

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



DUKE OF NORFOLK CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Approved by:

Governing Body

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**“When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today.
We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow.”**

Development Matters Sept 2020

1 Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

1. That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
2. Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
3. A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.
4. Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

2 Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) for 2023.

3 Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage the Duke of Norfolk Primary CE Primary School focuses on the distinct needs of children aged three years to the end of the Reception Year. In our Foundation classes children are cared for and provided with a stimulating and challenging environment to try to give them the best possible start to their education. In partnership with their family and carers, we enable children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

This policy links with the *Every Child Matters* agenda, in that every child has a right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, and achieving economic well-being.

4 Intent

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their Reception Year. In our school, children join us from three years of age. Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday. Key Stage 1 begins for our children at the beginning of Year 1. The EYFS is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later learning. The Early Years Framework sets out through the Early Learning Goals what is expected of most children by the end of the EYFS.

The Early Years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- > It builds on what our children already know and can do, developing self-esteem, confidence, social skills, and independence.
- > It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged.
- > It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors.
- > It prepares children for the next steps in their learning by providing explicit links to the Y1-Y6 curriculum.
- > It provides a rich and stimulating environment that enables the development of positive attitudes to learning, trust, curiosity, and friendships.
- > It enables children to make an effective transition from home to school.
- > It ensures the EYFS learning and development requirements, as set out in the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Our curriculum offer is shaped by the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2023) and the important and inter-connected *Seven Areas of Learning*:

Three areas of learning are particularly important for building a foundation and igniting children's curiosity, forming relationships, and thriving. These are the **prime areas of learning**:

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

The three prime areas of learning are strengthened and applied through the specific areas of learning. The **specific areas of learning** are:

- > Literacy
- > Mathematics
- > Understanding the world
- > Expressive Arts and Design

Four guiding principles shape practice in Early Years. These are:

- > **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.
- > Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates.

5 Implementation

5.1 Planning

Our staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children focus strongly on the **three prime areas**.

We plan as a team, organising a range of experiences and opportunities based on 'real' events, which give children chance to make decisions and choices, work individually or in groups, and explore the learning environment. We organise the curriculum into areas of **Continuous Provision**, which are enhanced by mini topics and are linked to all **seven areas of learning**, all underpinned by the development of **Language and Communication**. The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others; they are equally important and depend upon each other to support a rounded approach to the development of each child.

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 challenging and enjoyable experiences. 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, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn building on children's previous experiences, but mindful of preparing children for their next steps of learning in Year 1.

We use the Read Write Inc. program to plan daily phonics lessons.

5.2 Classroom Organisation

Our Foundation Stage consists of a Nursery and Reception mixed class, and a Reception class. The classrooms are organised into areas of Continuous Provision where children can develop ownership and independence and can engage in a wide range of practical tasks and activities, developing and practising skills and concepts. We provide a balance of activities and opportunities within the classroom between self-directed and adult-directed learning.

Our outdoor environments are an extension of our learning environment. Here, children can develop gross motor skills and coordination through the use of a range of equipment and physical activities; develop attitudes and disposition through learning to care for living things and each other; and observe and investigate to find out about the natural world. As some children prefer to learn outside, we also provide resources to promote number, reading, and writing opportunities outside.

5.3 Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We also build in structures to the day for children that change during the school year as we move towards the needs of the Primary National Curriculum so that we can ensure the smooth transition from Nursery to Reception and from Reception to Year 1.

5.4 Play in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which helps them to make sense of the world. They practise and build on ideas, learn how to manage their bodies and their feelings, and understand the need for rules. Children are given the opportunities to explore and discover within a safe and supported environment. Learning through play is the vehicle for the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. The children 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. The children are involved with both group and individual play, some initiated by adults, some by the children. They learn through being active learners and working with a wide range of resources. Through play, children will develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially, and emotionally. Play gives children the opportunity to take risks and make mistakes.

5.5 Inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage

In our school, we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best by removing barriers to learning. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals, or beyond, by the end of Reception. We meet the needs of all our children through:

- > Using precise assessment to match learning to children's starting points, and understanding clearly what those next steps are.
- > Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experiences, and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- > Using a wide range of pedagogical strategies based on children's learning needs, particularly for those who are disadvantaged.
- > 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 (including books and continuous provision) which reflect a diverse society 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.
- > Implementing additional resources and adapting the learning/approach (including additional learning programmes or agencies, such as speech therapy) for children with disadvantage/SEND.

5.6 Assessment

We make ongoing formative assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage is ongoing and is an integral part of the learning and development process. This involves all practitioners using the app SEESAW, making systematic observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests, and needs. This can be in the form of an annotated piece of work, photograph, a jotted note, or detailed script of what is observed, including any conversation, either between children, or between a child and adult, where appropriate. We also receive information from parents/carers. We regularly send home a '*Some Times in the Life Of...*' book where children and parents can comment and inform us of any learning and news that has happened at home.

Baseline assessments are completed on entry to the setting. These are updated termly and show the progression of each child's individual development. Observations and evidence are marked against the ***Development Matters*** statements, which are then used to track progression and inform future planning.

Precise phonics assessment and tracking is in place to identify where each child is within their phonic development, and we use this information to target intervention so that no child falls behind, particularly the disadvantaged.

We use 'Celebratory Checkpoints' to assess SEND children who are making smaller or slower steps in progress. This assessment tool breaks down targets into manageable and achievable steps to ensure all children can access their programme of learning at their own development stage.

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. The results of their child's profile are shared with parents.

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.

Parents receive an annual report that gives comments on their child's progress. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress.

5.7 Working with Parents/Transition

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there's a strong partnership between staff and parents/carers. Parents are made to feel welcome and valued in their child's education.

We also want to ensure a smooth transition from home to school and allow parents to ask any questions they may have about starting school. We do this through:

- > Inviting new children into school for visits prior to them starting in EYFS.
- > Providing school brochures and parent booklets along with other relevant information about school including Wrap around care and the PTA.
- > An introduction visit is arranged where children and parents come into our setting together and spend time with their child exploring the environment and meeting their teachers.
- > Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts their Reception year.
- > Conducting visits and contact with local nurseries or playgroups, where appropriate.
- > Arranging extra meetings and visits prior to starting Reception for vulnerable children, or those with additional needs, to ensure the right support is in place for when the child arrives.
- > Offering parents and carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress through 'drop-ins' and parent consultation meetings.
- > Encouraging parents to talk to their child's teachers if there are any concerns. If needed, a meeting will be set up so that any issues can be resolved quickly.
- > An annual progress report at the end of the academic year.
- > Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school, and parents.
- > Regular newsletters are sent so that parents are informed about and feel part of the wider school. These are also available on the school website.

5.8 Safeguarding

We recognise that 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 safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe, and stimulating environment, where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff:child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety: We have at least one member of staff for every 13 children.

We have at least one person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every three

years, as required.

All other policies regarding Safeguarding and Health and Safety apply to the EYFS, including:

- > Administering Medicines Policy
- > Anti-Bullying Policy
- > Behaviour Policy
- > Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- > Data Protection Policy
- > Educational Visits Procedures
- > First Aid Policy
- > Intimate Care Policy
- > Keeping Children Safe in Education
- > Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policies
- > Prevent Duty
- > Privacy Notices and Data Protection Policies
- > Private Fostering Policy

6 Impact

At the Dukes the impact of the EYFS Curriculum is that all children make at least good progress from their individual starting points. All children get the best possible start to their school life and develop the knowledge and skills to reach and exceed their potential as they move through school.

Our children develop and nurture strong, positive attitudes to learning, where they become proud and respectful of themselves, others, their school, and their community. They are keen and inquisitive learners, who become life-long learners – who love to learn and learn to love.

7 Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the EYFS Lead every two years, unless required sooner.

At every review, the policy will be shared, and ratified by the Governing Body.