



Together we Develop, Inspire, Succeed

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The overall aim of this policy is to ensure consistency in teaching and learning and classroom organisation throughout the EYFS classes at Dinglewell Infant School.

Links with other Policies and Statements

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following: Assessment Policy, Teaching and Learning Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, SEND Policy, Admissions Policy, Educational Visits Policy, Staff Handbook.

The Foundation Stage is concerned with the **development** of the whole child and has a strong emphasis on learning through play and practical activities. Through play and our carefully crafted curriculum we strive to **inspire** children to

- Learn and use oral language skills, communicating with others as they investigate, learn and solve problems
- Practise and build up ideas; repeating, reinforcing and embedding learning
- Develop a love of reading and become successful readers
- Learn self-control/regulation and understand the need for rules and values
- Think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own
- Develop characteristics of learning and positive lifelong learning attitudes to ensure they **succeed** in the future
- Develop a deep understanding of Early Maths Concepts
- Explore learning experiences that help them make sense of and respect the world and those who inhabit it
- Feel safe, secure and confident to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

Intent

At Dinglewell Infant School, our Early Years curriculum is centred around child development. We support and guide children to **develop** skills and knowledge holistically; helping them to make connections between learning both in the moment and as they continue their learning journey. Through play, and our carefully crafted curriculum we strive to **inspire** children to develop skills and knowledge in all 7 areas of learning; building up skills, knowledge and ideas; repeating, reinforcing and embedding learning. We support children to learn and use oral language skills, communicating with others as they investigate, learn and solve problems. It is essential that we help children to develop oral language skills. These are central to all learning and are a vital part of human interaction and communication

We hold reading in high esteem and develop a love of reading. We ensure that children have a good foundation and deep understanding of Early Maths Concepts. We ensure that children are exposed

to a broad curriculum, encouraging creativity, developing cultural capital and helping them to make sense of the world in which they live. We strive to develop the 'characteristics of learning' and positive lifelong learning attitudes to ensure children **succeed** in the future.

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape our educational programmes. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. We support, model and guide children to make these connections. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. They build children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These are the prime areas:

Prime Areas

Physical development

Communication and language

Personal, social and emotional development

The three prime areas are strengthened and applied within the **Specific Areas** of learning;

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the world

Expressive arts and design

In planning and guiding children's activities we also reflect on the different ways that children learn. The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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; and

Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas.

Implementation

At Dinglewell Infant School we aim for our children to become confident and independent learners. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Children build upon previously learnt skills and knowledge in order to be successful; for example, they will develop core strength and wrist extension before being expected to hold a pencil correctly.

Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play or group activities which are guided by adults. We believe that the adults are the most valuable teaching resource and we work hard to build relationships with the children and understand potential barriers to learning.

We encourage children to select their own activities and resources, choose who they will learn with and provide frequent opportunities for children to make their own decisions and choices. Central to this in each classroom are specific areas of continuous provision that children can access at all times. In addition to these we provide the children with enhancements to continuous provision; these are set up by the teacher, based on the children's needs and interests. These will change regularly based upon what the cohort needs to move learning forward. Through free choice children learn to make decisions, negotiate with others, take turns and exercise patience and self-control. We recognise that young children learn best when they are absorbed in an activity and we therefore avoid removing them from self-chosen activities unnecessarily, and provide opportunities for them to return to an activity in the following session or the following day so that they may see a task through to their satisfaction and then challenge or extend this learning.

'Practitioners need to decide what they want children in their setting to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. Practitioners must stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning.' (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation stage 2021)

Each class has a slot for the allocated use of the hall, computing suite and library to be used as required. Other than daily whole school routines there is no rigid structure to the weekly or daily timetable in the Reception Classes. Reception teachers plan the week and day to respond to the needs and interests of the children; meeting them where they are and moving learning forwards. Children undertake both adult-directed and self-initiated activities during the day and both types of activity usually take place alongside one another.

Throughout the day children from all three Reception classes are able to engage in a variety of activities in the outdoor learning area and classroom. The outdoor area provides an environment in which a wide variety of experiences are available. The space allows children to practise skills on a large scale and for children to experience the very nature of being outside – weather, birds, minibeasts. For these reasons the outdoor area is available for use every day unless there are unsafe weather conditions. This area is always supervised by a teacher or teaching assistant whose role is to guide and scaffold the children in their language skills and play extending their learning. The children are always within sight or hearing of an adult. The children are also fortunate enough to have regular sessions in our 'Forest School' area. The children play outside on the playground at lunch times where they are supported by their lunchtime supervisor.

The classroom and outdoor areas are designed to encourage children to make choices and develop independence by having equipment and materials readily available and well-organised. The classroom layout also gives children the space they need for their activities while encouraging them to initiate their own learning.

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. We want children to feel safe, secure and confident to express fears or 're-live' anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

The children will explore the majority of areas and aspects of learning through play. We work closely with subject leaders to ensure that children have the skills and knowledge required for future learning in each subject area. However there are certain areas of learning where a more formal approach to learning is taken;

- As a school we hold reading with the utmost regard. Reception children rigorously follow the 'Essential Letters and Sounds' programme. Reading books are closely matched to the children's level of phonic ability, allowing children to see succeed in reading from the very start (See Literacy policy for more detail) We understand that language and vocabulary underpins reading skills and developing these areas are always at the heart of our provision.
- We strive to inspire a love of mathematical activity and are committed to ensuring that children develop a deep understanding of maths concepts through a progressive programme (NCETEM) of learning delivered through adult led whole class sessions. The concepts are strengthened in continuous provision and children who need extra support are identified during this session and further scaffolding is provided.

- In order to reduce the load on children's working memory when writing we aim to make handwriting as automatic as possible, teaching children to form letters correctly from the start. We use 'Penpals' to teach handwriting
- Writing at the beginning of the year matches the children's phonic knowledge. We want children to feel safe and confident to 'have a go' and see themselves as writers. Writing starts with magnetic letters to ease working memory and focus on the skills of segmenting over handwriting. Writing sessions are heavily scaffolded initially and where needed thereafter. Children progress to composing their own basic sentences to write; covering fiction, non-fiction and different forms of writing in a stripped back layout such as lists and letters.

Impact/assessment procedures

Prior to admission parents complete with their child an 'All About Me' booklet. Teachers also use Transfer records received from Pre-School settings to ascertain children's progress. Pre-school settings are contacted by the school to discuss children's needs and involve the SENDCO where necessary.

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. The assessment will be completed covering areas of Mathematics and Literacy. The purpose of the assessment is to provide the starting point for a new measure that will help parents understand how well schools support their pupils to progress between Reception and Year 6.

In addition to the baseline assessment, teachers and teaching assistants will spend time over term one making observations and completing short practical activities to ascertain the children's starting points and plan next steps.

The Reception teachers and Teaching Assistants make planned, regular observations and evaluations of the children. These planned assessments lead to close monitoring of children's needs, stages of development and achievements. This information enables the Reception teachers to plan appropriate activities for the children, which are differentiated according to the children's needs and are designed to maximise their learning. These are however kept to a minimum as we value adult's interactions and interventions which raise the mode of play and bring learning forward.

Assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation stage 2021)

Over the course of the year teachers will identify children who may be not on track in terms of learning and development. These children and their next steps/any interventions required will be discussed during pupil progress meetings along with the headteacher, year group leader and SENDCO. Year 1 teachers are also involved towards the end of the school year to aid the transition process.

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. Teachers make a judgement based upon their level of development in the seven areas of learning. Teachers work alongside one another to ensure a consistent and moderated approach to assessment and meet with Reception teachers from other local schools to moderate judgements.

At the end of the year parents receive their child's school report which details their child's achievements in relation to the Early Learning Goals and the three characteristics of learning outlined above. These are also shared with Year One teachers in order to plan an appropriate curriculum building upon the children's strengths and any potential gaps.

Organisation

Admissions, Induction and Entry Arrangements

In May/June meetings are arranged for parents whose children are due to start at Dinglewell Infant School in September. At these meetings parents are able to meet with their child's class teacher, the class's teaching assistant(s) and the Headteacher. Parents are given information about school routines and admission details specific to their child.

Parents are also offered individual appointments with the Headteacher and home visits.

Teachers ensure that transition happens across the year with visits to our most local pre-school settings to read stories and share resources to help parents and settings support children with transition to school. We also invite them into school for school events. Hucclecote playgroup share our outdoor space during the summer term. In May/June the class teacher visits some of the nursery schools and playgroups attended by the 'new Reception' children. We also provide an after school session for parents and children to 'meet the teacher' and become familiar with the classroom environment.

During the first week of September children visit the school for a settling in, 'stay and play' session, with only small groups of children attending each session. During this time they familiarise themselves with the classroom, meet their teacher and teaching assistant, become familiar with where to hang their coat/access toilets etc. and are able to choose activities in the classroom or outdoor area.

Our intake procedures aim to ensure that the children have a happy and positive start to school life. In September the Reception children are admitted in small groups to their Reception classes. This staggered intake enables a smooth transition between home and school. Initially children attend mornings only; this extends to full time in the last week of September. This helps the children to become familiar with new routines and develop a sense of confidence and security. Gradually they are introduced to whole school routines such as lunches PE and assemblies. More flexible patterns of attendance to suit individual needs are negotiated between class teachers, the parents of individual children and Headteacher when necessary.

Starting and finishing times

Reception children come directly to their classroom from 8.40am. Children who attend Breakfast Club are brought directly to the classroom at 8.40am by a member of the Breakfast Club staff. The school day finishes at 3.15pm and children are collected from their classroom.

Location within the building

Our Reception children are organised into three classes. The Reception classrooms are situated together on one side of the main building and open onto the hall and share a large outside area for outdoor learning.

Snack and lunchtime provision

The school is part of the Fruit for Schools scheme and children are able to have a piece of fruit every day. We encourage the children to be independent in choosing when to have their snack and a rolling snack table is available throughout the morning. Initially we sit with children modelling safe eating and table manners. Snack time is also an opportunity for social interaction. Parents are also able to order milk for their child to drink; again at a time of their own choosing. Lunchtime is from 12.15pm until 1.15pm. Children may order a free cooked school dinner or bring a packed lunch (eaten in the hall).

Educational Visits

Educational visits, use of the local area and visitors are carefully planned and used to deepen the children's understanding and provide valuable first hand experiences related to our topics learning. Please refer to Educational Visits Policy for further details.

Equal Opportunities

"No child should be excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability" (Equal Opportunities Policy)

We believe that the equality of opportunity is important for all pupils irrespective of gender, ethnicity, social circumstances, religion or belief and intellectual capacity. Within the Foundation Stage we strive to reflect and respect this diversity in our choice of resources and in the model we set for children. We strive to plan an environment for a child that is free from stereotypical images and discriminatory practices. In this way, and through appropriate differentiation, we endeavour to meet the needs of all pupils.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Staffing, Equipment and Resources

Staffing

Our Reception classes are staffed by a Teacher and a Teaching Assistant; giving the children good opportunities for quality interaction with the adults responsible for their learning and care.

The Foundation Stage Year Group Leader is responsible for ensuring consistency of teaching, learning and all routines across the Foundation Stage. They work alongside the other Reception teachers to moderate assessments on the Foundation Stage Profile and carry out formal and informal monitoring.

Equipment and Resources

Each Reception classroom is well resourced with equipment that is used on a regular basis. Other equipment is shared between Reception classes and some with the rest of the school.

We believe that children should have access to quality resources and should treat them with respect and care. Therefore any resources and equipment which are broken are removed from use.

Partnership with Parents

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We endeavour to develop effective two way communication and work in partnership with parents by:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and an information evening in September once their child has started school
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Reception class; sharing progress at drop-ins.
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns
- providing an opportunity for children to invite their parents to visit their classroom to show them their work and progress
- sending parents a curriculum overview each term to inform them about potential lines of development that term
- celebrating achievements from home
- encouraging parents to read to and with their children as well as helping them to learn phonic skills.
- informing parents if we have any concerns about their child's development.

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