



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Amendments made since last review Spring 2022 – Policy amendments to capture Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2021 Spring 2024 – 3 is added to policy rather than a separate document.	
Policy agreed / reviewed 19/3/2024	Next review due Spring 2027
Signed on behalf of the Governing Body	Signed by headteacher

Aims and Purposes

We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework outlined in the revised documentation (2021) that clearly states:

The EYFS seeks to provide...

- *'quality and consistency...', so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind*
- *a secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly*
- *partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers*
- *equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported'.*

Four Overarching Principles

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

The EYFS is based upon four overarching principles:

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

This policy explains how our practice is underpinned by these.

Intent

At Longton Lane, our Early Years curriculum makes clear our aspirations for all children to 'Believe and Achieve'. We believe that children should experience excellent teaching and develop a deep love of learning to enable them to move on confidently to their next stage in their learning. Our curriculum is bespoke to the needs of Longton Lane children and uses the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' as a starting point. We use the non-statutory 'Development Matters', to support assessment, tracking and planning for children's next steps.

In delivering our curriculum, we aim to remove any barriers to learning, so that all children can make progress across the curriculum and reach their full potential. Through our school values we aim for our children to be respectful, tolerant, confident, resilient and articulate individuals. We aim to ensure that all children have a secure understanding of the Fundamental British Values, gain an understanding of equal opportunity, are able to celebrate the richness and diversity of the society in which they live and are fully prepared for life as a global citizen. Through the curriculum, we want the children to be able to make positive choices in terms of their social interactions, health and personal wellbeing. A key approach to achieving our curriculum intent is for our curriculum to be filled with rich-first hand experiences.

Staff continually review and construct a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give children, particularly the most disadvantaged, the knowledge, self-belief and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. The curriculum is coherently planned

and sequenced building on what children know and can do and prepares them for future learning. There is a curriculum focus on ensuring that children acquire a wide vocabulary, communicate effectively and secure a knowledge of phonics, which gives them the foundations to become confident and fluent readers.

We are committed to providing a high-quality early years education which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a life-long love of learning.

Implementation

What lies at the heart of our provision is; a rigorous and systematic approach to teaching each of the 7 statutory areas of learning and development:

- Communication and Language,
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development,
- Physical Development,
- Literacy,
- Mathematics,
- Understanding the World and
- Expressive art and Design

Pupils are intentionally provided with a rich, broad and balanced curriculum which is matched appropriately to their stage of development and individual needs. The curriculum pays particular attention to the development of language and oracy through language rich provision due to the low starting points in this area for many of our pupils. Children are exposed to high quality experiences through both adult focused and child-initiated activities. Priority is given to the development of Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning. We have designed, organised and planned our curriculum to ensure every child receives an appropriate mix of academic and personal development, which means in practice our curriculum places equal importance on the 7 statutory areas of learning and the promotion of the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning. We have created the capacity within our curriculum to be flexible and respond to individuals, in the knowledge that children need to feel emotionally secure in order to learn.

Our curriculum includes the wider area of cultural and social aspects and is effective in breaking down any barriers to learning by offering additional opportunities for experiential and practical learning.

Phonics is taught using the Read Write Inc model, all staff are trained and continuous monitoring ensures that provision is of a high standard and children make good progress. Number is taught systematically and results in children applying these skills in oral and written activities. Understanding the World and Expressive Art and Design are taught through predictable topics and interests throughout the year. Theme and resources are chosen to motivate and encourage all children to learn.

The progress of all children, including those with SEND and those in receipt of pupil premium funding, is closely monitored and the curriculum is designed to ensure that any identified gaps are diminished. In Foundation Stage, when planning for learning, we take account of children's range of life experiences, stages of development, individual needs and interests.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests and develop their self-confidence and self-esteem.
- 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 enabling learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Observing children and planning challenging activities tailored to the unique needs of individuals.
- Closely monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Continuous provision is planned to compliment the planning cycle whilst providing opportunities for further enquiry and learning and the consolidation and recall of skills, knowledge and attitudes to learning. It is designed around individuals to provide rich, varied and imaginative experiences for all children.

We always aim to provide experiences that are highly motivating and irresistible to young children, engaging and which capture their interests for extended periods of time. Through these experiences, children are able to apply, revisit and build on ideas, concepts and skills and make sense of the world around them. 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, whilst adults scaffold

and support their learning. Children also learn to persevere and to keep trying when things don't go as they planned, building resilience and developing a 'can do' attitude.

Parents and carers are involved in their children's learning and encouraged to support learning at home. Partnerships with parents are supported through letters, diary sheets, invites to activities, daily contact, home activities and workshops.

Impact

The impact that our curriculum is having on our children as learners is constantly and rigorously evaluated to ensure all children are receiving their entitlement of a broad and balanced curriculum. Our careful curriculum design and planning, means that we build in many opportunities for repetition and practice of; essential skills, knowledge and understanding in every area of learning. This ensures that children can revisit previous learning, which allows them to gradually develop a deeper understanding of the skills and processes within areas, at their own pace and in the best possible way for each individual child.

The progress of ALL children is carefully tracked and the impact of the curriculum for all groups of children is closely monitored. Children make good progress, and with accurate assessments children, including disabled children, those who have special educational needs and those for whom the school receives additional funding make good progress in relation to their starting points.

Children are curious learners and demonstrate the Characteristics of Effective Learning – playing and exploring (engagement), active learning (motivation) and creating and thinking critically. They are becoming resilient learners and have pride in their work. Children in Reception leave with a broad range of knowledge and fundamental skills which provide a strong foundation in which future learning is built upon.

A Unique Child

At Longton Lane Primary School, 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 and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration assemblies and rewards to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

At Longton Lane, we value the diversity of individuals and their families. We endeavour for all children to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of the needs, interests and next steps of individuals. In the EYFS, we set challenging realistic expectations for all, including those with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from a variety of linguistic backgrounds.

Special Educational Needs

Continual informal and formal assessments undertaken by staff provide opportunities to identify any special educational needs a child may have. As children all develop differently, it is recognised that a significant lack in achievement after the initial settling in period represents initial concern and careful monitoring. Children identified with special educational needs are monitored and initial concerns are discussed with parents, SENDCO, and advice may be sought from other agencies e.g., Speech and Language Therapy Service.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in our 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 School Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy).

At Longton Lane Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that we are required to meet all of the following requirements:

- promote the welfare 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

We endeavour to meet all of these requirements.

Positive Relationships

At Longton Lane Primary School, we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with all 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 their children. We do this through:

- Demonstrating that we value and respect the role of the parents/carers as the first educators by listening to accounts of their child's development and any concerns and aspirations they have.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Inviting parents and children to a series of transition afternoons, during which parents can 'stay and play' with their child and get to know staff in the setting.
- Holding a parent/teacher meeting before their child starts school, in order to discuss children's individual circumstances, interests, skills and needs.
- Ensuring parents/carers are informed about the curriculum and school life through regular newsletters, the school website, weekly diary sheets, curriculum outlines, Tapestry, termly opportunities for more formal discussion, curriculum days, workshops, half termly report cards and celebration assemblies, as well as informal opportunities.
- Encouraging parents to take part in home learning tasks with their children. These are outlined on the weekly diary sheet and include home activities (linked with key topics or lines of enquiry), reading, phonics and maths.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class.
- Providing parents with the facility to comment on learning added to children's 'Learning Journeys' at any point in time and to add learning from home, including 'wow' moments.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher/key worker if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term, at which, the teacher and the parent/carer discuss their child's progress and next steps for learning in detail. The termly report card also shows each child's attainment and progress at the end of each term.
- Inviting parents to attend workshops focused on phonics and early reading and mathematics.

Key Person

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At Longton Lane Primary School, each child is allocated a key person. The key person approach is aimed at enabling and supporting close attachments between children and practitioners. Attachment provides a sense of security, so that children can become confident, independent and capable young learners. The role of the key person is to meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, talking to the parents when appropriate and working in partnership with them. The Foundation Stage Leader also meets with pre-school providers where possible to discuss each child and their transition process into school.

Enabling Environments

At Longton Lane Primary School, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their level of development, individual needs and interests, before planning challenging, but achievable activities and experiences to extend children's learning.

The Learning Environment

The classroom is organised in such a way that allows children to explore and learn securely and safely. The environment is arranged into areas which include, a workshop, writing, maths, books, investigation, observation, water, small and large construction, loose parts, storytelling, sand, malleable, fine motor, music, dance and role play. The Foundation Stage classroom has its own outdoor area. The children free flow between the inside and the outside spaces and make their own choices about where they choose to learn. This has a positive impact on the children's development and empowers them as learners. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on larger scales than when indoors. Outside the children can explore and make sense of the natural world, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. Just like indoors, we plan activities and experiences for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

Learning and Development

In Early Years Foundation Stage, there are seven areas of learning and development that shape educational provision in early years settings. Three areas, also known as the prime areas, are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, express themselves effectively, form positive relationships, be healthy and thrive. They are also crucial areas to be developed during a child's early years to enable them to be able to access education later on. Staff will also support children in four Specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The seven areas of learning covered by the framework are:

Three Prime Areas:

- Communication and Language (C and L)
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)
- Physical Development (PD).

Four Specific Areas:

- Literacy (L)
- Mathematics (M)
- Understanding the World (U the W)
- Expressive Arts and Design (CD)

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

The characteristics of effective teaching and learning describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner. They are vital elements of support for the transition process from EYFS to Year 1. The characteristics of learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes. Information describing the child's characteristics of effective learning will provide Year 1 teachers with vital background and context when considering the child's next stage of development and future learning needs.

Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

At Longton Lane Primary, we deliver learning for all the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Assessment and Planning

Children are assessed within the first six weeks as they start in reception using the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) and our learning priority overview. Additional assessments are also undertaken to gather more information, including the Leuven scales, which focus on children's emotional wellbeing and their level of involvement. We also observe children closely to obtain detail about which characteristics of effective learning they are demonstrating. All information from staff, parents and professionals is used to form a clear detailed picture of the whole child and to ascertain an accurate baseline 'on entry' into Reception class.

Observations are added to each child's individual electronic 'Learning Journey' on Tapestry. Ongoing assessment (formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff are involved in daily observations and assessments through the Reception year; they include child-initiated tasks and teacher led activities both indoors and outdoors.

We continue to make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that planning reflects identified needs, and we also take advantage of in the moment planning. Planning is flexible, so that we can respond to the needs, achievements and interests of all children. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for their learning.

Assessment at the end of the EYFS

At the end of the reception year in school, the children's progress is recorded on to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

The EYFS Profile is completed, and data is then sent to the Local Authority whereby practitioners report whether children are meeting 'expected' levels of development or not yet reaching expected levels.

The Early Learning Goals (ELGs) cover 17 aspects across 7 areas of learning. These are:

Communication and Language

- Listening, attention and understanding
- Speaking

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Self-regulation
- Managing self
- Building relationships

Physical Development

- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills

Literacy

- Comprehension
- Word reading
- Writing

Mathematics

- Number
- Numerical patterns

Understanding the World

- Past and present
- People, culture and communities
- The Natural world

Expressive, Arts and Design

- Creating with materials
- Being imaginative and expressive

Children who do not achieve all the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year, continue to work towards them in Year 1.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS practitioners to follow the principles stated in the policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. The Headteacher, Foundation Stage Leader and Subject Leaders carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.