

Dormansland Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Review period	Tri-annual	Status	Statutory
Written by	Mr M Cook Mrs F Davies	Governor review	Governors

Introduction and Legislation

This document sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. At its outset, it states: 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 early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

At Dormansland , our vision: 'To Inspire, Nurture and Challenge,' can be seen across the canvas of our EYFS provision as children learn, experience and develop together, guided by our staff team.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- 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;
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers;
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

Structure of the EYFS

The Reception intake at Dormansland Primary School is 30 children. The Class Teacher, who is also the EYFS Leader, is supported by a full-time teaching assistant. Learning Support Assistants may be allocated to work with specific children depending on any individual special educational needs or disabilities within the class. Additional assistance may also be provided by teaching assistants offering intervention and catch-up work in small groups or 1:1.

Children in Reception will have a staggered start in September to help them settle in. They are able to start full-time from around the third week of term following home visits and the staggered start sessions. There may also be provision for children to initially be part time if this is appropriate for them.

Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively based on the Characteristics of Effective Learning' – playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically. In order to do this, staff working with our youngest children focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

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 a challenging and enjoyable experience. 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 and include these in their practice. Staff plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are more guided by adults. During children's play, staff interact to stretch and challenge children further. As a guidance for members of the team, 'objective led planning' is used which is based on children's next steps in which are made the focus of interactions with children wherever appropriate. Topic themes are planned and picked based on the children's interests

combined with those that staff know through their experience will achieve the outcomes aimed for.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. Children have whole group sessions every day for Maths and English. Smaller focus groups are then used in which all children complete tasks according to their next steps over the week. Recognising the importance of a strong start in early reading underpinned by regular practice, children take part in daily phonics lessons using our phonics programme: 'BugClub'. Phonics is taught from the very first day that children start. Over the course of the week, the teaching staff will work 1:1 with children on their reading as well as with any children who need additional support. The Early Years staff are highly responsive to how children engage during whole class sessions and adapt child-initiated learning experiences based on those areas of need. An example of this may be having smaller focused groups with a member of staff in the morning whilst the rest of the class are engaged in a focussed task on the carpet.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, a transition and journey that will continue throughout Year 1 and 2.

Assessment

At Dormansland Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. This 'formative assessment' is recorded and allows staff to quickly capture each child's learning journey in close relation to the Early Years curriculum.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). Data/results from this assessment and others, will be analysed by staff to help pinpoint where children need extra support as well as their overall next steps for the following term.

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 and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

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.

Working with parents

At Dormansland we recognise that children learn and develop better when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. In addition, staff can support parents/carers to guide their child's development at home or, with support from the school SENDCo, to engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

Children visit the school for 'stay and play' sessions in the Summer Term prior to admission. The school also offers a parent induction evening before children start, a parent introduction coffee morning in September and a parent reading workshop early in the Autumn Term. Parents receive an induction pack which, as well as key documentation, includes the 'Reception Handbook.' This details the school's approach, curriculum & assessment, as well as tips and information to help parents support their child, aiming for a smooth transition to school life.

Before they start school, children and their families are offered a home visit from the Reception staff team. This is an important part of the induction process, helping staff to build relationships with children and using information from the visit to help children settle during their first few weeks.

Safeguarding, health and welfare procedures

At all times, adults aim to provide a safe working and learning environment for all Reception children and to draw the children's attention to the importance of safety considerations in all their own activities.

Additional information is provided in the Health & Safety policy.

We promote good health, including good oral health, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- Hygiene when using the toilets
- The importance of washing hands and how to wash hands thoroughly.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in the main safeguarding/child protection policy, available from the policies page of our website.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

In line with our aim to 'inspire, nurture and challenge' the school believes that every child should be given the opportunity and support to learn and develop their potential in every area of school life.

All pupils irrespective of ethnicity, religion, gender or ability are given equal access to the Early Years curriculum. More confident pupils may be challenged by developing analysis, thinking skills and evaluation techniques. Teachers will aim to anticipate sensitivities linked to ethnicity, religion and other differences in all areas of the EYFS curriculum.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the EYFS Leader and Co-Headteachers every three years. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body.

Other Policies which link to EYFS provision

- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy (safeguarding, visitors, missing children, parents failing to collect children)
- Complaints Procedure (concerns and complaints)
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions, Health & Safety, Children with Health Issues who Cannot Attend School (illness)