

LANDYWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL



Early Years Policy

June 2018

Introduction

'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",
Department for Education, 2012

Aims & Objectives

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners, by providing a broad and balanced curriculum that builds on children's prior learning and experiences so that each child will develop to their full potential.

At Landywood Primary School, we are committed to:

- Providing a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging curriculum for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- Providing a broad, balanced and creative curriculum that enables choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence. Taking all opportunities to give the children a multisensory approach which enriches and engages them in nurturing a love for learning.
- Using and valuing the child's voice and what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Developing a strong partnership where parent's voice is invaluable and paramount in supporting their children's journey through school life.
- Providing a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes:

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

A Unique Child

At Landywood Primary School it is recognised that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We respect that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; therefore praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, are used to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning and desire to succeed.

Inclusion - the diversity of individuals is respected within the school and it is believed that every child matters. All children and families at Landywood Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities; every individual is valued within our school. Children are given every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Children's range of life experiences are taken into account when staff are planning for their learning.

At the Foundation Stage realistic and challenging expectations are set to develop the skills of our children, so that as many as possible achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage.

This is achieved through:

- Planned opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a multisensory approach based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary (such as referrals to speech therapy) as necessary.
- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.

Positive Relationships

At Landywood Primary School we value that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We therefore strive to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families through:

- Arranging, where possible, visits by the teacher to all children in their childcare provision prior to their starting nursery.
- Inviting parents/carers and children the opportunity to spend time in Nursery or Reception Class for induction visits before starting school.
- Providing an induction meeting for Nursery and Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns and if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Written contact through the Home-School Reading Diary, monthly newsletters and school website.

- Sending home 'proud cloud' slips designed to enable parents to record outstanding achievements at home.
- Inviting parents to attend 'stay and learn' sessions to spend time with their child finding out how they learn.
- Offering three parent/teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child's progress is discussed.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in Reception and Nursery.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as head teacher coffee mornings, Christmas productions, Mothering Sunday celebration, Graduation and sports day etc.

Enabling Environments

The environment is paramount in supporting and extending the children's development, the children must be able to feel confident, secure and challenged. A welcoming and stimulating learning environment is created which will encourage all children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. Rooms are organised into defined learning areas, additional to this are a thinking zone, creative zone and communication zone. Both Nursery and reception have their own secure outdoor area. Resources are clearly labelled and organised, enabling the children to access them with a high level of independence. The effectiveness of the learning zones are regularly evaluated by practitioners and adaptations to the provision are made as necessary. Children are encouraged to make their own selection of the learning challenges on offer, as this encourages independent learning. All staff ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and risk assessments are checked daily.

Learning and Developing

The EYFS Curriculum – Our curriculum reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape the provision in early year's settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-linked; no area of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skills across a number of learning areas. They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS.

The three Prime Areas are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Four Specific Areas:

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

Children's development levels are assessed throughout Early Years and 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. Reception pupils also participate in a daily phonics sessions, following the guidance in the "Letters & Sounds" document and in line with school policy. Nursery children have discreet phonics teaching during the Spring and Summer term.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- **Playing and exploring** - children have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'. Through play, children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.
- **Active learning** - children have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements. Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.
- **Creating and thinking critically** - children are encouraged to develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things. Children are given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children access learning challenges and move around the zones freely which enables them too purposefully to extend their learning.

Planning

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. At Landywood Primary School, a creative curriculum is delivered which is based around a topic with discrete phonics, maths, writing and reading directed teaching.

Curriculum overview completed each half term shows the key learning experiences for each area of the curriculum. Practitioners use this flexibly, choosing learning experiences to meet the needs of the children. At the beginning of each topic, practitioners lead the children in discussion to identify areas that they are particularly interested in. These ideas are incorporated into the medium term plan.

Short term planning shows the learning opportunities that will be available over the week. Including differentiated adult led experiences for all curriculum areas, as well as showing how the learning environment will be enhanced in order for the children to develop and apply their numeracy, phonics, spoken language and fine motor skills independently.

Observations

Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Focused observations allow the children to demonstrate learning and understanding and teachers are then able to plan next steps to move the children's learning on. During child initiated activities, practitioners also make 'snapshot' observations. Notes about teacher led activities are recorded on planning sheets. Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's Learning Journeys along with examples of work and parental contributions. The learning journeys are collated using an online system called Tapestry. This policy confirms that Tapestry is compliant with GDPR regulations May 2018.

Assessment

During the first half term in Reception and Nursery, the ability of each child is assessed using a baseline test. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. At the end of Reception each child's level of development is assessed against the 17 early Learning goals and recorded as Emerging, Expected or Exceeding. Regular assessments of children's learning are made, and this information is used to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

Progress records and learning journals are used to record progress and are shared with parents. Tracking grids are updated on Classroom Monitor in line with the school assessment system at the end of each half term. Each child's level of development is recorded as entering, developing or secure within the Development Matters age-bands. Individual Phonics records are also kept to track pupil's progress in Letters and Sounds.

Parents and 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 helps to create a smooth transition and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Effective teaching and Learning

We aim to provide an attractive, challenging learning environment that offers high quality opportunities for the children to learn through play, both indoors and outdoors. Activities are a mixture of Adult led and Child initiated. Adult led activities are practical in nature and based on first hand experiences wherever possible. The children are supported to develop problem-solving skills through open-ended tasks and opportunities to share their thinking with others. The number of adult led activities that the children take part in increases throughout the year, as their concentration develops. There is a range of "continuous provision" available in the classroom, that is designed to offer open-ended, practical learning opportunities. Children are supported to think creatively and imaginatively and explore how resources can be adapted. Each week, the provision is enhanced with additional resources, based on the week's learning to enable the children to apply skills

independently. The children and the parents are encouraged to look at and discuss their Learning Journey to review learning and successes.

Transition

Starting Nursery and Reception– parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an Induction Meeting in the summer term to meet their child's new teachers and teaching assistants and learn more about the school and EY curriculum. This is an opportunity for staff to

- To explain the day in a life of a Nursery/Reception child
- Explain about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals
- Explain about holidays and absences

New class sessions – Nursery and Reception children are invited to a stay and play session with their parent/carer. This all enables them to join their new class where the Reception or Nursery environment is already a familiar place to them. Children in Reception are full time from the 1st day of term. During the summer term, a programme of transition is implemented to support the children with their move to Year One. This involves visits to the Year One classroom, informal visits and chats with Year 1 teachers and opportunities to ask any questions about the next year. The school holds 'Transition Days', giving the children a taste of their new class. Reception class routines become more structured with more adult led teaching in the summer term in order to prepare children for transition to Year 1.

Safeguarding & Welfare

'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.'

(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014)

All staff have the safeguarding level 1 qualification and have completed Prevent training. The school safeguarding policy is adhered to precisely by all adults in the setting. In addition to the whole school policy,

- Staff adhere to the legal safeguarding and welfare requirements in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years and Foundation Stage and follow guidelines.
- Staff adhere to guidelines in the document 'A Mobile Phone and Camera Toolkit for Early Years Settings.'
- Staff only take photographs of children using the work camera; no personal cameras will be used. The work camera will be open to scrutiny at all times.
- Photographs will not be taken in sensitive areas such as toilets or nappy changing areas.
- Images of children will not be taken off the premises without the parents' permission.

We are committed:

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- To promote good health;
- To manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

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. We encourage the children to take an active role in ensuring their own safety and involve them in discussions about health and safety issues. The school follows a Life Education programme, which encourages children to think about who can help them in different situations. In addition to the school's risk assessment, daily risk assessments are completed in Early Years to ensure that any hazards are identified and managed before the children enter the classroom.

Good Health

Children have snack time every morning and afternoon where they can choose from milk or water and a piece of fruit. Children are encouraged to try new foods and the benefits of healthy diet are discussed. Fresh drinking water is available at all times. Children are supported to wash their hands with soap before selecting a snack and pouring their own drink.

Intimate Care

"Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. As part of our induction process it is explained that every effort should be made to encourage independence before a child arrives at school. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing or changing underwear following an accident.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. No intimate care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or guardian of that child and all parents and guardians will be asked to provide that permission when their child joins the school.

The following steps are taken to promote safeguarding and also to maintain the child's dignity:

- Staff inform a colleague when a child needs to be taken to the toilet
- Parent/carer to be informed of the accident when they collect the child at the end of the session.

Illnesses and Injuries

Parents and carers are asked not to send their child to school if they are unwell and to inform the school office of their absence. Parents/carers are asked to inform staff if their child is suffering from a minor ailment so that appropriate care can be given. Children must not return to school within 48 hours of the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea.

If a child becomes unwell whilst at school, a member of staff will:

- phone the parents/carers, explain that their child is unwell, explain the symptoms noted and ask them to collect their child.
- sit with the child in a quiet place away from other children, if possible, until the parents arrive.
- if the child has had sickness or diarrhoea, explain the policy of at least a 48 hour clearance of either symptom before the child may return.

In the case of an injury, appropriate first aid will be administered by a qualified first aider. There are 2/3 paediatric qualified first aiders in the setting. A first aid kit is kept in the Nursery and Reception area and its contents are in accordance with advice from the Health and Safety Executive and the Community Health Physician. First aid cover is provided at lunchtimes. All accidents are recorded in one of the school's accident books and signed by the member of staff who dealt with the incident. Parents/carers may be contacted by text message or telephone call to inform them of an injury if deemed necessary.

In the case of a more serious accident to a child, the practitioner/school will contact the parent/guardian to agree a course of action if time permits. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted the practitioner/school will seek appropriate medical attention or treatment for the child.

Medicines

Only drugs/medicines prescribed by a registered Medical Practitioner will be administered to children. Parents should complete and hand in a Medication Consent Form, along with medicine, to the school office. Drugs/medicines must only be administered to the child for whom they are prescribed and all drugs/medicines must be kept in the original container stating whom they are prescribed for and dosage information. Unwanted or unused medicines must be returned to the parent for disposal. A record of the drugs given should be made indicating the time, dosage and signed by the person administering the dose. Training for prescribed medication that is invasive i.e. EPIPENS etc. is available via the school nurse. If an individual child requires a care plan, this will be drawn up in partnership with parents and the school nurse.