

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy



Downsview

Community Primary School

Approved by: Governing Body

Date:

Next review due
by: January 2026

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Downsview Primary School children are admitted to reception in the September following their fourth birthday.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Downsview Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

Aims & Objectives

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. At Downsview Primary School, we will:

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning.
- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- To offer each child wide ranges of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own individual experiences.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- 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
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills.

The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers](#) that applies from November 2024.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at Downsview Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning. At the Foundation Stage we set realistic

and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation stage.

Positive Relationships

At Downsview Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We believe that parents/carers are children's first educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at our open afternoons and induction meetings.
- Arranging, where possible, visits by the teacher to all children in their home setting or childcare provision prior to their starting school.
- Providing an induction meeting for 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.
- Written contact through the Home-School Reading Diary and school newsletters.
- Publishing termly overview of learning.
- Offering two 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.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, workshops, Christmas productions and sports day etc.

Enabling Environments

At Downsview Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the 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. Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff. We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and are checked regularly.

The EYFS Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from November 2024.

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

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 will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

'Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.'

Through play, our 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 will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

'Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.'

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 - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

'When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.'

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, teachers are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas. Staff also consider 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.

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. Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's Learning Journeys.

Assessment

At Downview Community 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.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

Children's progress from their baseline data is assessed and tracked in term 2, term 4 and at the end of EYFS.

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

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 and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Tapestry

At Downview Community Primary School we use the secure on-line system Tapestry which allows staff and parents to access the information via a personal password protected login. Staff access allows input of new observations and photos or amendment of existing observations and photos. Observations input into the Tapestry system are usually moderated by the Early Years Teacher before being added to the child's Learning Journey. Parent access allows them to comment (or reply) to observations that staff have input, as well as adding their own observations and photos or videos. Parents logging into the system are only able to see their own child's Learning Journey. As part of our on-line safeguarding policy parents are asked to sign a consent form giving permission for their child's image to appear in other children's Learning Journeys, and to protect images of

other children that may appear in any photos contained in their child's Learning Journey. This is separate from our photography and use of images consent form as the information is not-accessible without a personal log-in. Before accessing the system parents have to sign to agree not to download and share and information on any other online platforms or social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter.

Transition: Pre-school into EYFS

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle into their new class quickly and happily.

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 teacher and learn more about the Reception curriculum. This is an opportunity for staff to:

- Outline the daily routine and structure of the school
- Give information and explain uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals
- Outline expectations for attendance and give information regarding school absence
- Sign up for a Home Visit

Arrangements are made for the children's class teacher to visit them in their current nursery setting before the children attend meet their new class sessions. They will spend 45 minutes in their new class. Parents can either stay in the classroom or join other parents for a coffee afternoon in the school Community Room.

Before the children start school, the Reception Team will carry out home visits or in school meetings. When the children join the school in September a suitable transition period will be planned depending on individual needs.

Transition: EYFS into Key Stage 1

A smooth transition between the end of EYFS and the beginning of Key Stage 1 is important. At Downsview Primary School, we strive to ensure that the learning environment and activities allow familiarity and continuity when moving into Year 1.

Prior to joining Key Stage 1, an extensive handover meeting is held so that key information can be shared between colleagues. This information should include data, indicating strengths and areas for improvement for individual children along with individual characteristics of learning. Throughout the year, regular assessment and moderation takes place between the EYFS phase and Key Stage 1.

Safeguarding in the EYFS

Safeguarding & Welfare requirements are given legal force by Regulation made under Section 39 (1) (b) of the Childcare Act 2006.

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.

Safeguarding in the EYFS is met through the robust policies and procedures already in place across the whole school. Staff receive annual Child Protection update training and fully understand their duty of care when it comes to child safety and well-being. The school follows all duties as outlined in the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023' document and always notifies agencies if concerns are raised.

All staff have read and signed Part One of the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' document.

Medical conditions and medicines in the EYFS are covered through the school's Supporting pupils with Medical Needs policy. The EYFS setting uses staff suitably trained and qualified in Paediatric First Aid

Although technology is used regularly in the EYFS setting, staff do not use any personal electronic devices to record children's significant milestones or achievements. Only school technological devices are used to record these events and staff have signed the school's Acceptable Use of Technology Policy.