

LEARNING TOGETHER TO BE OUR BEST

**DOVER PARK
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Date agreed: November 2022

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Signed: _____

Chair Board of Governors

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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 2021)

Rationale

At Dover Park Primary School, we believe the early years are the essential foundation for all future learning and that every child has the right to equality of opportunity. We recognise the importance of play in the child's learning and development and the need to provide structured learning opportunities through a variety of experiences. We recognise the importance and value of high quality interactions including careful observations of the child's achievements to ensure the next steps of their learning journey are planned for. We believe that a strong partnership between our school and home is essential and children learn best when this support is shared. We encourage our children to value and respect themselves, others and their environment.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

A Unique Child

At Dover Park we believe every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We give every child the opportunity to achieve their best by having realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children across the areas of learning and development. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with disabilities, children with additional educational needs, children with medical needs, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

We meet the needs of all our children by:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, skills, experience and interests

- planning opportunities to develop their well-being, self-esteem and confidence, including experiences that provide risk and challenge
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- providing a secure and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is respected and valued
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination or stereotyping
- planning challenging and appropriate experiences for higher achieving children
- monitoring children's progress and providing additional support when identified
- using age appropriate ways to seek the views of all children through observing, listening and sensitive discussion
- seeking advice from specialist agencies where appropriate.

Positive Relationships

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

Parents as Partners

At Dover Park Primary School, we respect that parents are the child's first and future educators. We believe that the positive relationships we build are the key to effective partnerships between all practitioners, parents, carers and families. Each child has a key person, i.e. the person with whom they form a special attachment. The key person is responsible for ensuring that the child feels safe and cared for, in order to develop a positive sense of well-being and achievement.

We meet the needs of all of our families and children by:

- Developing positive relationships with parents during the induction programme and a home visit.
- Working with parents right from the start to find out about child's needs, feelings and interests.
- Providing the children and their parents/carers the opportunity to spend time with the class teacher before starting school during stay and play sessions. This also provides an opportunity for the children to become familiar with the surroundings, school staff and their new classmates.
- Inviting all parents to Welcome and Information Meetings before their child starts school and again during the first half term of the child's Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child particularly in relation to reading, phonics and early maths skills.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents three times 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;

- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: stay and play sessions, celebration assemblies, school visits etc
- Ensuring all parents know who their child's key person is.
- Providing a quiet and confidential area where parents are able to discuss any concerns.

Enabling Environments

At Dover Park we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. Opportunities are provided for children to take part in a wide range of experiences and to extend their interests. 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 offers open-ended and meaningful experiences and opportunities through quality continuous provision.

We meet the needs of all of our children by:

- encouraging children to communicate and talk about their experiences
- developing children's independence and decision making by providing an environment where children can freely access resources and select from the experiences on offer
- using the outdoor environment to enhance learning and development.
- analysing children's responses to different situations and identifying their future learning needs
- encouraging a positive attitude to learning by ensuring our planning begins by observing the children in order to consider their current interests, developmental stage and learning style.

Our Outdoor Environment

At Dover Park we have developed our outside provision so that it is an area that children are excited to learn in and an area that will support their development in all areas. We recognise and value the importance of using our outdoor area:

- Learning outside the classroom supports the development of healthy and active lifestyles by offering children opportunities for physical activity, freedom and movement, and promoting a sense of well-being.
- Learning outside the classroom gives children contact with the natural world and offers them experiences that are unique to outdoors, such as direct contact with the weather and the seasons.
- Playing and learning outside also helps children to understand and respect nature, the environment and the interdependence of humans, animals, plants, and lifecycles.
- Outdoor play also supports children's problem-solving skills and nurtures their creativity, as well as providing rich opportunities for their developing imagination, inventiveness and resourcefulness.

- Children need an outdoor environment that can provide them with space, both upwards and outwards, and places to explore, experiment, discover, be active and healthy, and to develop their physical capabilities. At Dover Park we have provided lots of opportunities outside for the children to develop their physical skills. Before children can pick up a pencil to write they need to have developed core strength in their upper body, we provide lots of activities to aid gross motor development.
- The outdoor environment offers space and therefore is particularly important to those children who learn best through active movement. Very young children learn predominately through their sensory and physical experiences which supports brain development and the creation of neural networks.
- For many children, playing outdoors at their early years setting may be the only opportunity they have to play safely and freely while they learn to assess risk and develop the skills to manage new situations

Learning and Development

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are all inter-connected.

Play

At Dover Park we recognise that play underpins all learning and development for young children. Most children play spontaneously although some may need adult support. It is through play that children develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. By providing well planned experiences based on children's spontaneous play, both indoors and outside we support our children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside and with other children and adults as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. Our continuous provision both inside and outside enables the children to explore further and enhance their learning when they are engaged in free flow play.

Teaching and learning

In planning and guiding children's activities we reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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.

Staff will enhance play and extend it as needed to further individual learning. We encourage children to ask questions and find answers through first hand learning experiences. Through sensitive questioning the children will be encouraged to think deeply and to extend their learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The early year's framework covers the education and care of all children in early years' provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of Learning and Development: All areas are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. Children should mostly develop the **3 prime areas** first

These are:

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

These prime areas are those most essential for a child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in the **4 specific areas**. Providers must also support children in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

These are:

- **Literacy;**
- **Mathematics;**
- **Understanding the world; and**
- **Expressive arts and design.**

All of the 7 areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led (child working with the adult) and child-initiated (child chosen) activities. Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside.

Observations undertaken by all practitioners are used to plan children's next steps of learning in their individual learning journeys.

At Dover Park we ensure that the requirements of the EYFS are met through all seven areas of learning and development, in order for children to make progress towards the early learning goals, which are the established expectations for most children to reach by the end of the reception year. Progress is tracked termly and parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's assessment.

Religious Education is also taught in the reception classes in accordance with the Hampshire Agreed Syllabus 'Living Difference IV'.

Assessment and Observation

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves practitioners observing children to understand and assess their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape and plan learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. High quality, professional and positive interactions between teachers and children is essential to this OAP process.

“Assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement and should not be required to prove this through collection of physical evidence.” (*Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021*)

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEND)

All children and their families are valued at Dover Park Primary 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 school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion policy for SEN.

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-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;
- 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 Whole School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies).

Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Health and Safety

At Dover Park Primary School 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 line with the EYFS statutory framework 2021, at Dover Park Primary School we undertake;

- A whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information are kept up to date. Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Prescription medicines are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer." At Dover Park Primary School, 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."
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- Children's' dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required
- The classroom has a snack and sink area and the children are provided with healthy snacks and drinks.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept (see accident and injury policy). The EYFS teaching assistants are paediatric first aid trained, as are other staff members across the school
- A health and safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy.
- Parental permissions are sought for images to be used on the school website or for other publicity shots. Cameras are an integral part of the EYFS observation cycle – cameras are for school use only and any photographs taken are kept within school, unless parental consent has been given to display elsewhere – including the parent communication app Marvellous Me.
- 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.

Transition

From Pre-school /Feeder settings

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition

- Home visits – The Reception Class Teacher and Inclusion Leader visit our new entrants during the Summer Term. The visits are extremely successful in building relationships with our families.
- The children are invited to Stay and Play sessions with their parents to meet their new classmates and teachers.
- Pre-school settings may also visit Dover Park with the children's key person. This is an ideal opportunity for Dover Park staff to discuss your child's interests and needs with their key person.
- The children attend a Move Up morning without parents and carers for an informal taster session.
- The reception teacher will visit all feeder settings. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting. Often these children will have been identified as requiring additional support or are part of the Early Help process.

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 must reflect practitioners' own knowledge and professional judgement of a child to inform 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 must be assessed against the early learning goals. Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are 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. The Reception Teacher and Year 1 Teacher take part in Local Authority transition sessions to ensure quality dialogue and planning opportunities for Year 1.