



'Valuing Learning, Learning to Value'

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Policy Status: Statutory

Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage is used to describe children who are in Reception in Class 1

Aims:

At Yorkley 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 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 age five have a major impact on their future life chances.'

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- 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**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is 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 curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and 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
- 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

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.

Characteristics of Effective Learning:

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The teachers plan activities within the Reception classroom with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics are;

- **Playing and Exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'

- **Active Learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

These are recorded in the children's learning journeys to build a picture of the child's learning style and areas for development.

We write long term and medium term plans using the EYFS based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans are reviewed by the Headteacher. These plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with times for a daily phonics session using 'Letters and Sounds', teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including shared reading and writing.

'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. 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.

We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and outside.

Observation and Assessment:

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey, which are shared with parents. These ongoing observations are used to inform the EYFS Profile/developmental matter bands. The child's progress is reviewed every term/half term and is regularly discussed with parents. The children have opportunity to share their learning at regular stay & play sessions.

The children are assessed within the first 6 weeks of school using the NFER baseline as well as the school's own baseline, which includes observations of the children, discussions with parents, information from preschool settings, Development Matters statements and observations from the rising 5s' sessions.

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 nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill / have an accident.

Inclusion:

We value all our children as individuals at Yorkley, 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.

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. This includes parent information sessions before their children start school, parent coffee afternoons, parent consultations in the first week of school, stay and play sessions every half term, invitations to Woodland Walk and opportunity to talk to the teacher every morning and afternoon.

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/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 school to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. Parents are also invited into school for sessions. Staff from school visit each feeder playgroup/nursery during the summer term. The children receive a small booklet and a letter from their new teacher during the summer holiday. In the final term, the reception teacher and Year 1 teacher liaise to discuss the individual children, their needs and analyse the assessment data to inform planning.

EYFS and British Values:

In the EYFS at Yorkley we promote the British Values in a variety of ways. Here are some of the ways that this is done;

Democracy: making decisions together

- Encourage children to know their views count
- Value each other's views
- Talk about feelings
- Make decisions about things that affect daily activities e.g. choosing role play themes
- Activities that involve turn taking, sharing and collaboration
- Opportunities for critical thinking and questioning

Rule of law: Understanding rules matter

As part of the focus on managing feelings and behaviour (Personal Social and Emotional development)

- Activities where children understand their own and others' behaviour and its consequences
- Distinguishing right from wrong
- Creating shared classroom rules/ common codes of behaviour
- Promoting an understanding that rules, e.g. tidy up time, apply to everyone

Individual liberty: freedom for all

As part of the focus on self-confidence and self-awareness and people and communities (Personal Social and Emotional Development and Understanding the World).

- Encouraging children to develop a positive sense of themselves
- Opportunities for developing self-knowledge, self esteem, and increase self confidence through e.g. encouraging risk taking on climbing apparatus, celebrating individual successes
- Activities which encourage the language of feelings and an appreciation of the feelings of others e.g. through the use of persona dolls
- Activities which encourage discussions and celebration of all our similarities and differences
- Creating an ethos which encourages and respects different opinions

Mutual respect and tolerance: treat others as you want to be treated

As part of the focus on people and communities, managing feelings and behaviour and making relationships (Personal Social and Emotional development and Understanding the World)

- Creating an inclusive environment and ethos where everyone is valued and differences are portrayed positively
- Positive relationships promoted with parents/carers and the wider community
- Activities which encourage an understanding of and respect for one's own cultures and beliefs in that of others; an appreciation of similarities and differences among families, faiths, communities and traditions
- Activities which encourage positive social behaviours such as sharing and kindness towards others
- Activities and resources which promote diverse attitudes and challenge gender, cultural and racial stereotypes and value the diversity of children's experiences and lifestyles through e.g. persona dolls

Links with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Admissions

Health and Safety

Child Protection

First Aid

Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions

Teaching and Learning

Equal Opportunities

Home School Agreement

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