

Eastwick Schools

Early Years



Governors' Committee Responsible: T&L

Status: non-statutory

Review Period: 2 years

Next review Date: November 2019

Vision

“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, March 2012

Aims

- The child is at the centre of decisions of the Curriculum
- Our Curriculum should reflect the way young children learn, preserving the place of play, talk and first hand experiences.
- It is important to take account of the child’s likes, previous learning and the next steps in achieving his/her potential.
- The curriculum must be planned to ensure coverage, continuity and progression.
- The child has right of access to a planned curriculum which reflects and meets all needs
- Our curriculum demands trained experienced and knowledgeable staff.
- The presentation of our curriculum should enable children to learn how to learn
- Our learning happens in a variety of settings, groupings and situations.
- Our curriculum will provide a rich, happy, safe and secure environment that builds on the foundations of future learning.

Planning and organising

Induction

- Open mornings
- Induction evening
- 1:1 chats with Headteacher and class teacher
- Class visits
- Class picnic
- Curriculum evening (Early September)
- Children start school on a gradual basis to ensure time to settle into the new environment and build relationships with the staff.
- Bigger picture- informing parents termly of the learning

Opportunities

- The children have opportunities to learn by doing, exploring, playing, negotiating, watching, copying and demonstrating.

- The children make sense of their learning by talking about what they are doing, and embed their learning by reviewing, through language and other forms of expressions.
- The children are taught the skills to be independent learners who feel secure to try new activities, make mistakes and build upon them in a positive way.
- To embed clear intentions and identify what needs to take place within the areas of experience, in order to build on what they have done and learned. These rich experiences should be reflected in both the indoor and outdoor environments.
- The children are given a balance of child initiated activities and adult led learning that provide opportunities to consolidate knowledge, skills and concepts.
- Gradual introduction of assemblies, playtimes and lunchtimes.

Our Curriculum

Our Reception Classes follow the curriculum as outlined in the 2016 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available to download at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>. This clearly defines what we teach. The following policy details the specifics of our setting.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

A Unique Child

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, 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/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Positive relationships

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

Enabling environments

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests and stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

Learning and development

Our foundation stage has three reception classrooms and a large outdoor classroom, which is shared. All our learning environments are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The seven areas of learning are defined so that children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of three prime area of learning:

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

There are four specific areas of learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

All areas are delivered through a well-planned play based approach, with a balance of adult led, adult initiated and child initiated activities. Throughout the foundation stage our long, medium and short-term plans ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area at the appropriate developmental level. Our long term planning ensures coverage so that all children have opportunities to work towards and achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. We follow a half termly topic based approach which allows flexibility to ensure that both children's needs and interests are taken into account.

Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the foundation stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. In doing so we can provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning and to help them make sense of the world. Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and the teachers plan activities with these in mind. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics 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.

Staffing and resources

The Early Years team

- Teachers and Special Needs teachers
- Teaching assistants
- Special needs support assistants
- Lunch time supervisors
- Trainee teachers, NNEB students
- Parent helpers (DBS checked)
- Where appropriate school nurse, Home School Link Worker

All staffs are involved in training, planning, assessment and implementation as far as possible.

Opportunities will be given to develop good practice in Early Years through school based INSET, external courses and observation.

Resources

- Equipment is stored, labelled and accessible for children indoors and outdoors
- Children are encouraged to locate, set up, share, tidy and store resources indoors and outdoors.

Assessment

- Continual liaison between practitioners ensures that all involved are aware of the child's progress and next steps.
- Moderation meetings take place every half term across the year group to ensure consistency of assessment

- On entry assessments of each child are completed in the first four weeks
- A child's learning is assessed through observation during both child initiated and adult initiated or led activities.
- All staff are involved in assessment.
- Parents are involved in assessment through the Parent Voice
- Parent meetings take place in autumn and spring term and a Celebration evening in the summer term.
- End of Year Reports show the children's attainment against the 17 Early Learning Goals and whether a Good Level of Development (GLD) has been secured.
- Electronic Profile completed and sent to the LEA at the end of the Foundation Stage Year.
- Transition meetings take place between the Reception and Year 1 teachers to ensure the move from EYFS to KS1 is smooth.

Equal Opportunities

- All children have access to the Curriculum within the Foundation Stage, regardless of ability, gender, or ethnic origin.
- Children with Special Educational Needs will be offered the full range of experiences, differentiated as appropriate.
- Integration in to the Foundation Stage begins gradually and increases where appropriate

This policy should be read in conjunction with the assessment, learning and teaching and racial equality policies.

'Growth is a process of change which we can apprehend as a pattern; not as a pattern like that on a hearth rug, fixed until it is worn through, but a pattern like that of a sunrise, changing continuously in space and time, and similar but never the same from one day to the next. We do not hold a sunrise still on a pin, and measure its dimensions. What is a concern in a sunrise is its quality.' (Christian Schiller, 1895- 1976)