



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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Policy Date: June 2020

Review Date: June 2022

The Laurus Vision

The Laurus Vision is for everyone regardless of background or circumstance to be inspired, to thrive in all environments, to recognise what it takes to succeed, to set aspirational goals and work hard to achieve them.

Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure that all children are provided with the best foundation on which to develop, broaden and enjoy their knowledge, skills, understanding and interests.
- To ensure that we continuously provide high quality care and education in a learning environment which is well planned and organised for our children.

Objectives

- To provide a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment, which meets the individual needs and interests of the children and in which creativity and expressiveness are valued.
- To develop warm and secure relationships between children and adults.
- To foster positive home school links and share a common sense of purpose with parents. The key person is fundamentally the class teacher with a team of practitioners contributing towards the care and learning for the children and their parents.
- To provide a high quality curriculum in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage documents.
- To ensure that the children become aware of moral and social values.
- To encourage active learning through first hand experiences both in indoor and outdoor play, and through both verbal and non-verbal communication.
- To encourage children to become self-motivated and independent learners with a positive attitude to learning and self-discipline.
- To value the cultural diversity within our school and community.

What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our primary schools, children join us at the beginning of the school

year in which they are five. The statutory EYFS Framework sets out how teaching and learning is organised:

Prime Areas:

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

Specific Areas:

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

None of these Areas of Learning (AoL) can be delivered in isolation; they are equally important and depend on each other. All AoL are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. Within each of these AoL there are scales which show the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that children need to learn during the EYFS in order to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of their Reception year.

Religious Education is not explicitly covered by the Early Learning Goals and scale points. It does, however, play a significant role in the development of the children in their Reception year. Children begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects. They listen to and discuss stories, and reflect on their own feelings and experiences, as they develop their appreciation and wonder of the world in which they live.

Our Philosophy

- Children learn best through play based activities and first-hand experience.
- Every child deserves the best possible start in life and we aim to give this by observing what the children can do and supporting them to fulfill their potential.
- Children become independent learners through the provision of a balance of child initiated and adult led experiences.
- Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world.
- Children practice 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.

- A broad and balanced curriculum enables each child to develop emotionally, socially, physically, creatively, and intellectually to their full potential and at their own pace. Each child is unique and is valued as an individual.

Role of the Early Years/Nursery Manager

It is the role of the Early Years/Nursery Manager, under the guidance of the Head of School:

- To organise the delivery of the Early Years Curriculum and to ensure progression and development.
- To monitor planning and quality of delivery within the curriculum.
- To keep abreast of developments within Early Years.
- To monitor and update resources/the learning environment.
- To liaise with internal and external pre-school establishments and Year 1 teachers as part of the transition process.
- To attend regular EYFS cluster/network meetings/groups.

EYFS Practice

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

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. We use praise and encouragement to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

We believe that all children matter and 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.

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 and/or Disabilities, children who are high attainers, children who have additional needs and require more support, 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 by:

- 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 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 progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent when they experience secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents/Carers as Partners

We firmly believe that parents/carers are every child's primary educators. Our philosophy is rooted in two-way communication and full partnership, from the family's first introduction to our school/nursery and beyond. We promote this by:

- Talking to parents/carer about their child before their child starts in our school/nursery;
- Offering opportunities for parents/carers to spend time with staff before starting school/nursery during an induction and pre-school visits;
- Inviting all parents/carers to an Induction Meeting during the term before their child starts school;

- Offering parents/carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress;
- Encouraging parents/carers to talk to the child's teacher/key worker if there are any concerns;
- Arranging formal meeting opportunities for parents/carers throughout the year at which the teacher and the parents/carer discuss the child's progress in private. Reception parents/carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- Inviting all Reception parents/carers to a Curriculum Evening to discuss how the children learn in Reception
- Holding 'Stay and Play' sessions for children and their parents/carers when they first start in our Nursery
- Encouraging two-way communication about each child outside of the school/nursery setting.

Enabling Environments

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.

Our Nursery and Reception 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 calm. The rooms are set up for children to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The children have their own outdoor learning area, part of which is covered to facilitate outdoor learning even when the weather is inclement. The outdoor environment offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales. It offers the children a chance to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan play based activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all six Areas of Learning.

Learning and development

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.

Observation, assessment and planning

The EYFS curriculum is flexible and can therefore respond to the needs, achievements and interests of the children.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment mainly takes the form of observation by staff. These observations are recorded and used to inform next steps.

We record judgements against the EYFS Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against 13 assessment scales derived from the EYFS Early Learning Goals.

We also submit our data to the Local Authority in accordance with statutory requirements.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children have a human right to be educated with their peer group. We are fully committed to promoting inclusion of all children, whatever their age, ability, gender, race, culture, religious beliefs or background. We believe that the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every child is of paramount importance

We aim to provide equal opportunities for all groups of children, including those with diverse needs. Our main objective is to safeguard the interests of all children and to ensure they achieve their full potential. All pupils should have the opportunity to join fully with their peers in the curriculum and the life of the school/nursery. We aim to pay particular attention to the provision for, and the achievement of, 'identified groups' within the school, providing extra resources and support, where possible.

Whilst we are fully committed to inclusion, we are aware that, in exceptional circumstances, the needs of the individual child might not be met because of lack of resources or if it is not in the best interests of the other children in the school/nursery.

Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

It is important to identify children who find some areas of learning difficult early so that strategies to help them can be put in place as soon as possible.

Further details can be found in our Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Policy.

Transition arrangements

We have good links with our main feeder pre-schools. Visits are undertaken by EYFS staff to pre-school settings to discuss how we can best prepare for each child's transition. Staff and children from our feeder primary schools/nurseries are invited to school events. Where children attend other pre-school provision, we aim to ensure continuity and coherence by sharing information about the children's achievements and try to make contact with all children in their setting before they start school.

At the end of the Reception year, the Early Years team meets with Year 1 staff to discuss each child and their transition needs for the Autumn Term.

Safeguarding

It is of the utmost importance that all children are safe in our care. We educate children about boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand how to keep safe. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We believe that children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We take our duty of care seriously and recognise the role we play in protecting the physical and emotional well-being of all children. Further details can be found in our Trust Safeguarding Policy and setting specific Safeguarding Protocol.

Welfare

We understand that we are also legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory EYFS Framework. This means that we must:

- 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 are safe and suitable for purpose through risk assessment of the outside area;
- 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.