

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy DREW PRIMARY SCHOOL



'Learning today for tomorrow's world.'

Agreed at Governing Body Meeting on

Signed Headteacher:

Signed Chair of Governors:.....

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Our Early Years Foundation Stage policy describes the framework upon which the beliefs and practice of this school are based. This policy should be used in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning policy, the Admissions policy and Inclusion and Equal Opportunities policy.

Our philosophy

At Drew Primary School we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to reach their full potential. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. Each child is unique and is valued as an individual; we aim to provide a secure foundation through learning and development opportunities based around the needs of each individual child. In the Early Years Foundation Stage we aim to create a balance of play based learning and the focused teaching of key skills.

“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 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)

The Early Years Foundation Stage is the stage of development and education for children from birth to five years of age. The children in our Nursery and Reception classes make up the 3-5 year stage. The Early Years Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and in laying a secure foundation for learning throughout the school years and beyond. The statutory Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children are competent learners from birth and develop and learn in a wide variety of ways. The Early Years education that we offer our children encompasses the four themes of the EYFS and is based on the following objectives:

Objectives

- To provide a happy, caring, safe and secure environment for learning, which meets the individual needs and interests of all children.
- To develop warm and secure relationships between children and adults.
- To provide a high quality curriculum in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage document.
- For the children to 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 positive attitude to learning and self-discipline.
- 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.

At Drew Primary School we are committed to underpinning our provision with the four themes of the Early Years Foundation Stage in our Nursery and Reception Classes.

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

A Unique Child

The characteristics of effective learning support the child to become a motivated and effective learner. Children will play and explore and 'have a go' at using all available resources; developing their experiences. Children will develop resilience and enjoy achievements through active learning and will make links, explore their ideas and strategies for problem solving through creating and thinking critically. Practitioners support the children in developing all these characteristics through play alongside children and, where necessary, scaffolding and supporting their thoughts.

Children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion, gender or abilities. We welcome all children and families into our setting so that they feel included, safe and valued.

It is important to us that all children at Drew Primary School are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop these important life skills. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards, both within school and in the wider environment. We encourage a healthy lifestyle including taking exercise and eating healthy food.

Positive Relationships

We aim to promote positive relationships between staff, parents and children. Children are taught how to deal with difficult situations and relationships through their daily interactions with adults and other children and during 'Circle Time' sessions. In the nursery children are greeted as they come into the nursery and have a familiar routine with all staff. In reception following the initial settling in period children are greeted as they arrive by their class teacher or teaching assistant. During the course of the day, staff will work with each child either on a one to one basis, in a small group or as part of a whole class carpet session. They are able to build up confidence, rapport and respect with each child so that they feel safe, happy and enjoy their time at Drew Primary School.

We recognise that parents are children's first educators and their importance for child's welfare and education is paramount. We believe that when parents and practitioners work together the results have a positive impact on development and learning. We recognise the role that parents play and encourage their future role by:

- Inviting parents and children to visit the classroom and spend time with their teachers before starting Nursery and Reception;
- Arranging for children to start Nursery on a staggered basis for the first week and for children to start Reception for half a day at the start, extending to staying for lunch and then staying all day. We follow this induction to ensure all children have a gradual introduction and ensures that staff get to know the children well before they start full days in school.
- Gradual settling in period allows parents and practitioners to discuss children's needs, circumstances, interests and skills as appropriate;
- Creating an 'Open door' policy that makes parents feel welcome to talk to practitioners at the start / end of the school day / session.
- Opportunities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, parent and school;
- Encouraging parents to contribute to their child's individual folders and to support their child learning at home.
- Termly parent meetings to discuss children's progress.
- Keeping parents informed through newsletter information, letters and notices.

Environment

In the EYFS at Drew Primary School we recognise the importance of a rich learning environment both inside and outside. These are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and reflect and rest. The environment is set up in learning areas, where children are able to go and access resources independently to foster their independence.

The outside area for our Nursery and Reception pupils plays a key role in supporting and extending our children's development and learning.

Learning and Development

There are seven areas of Learning and Development which are interconnected. The three Prime areas are deemed crucial to develop lifelong learning and to help children form relationships. These areas are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development ~ children develop confidence and

self-esteem, learn how to manage feelings and respect others.

- Communication and Language ~ children have opportunities to speak and listen in a range of situations and experience a rich language environment.
- Physical Development ~ children have opportunities to be active and develop coordination (both gross motor and fine motor); they learn about healthy choices.

The Prime areas are strengthened and applied through four specific areas:

- Literacy ~ involves children learning how letters link to the sounds and begin to read and write.
- Mathematics ~ children have opportunities to develop counting and calculation skills, to use numbers in everyday activities and recognise and describe shapes and measures.
- Understanding the World ~ children have opportunities to find out about people and communities, the environment and technology.
- Expressive Arts and Design ~ involves exploring feelings and ideas through music, dance, role play and design.

In Nursery, children learn through enjoying different stories and engaging in planned play activities, linking to areas of the environment. In Reception, children have a more structured day which will include maths and English carpet sessions, focused teacher led and independent tasks and also opportunity for child initiated play indoor and outdoor. Children and parents are encouraged to be involved in the next steps for learning through the children's learning journey's and parents consultations.

The EYFS development matters document provides the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers use the national schemes of work where appropriate to support the planning and for individual children who are working beyond the Early Learning Goals. Our medium term planning consists of specific teaching objectives and ongoing learning objectives for each half term. The ages and stages of development are built upon as the children move through the Foundation Stage and work towards achieving the Early Learning Goals. All carpet sessions and focused tasks are planning for and include clear learning objectives and success criteria to help children achieve the learning outcome. Activities are differentiated according to the children's level of development.

Assessment

Each child in the EYFS at Drew Primary School has a 'Learning Journey'. Their folder contains photos of children taking part in activities, snap shot observations, and pieces of work. This helps to provide evidence that can be used when making a decision about where a child is in their learning and development.

Reception children also have a maths and English book where they record once a week. The books play an important part in recording the children's learning journey and their developing skills in writing and mathematics.

At the end of reception teachers have to undertake a statutory Early Years Foundation Stage Profile assessment, which is reported to the LA and to Year 1 teachers. Teachers also have to write a short commentary about each child's characteristics of learning.

Observational evidence collected from a wide range of learning and teaching contexts ensures that future planning reflects identified needs and that our children are continually developing.

Progress and achievements are discussed formally with parents/carers at parent-teacher meetings and Learning Journey's may be shared. Parents receive an annual report that comments on their child's progress and development in relation to areas of learning.

Teaching and learning style

We believe in a flexible approach that responds quickly to children's learning and development needs. The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Early Years Foundation Stage are:

- The partnership between staff and parents - ensuring that information is passed on through good liaison
- The understanding that staff 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 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 identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observation;
- The partnership and transition programmes between nursery and reception.
- The regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the EYFS.

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. We aim to provide a foundation for them to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

We plan to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are gifted and talented, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

In order to meet the diverse needs of all our children we set realistic and challenging expectations and provide relevant learning and development opportunities through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- 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, including the involvement of outside agencies.

Transition

Our aim at Drew Primary School is to establish a smooth and successful transition to school. This is facilitated by:

- Increased visits into the main school for Nursery pupils
- Liaison with outside agencies as appropriate
- Good communication with parents ensuring appropriate information for each child is collated through good systems.

This policy was agreed on the 24th March and will be reviewed as appropriate in line with any new initiatives or Government legislation.