

EYFS Policy

Our Early Years 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, Assessment policy and SEN policy.

Our philosophy

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. In the Early Years Foundation Stage children learn best through play based activities and first hand experiences. 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.

Aims

- To provide a happy, caring, safe and secure environment for learning, which meets the individual needs and interests of the 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 a positive attitude to learning and self-discipline.
- To value the cultural diversity within our school and community.
- 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.

Admission Arrangements

Children are admitted to the Nursery and Reception classes once a year in September. Children make transition visits from their current setting to our Nursery and the Nursery teacher also visits children in their home setting.

Children in Reception start full time in September. Children also have opportunities to visit their new classroom and meet their teacher in the summer term whilst still in the Nursery. Children who do not attend the school Nursery class will be invited to attend these induction sessions and where possible the Reception teacher will visit them in their own setting.

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The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Studlands Rise First School, children join the Nursery class in the year that they turn four and the Reception class in the year that they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

We endeavour to ensure that children “learn and develop well and keep healthy and safe.” We aim to support children in their learning through “teaching and experiences that gives children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life.” (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2012)

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive Relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling Environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Learning and Developing – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates

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. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by interactions with others. We use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEN)

All children and their families are valued at Studlands Rise School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the schools Special Education Co-ordinator is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school’s policy for SEND.

We meet the needs of all our children through

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and those that develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and those that 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;

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- 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.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Safeguarding Children Policy)

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them."

We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding 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 is safe and suitable for purpose
- 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.

Positive Relationships

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

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school to welcome parents new to the school, give an overview of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, the school's ethos, vision and values and the day to day routines and expectations.
- the Nursery teacher visits pre-schools during the term before a child starts Nursery, has a discussion with the pre-school leader and meets the child.
- arranging home visits during the summer term before a child starts Nursery and arranging home visits for children joining Reception who have not attended our Nursery
- arranging transition visits, before the child starts, for parents and children to meet the practitioners, children and to play.
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;

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- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents; providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by completing "wow" moments which inform planning and provision;
- written contact through home school record book as well as the acknowledgement that parents can ring school to arrange a visit to meet with the child's teacher.
- by providing a quiet and confidential area where parents are able to discuss any concerns.

Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interest. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual Learning Journals.

Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

Learning and Development

Teachers and Early Years practitioners provide the curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes of up to a class size of 30 children.

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas."

The prime areas are

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

The specific areas are

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

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the Inclusion Leader in order to access Special Educational Needs support if appropriate.

"Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part of children's development, building their confidence as they

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learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1."

(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2012)

Planning and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At Studlands we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These 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;
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

(Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2012)

Religious Education is also taught in the reception classes in accordance with Hertfordshire guidelines.

Health and Safety

There are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school risk assessment policy) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In addition to this, an annual risk assessment is conducted of the EYFS. The staff handbook contains safeguarding and child protection policies where there is detailed information and procedures to ensure the safety of the children.

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2012, we undertake;

- A whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date.
- Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge.
- Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer.
- A written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and informs the child's parents and/or carers on the same day. (Statutory framework for EYFS 2012)
- To provide fresh drinking water which is available at all times
- To take account of children's' dietary needs which are recorded and acted upon when required
- That each classroom has a snack and sink area that can provide healthy snacks and drinks.
- To maintain a first aid box which is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept.
- A minimum of two staff in EYFS are paediatric first aid trained.
- To review whole school policies which include the Early Years Foundation Stage on health and safety, and safeguarding in line with statutory guidance.
- To maintain regular fire and emergency evacuation practises in line with procedures outlined in the policy
- That practitioners will wear appropriate clothing.
- Staff are expected to wear clothing that supports them in getting to a child's level and playing and engaging with children at floor level.

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Transition from Pre -school to full time Education

Our aim is to establish a smooth and successful transition to school. This is facilitated by

- Visits to partnership pre-school establishments.
- Transition sessions that are held at the school in the summer term for all children prior to starting Reception class.
- Liaison with outside agencies.
- Home Visits by their child's classteacher
- On the county 'move up' day all the nursery children spend about one and half hours in their new reception class
- Children are invited to stay for lunch
- There is a formal staff meeting where the nursery teacher meets with reception teachers to discuss each child in detail, the child's achievements, personality and level of development. This enables teachers to plan appropriate activities for the child in Reception.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Role of the Early Years Leader

It is the role of the Early Years Leader, under the guidance of the Head Teacher: -

- To organise the delivery of 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 and carry out INSET when required.
- To monitor and update resources
- To liaise with and support Pre-school establishments within the Partnership link.

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