starts in our school;
- offering to visit all children in their home/pre-school setting prior to their starting school;
- offering the children the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- inviting all parents/carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- outlining the school's expectations in the Home-School agreement.
- offering parents/carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Nursery and Reception classes and allowing free access to the children's profiles;
- written contact through our half termly Parent Information Sheets, Reading records and school newsletters.
- encouraging parents/carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents/carers twice a year at which the teacher and the parent/carer discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher.
- parents/carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers: Open days, workshops, Sports Day etc;
- providing space in the children's profiles for parents/carers to leave comments relating to the children's achievements.

- Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning e.g. listening to readers.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. In accordance with the Statutory Requirements, each child has a named Key Person. Their role is to:

- help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs
- help the child become familiar with the setting
- offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents.

(3.26, Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2017)

The Reception and Nursery staff and children work closely together. The Reception teachers meet with staff to discuss new intake children. They also visit other settings or make home visits to meet other new intake children.

Enabling Environments

At Low Ash Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The Planning within the EYFS follows the schools' Long Term Plan and Medium Term Plans (MTPs), which are based around half termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning; however the teacher may alter these MTPs in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in children's individual profiles. They also contain information provided by parents/carers and other settings.

At the end of FS 2, we use the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) to record if children have reached expected levels of development. Each child's level of development is recorded against 17 assessment scales derived from the Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents/carers, reporting their progress against the ELGs. We organise a parents meeting to explain these final assessments and we give reasonable opportunities for the parents/carers to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher. We also submit these results to Bradford Council.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classrooms 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 classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. They also have their own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At Low Ash Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our curriculum policies on teaching and learning define the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents/carers, 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 the 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 and self-management;
- 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, which are shared with parents/carers;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

The EYFS Curriculum – Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in Early Years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.

They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels 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.

The three Prime areas are:

- 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 levels are 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.

However, if a child’s progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child’s parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Nursery and Reception pupils also participate in daily phonics sessions, following the guidance in the “Letters & Sounds” document 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: Engagement

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 express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning: Motivation

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.

Creating and Thinking Critically: Thinking

Children should be given 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 ended questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. Low Ash has a named Governor with responsibility for the EYFS. They discuss EYFS practice with practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the Full Governing Body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head teacher, Senior Leadership Team, Foundation Stage Leader and Subject Leaders will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Signed: **Named Governor for Early Years**

Date of next review Spring Term 2021