

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy



Downsview

Community Primary School

Approved by:	Governing Body
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Date:	January 2026
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Next review due by:	January 2027
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Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 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 recognise the importance of the EYFS in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. We aim to ensure that all children feel happy, safe and valued, and that they develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed for lifelong learning.

This policy is based on the requirements set out in the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers**, which applies from **1 September 2025**

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.

Principles of Early Years Education

Our EYFS provision is underpinned by the following principles:

- It builds on what children already know and can do.
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged.
- It provides a structured yet flexible approach to learning, with opportunities indoors and outdoors.
- It offers a rich, stimulating and purposeful learning environment.
- It values the importance of positive relationships with parents and carers.

Inclusion

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

Planning is adapted to meet the needs of all children, including those with additional needs or disabilities. We set realistic yet challenging expectations so that all children are supported to achieve their personal best. Most children are expected to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn best when they feel secure and valued. At Downsview Primary School, we develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with children and their families. Staff act as positive role models, supporting children's emotional wellbeing and social development.

Parents as Partners

We believe that parents and carers are children's first educators and value working in partnership with them. We support this partnership by:

- Offering open afternoons and induction meetings prior to children starting school.
- Arranging home visits or meetings where possible before children begin Reception.
- Providing an induction meeting to explain routines, expectations and answer questions.
- Maintaining an open-door policy for communication and support.
- Using home-school reading diaries and newsletters to share information.
- Publishing termly curriculum overviews.
- Offering parent-teacher consultation meetings.
- Providing a written end-of-year report for each child.
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Parents are also invited to take part in school activities such as assemblies, workshops, productions and sports events.

Enabling Environments

The learning environment plays a key role in supporting children's development. Our EYFS classrooms provide daily access to well-planned indoor and outdoor areas, organised into clear areas of learning.

Play-based learning is central to our approach. Children are encouraged to make choices, explore resources independently and direct aspects of their own learning. All resources are safe, accessible and regularly checked.

The EYFS Curriculum

The EYFS Curriculum

Our EYFS curriculum follows the **EYFS statutory framework (September 2025)** and includes **seven areas of learning and development**, all of which are important and interconnected.

Prime Areas

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

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 that support effective learning and development, with a strong focus on the prime areas. Planning takes account of individual needs, interests and stages of development.

Where a child has a special educational need or disability, staff work with parents and external agencies to provide appropriate support.

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 Downsview 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 Downsview 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 and welfare requirements are underpinned by legislation set out in the **Childcare Act 2006**.

The school follows:

- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)**

All staff have read and signed Part One of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025* and receive regular safeguarding training.

Medical needs are managed in line with the school's *Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs* policy. Paediatric First Aid-trained staff are available at all times.

Only school-owned devices are used to record observations, in line with the school's Acceptable Use of Technology Policy.