

# EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

## LEIGHTERTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Review date:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Signed (Chair of Governors)</b>	<b>Signed (Headteacher)</b>

## **LEIGHTERTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY**

#### **Our Vision**

We aspire for all our children to become confident, secure and caring individuals who achieve personal success and develop a lifelong love of learning. We do this by:

- Providing a nurturing, welcoming and secure environment for all children where they can thrive and build long lasting friendships with each other and appropriate, respectful and warm relationships with adults
- Building strong collaborative partnerships within our school community, families and the local community
- Providing a motivating, enjoyable and challenging curriculum guided by our cohort's particular interests, the legal requirements of the Department for Education EYFS Statutory Framework and their non-statutory curriculum guidance document Development Matters
- Recognising and valuing play as a vehicle for self-expression and essential factor in young children's learning
- Enabling, recognising and celebrating success in both school and home environments
- Supporting, guiding and facilitating learning starting from each unique child's starting point and having high expectations in order to challenge and extend understanding
- Developing children's emotional, spiritual and physical wellbeing so they may develop positive relationships with each other and the wider world
- Ensuring our Early Years team have opportunities for continuing professional development, training and time to embed current best practice within Early Years Education

#### **Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Leighterton Primary School EYFS refers to the children in our Reception class.

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. 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.” (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2021)

At Leighterton Primary School, we adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS, which sets the standards early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well; and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure that children are ready for school; and stimulates the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the foundation for good future progress through school and later life. This framework is based on four guiding principles, which recognise that:-

- 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**

### The Early Years 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 children to achieve and exceed beyond 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 known as the **prime** areas and are:

- **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. These are:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

At Leighterton Primary School, children experience a wide range of rich, meaningful learning opportunities to help them develop a range of essential **characteristics of learning**; playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically. Through actively sharing

and celebrating achievement these with children we aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

Our long term planning is based on a series of topics, linked to quality texts and/or first-hand experiences. Each of these broad topics offer experiences and opportunities across all seven areas of learning. These plans and our observations and interactions with children inform our short-term weekly planning, which is flexible adapting to children's responses, spontaneous opportunities or unplanned circumstances.

Children at Leighterton Primary School have whole group and small group learning sessions as they progress through the EYFS with times for daily phonics, mathematics and literacy sessions including shared reading and writing. Children have daily access to our Reception outdoor classroom and our extensive grounds, which support their understanding the natural world, and enable us to extend our curriculum, promote wellbeing and a love of the great outdoors. The Daily Mile, together with weekly PE sessions and an Outdoor Learning session (Forest School) provide further opportunities to develop seasonal awareness and build physical strength, stamina as well as life skills such as perseverance, team building and learning to manage risk awareness.

The wider curriculum of the expressive arts and knowledge of the world is delivered through a range of whole class and group sessions using a range of sensory learning styles eg audio, visual, kinaesthetic often using a play-based and/or challenge approach, as outlined by the Statutory EYFS Framework.

**'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 self-initiated activities and adult planned activities. During children's play, early year's practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further, providing a model to support and extend language, personal, social, emotional and physical development.

### **Observation and Assessment**

"Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs and to plan activities and support."  
*Statutory Framework for Early Years Stage 2021*

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Within the first six weeks of a child starting his/her reception year, our Early Years Teacher will administer the National Reception Baseline Assessment. At Leighterton, we also carry out our own baseline assessment identifying each child's current development and learning achievements.

As part of our daily practice, we observe, interact and assess children's development and learning to inform and tweak our future plans. We recognise children's interests, strengths and areas to be developed. We record each child's significant learning steps, during teacher

led and self-initiated activities, in a range of ways including individual learning journeys. These learning journeys are shared and celebrated with children and parents at regular intervals.

We hold regular parent consultations to share information and achievements from both at school and home and to discuss next steps in learning towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.

At the end of the EYFS, our Early Years Teacher completes an EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the seventeen early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The EYFS Profile reflects the Early Years Team's ongoing assessments, observations, interactions and discussions with parents and/or carers. At Leighterton Primary School we moderate this profile in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. The EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Parents/carers receive a report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals as well as their particular characteristics of learning. Parents have an opportunity to discuss this report and its judgements with the Reception teacher in preparation for Year 1.

### **Partnership with Parents**

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.

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 and inviting members of the community into our setting.

### **Home Learning**

At Leighterton, we understand the impact of high quality liaison between home and school and strive to ensure that our pupils are keen to learn at every opportunity. For this reason, we believe that the extension of learning out of the classroom, including the provision of home learning is a vital part of school life. Once children have settled into Reception home learning will begin, initially through reading scheme books and as regular reading routines are established through phonics activities and maths games.

### **Transition from Pre-School Settings**

Once all parents have accepted their place at Leighterton Primary school, we hold an introductory meeting with them to welcome them and familiarise them with our school staff, routines and expectations. We also have Stay and Play sessions to help familiarise children with each other, the Early Years team and the class environment. Our Early Years Teacher visits each child's pre-school setting to interact with his/her Key Worker and to discuss her/his friendships and their learning needs prior to receiving their transition record. Parents are encouraged to complete an 'All about Me' form providing essential details to help the teaching team quickly establish an overview of their child's pre-school learning pastoral needs. Our Year 5 and 6 Buddies welcome and guide our new reception children as they settle in through playtime and lunchtime friendship building and a particular favourite accompanying them to our whole school assemblies! Prospective Buddies have a rigorous application, interview and training programme to enable them to recognise the significant responsibility and trustworthiness this role holds.

### **Transition into Year 1**

In the final term in Reception, children begin to have short learning and familiarisation sessions with their KS1 teacher. The Year 1 teacher also meets with the Early Years Teacher to discuss each child's friendships, development against the Early Learning Goals and any needs particular to child eg medical, learning, family need. This helps support a smooth transition into Year 1 and enables the KS1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that meets the needs of all children.

### **Safety**

Our team works collaboratively to promote the welfare and safeguarding of children. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum, which teaches children how to be safe, make choices, assess risks and avoid hazards. Our policies, procedures and documents are in place to ensure children's safety and comply with the welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including teaching children about healthy lifestyle choices. All Early Years Staff have first aid training and follow set procedures when children become ill, to prevent the spread of infection, or have an accident.

### **Inclusion**

We believe that it is our responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference – not only so that each child is included and not disadvantaged, but also so they learn from the earliest age to value diversity in others and grow up making a positive contribution to society.

We value all our children as individuals at Leighterton Primary School, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. Equal

opportunities for children mean that we make sure all children have an equal opportunity to learning.

We focus on each child's individual learning, development and care needs and remove or help to overcome barriers for children where they exist. We identify children who may need extra support in school in consultation with parents/carers, pre-school experiences and our own observations. It may be that a child's needs require them to be placed on the SEND register and supported in school. When necessary, outside agencies will be contacted to ensure that the child is supported in the best possible way. This will only happen with parental permission. Teaching and learning is always differentiated to ensure all children's learning has the necessary scaffolding, additional support or extended challenges.

Please read this policy in conjunction with our other policies, particularly Safeguarding, Equalities and Behaviour.

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