

# Lovers' Lane Primary and Nursery School



## **EYFS Policy**

Date Reviewed: September 2022

Next review date: Annually

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

### Aims

At Lovers' Lane we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children therefore giving them the strong foundation for their future. We aim to ensure that all our children develop into independent and lifelong learners.

As outlined in Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage

'Children develop quickly in the early years, and early years practitioners aim to do all they can to help children have the best possible start in life. Children have a right, spelled out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to provision which enables them to develop their personalities, talents and abilities irrespective of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities or gender'.

### ***To achieve the above at Lovers' Lane in Early Years we aim:***

- 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;
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences;
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development;
- To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere;
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

### The Curriculum

The Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document (September 2021), which is available from the school office or to download at [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/974907/EYFS\\_framework\\_-\\_March\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf)

This clearly defines what we teach. The following policy details the specifics of our setting. The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (DfE 2014: 1.3), they support children's learning in all other areas, they are known as the prime areas.

### ***The EYFS is based upon four principles:***

- **A unique Child:** every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- **Positive Relationships:** children learn to be strong and independent through strong relationships

- **Enabling Environments:** children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers.
- **Learning and Development:** children develop and learn in different ways. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early year's provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

***As part of our best practice we:***

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Provide early intervention for those who need additional support.
- Work in partnership with parents and where needed outside agencies.
- Plan challenging learning experiences for all our children, based on the individual needs of the child.
- Provide opportunities for our children to engage in adult led learning and child initiated learning.
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors.
- Plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observations of children's needs, interests and stages of development across the seven areas of learning.

***The prime areas are:***

- **Communication and Language** – Listening, Attention & Understanding and Speaking
- **Physical Development** – Fine Motor Skills and Gross Motor Skills
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – Self-Regulation, Managing Self and Building Relationships

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

***The specific areas are:***

- **Literacy** – Comprehension, Word Reading and Writing
- **Mathematics** – Number and Numerical Pattern
- **Understanding the World** – Past & Present, People, Culture & Communities and The Natural World
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – Creating with Materials and Being Imaginative & Expressive

*All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.*

At Lovers' Lane children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first hand experiences, in which children can explore, think creatively and are active. We provide a well -balanced curriculum and our planning ensures that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area of the EYFS. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful activities and through a mix of adult led and child initiated learning.

## **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The Nursery and Reception teachers plan activities within the Nursery and Reception classrooms with these in mind. They 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.

## **Teaching strategies**

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases, the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible.

### **Play**

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They 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 experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child initiated play, which is controlled, and adult led activities is very important to us

### **Teaching**

We include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood and taken on. Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place. This looks quite different in the Nursery and Reception classes. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered together on the carpet as a class. In these slots we focus on our topic work, maths, literacy, phonics, and stories. These sessions help to develop vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, sitting still etc...

Reading and story play an important part of the day. We want to make sure our children have a love of books and will leave the EYFS with a bank of stories they know well, both traditional and modern classics. We make sure there is always time for whole class story at the end of the day but also that there are many opportunities to enjoy books at other times. Every child is given their own book bag and has a designated day when they will have one-to-one time sharing books with an adult (although it is fine for others to listen too!) or, in Reception, a group reading session.

## **Planning**

We believe many children need to be given a starting point to learn new things and find topics are a great way to fire the imagination. We have a two-year topic cycle so both classes are working together on the same theme. The topics are flexible to ensure we also follow the children's interests, school themes and local or national events e.g. 100 years Remembrance. Every half term (and occasionally termly) staff plan the next topic, outside of school visits and visitors that will enhance the learning. Staff plan in more detail on a weekly basis using daily notes, observations and interactions with children to inform where the learning journey should move to. Although class teachers are responsible for writing plans, the EYFS plan as a team in the unit.

## **Visits and visitors**

The part that visits and visitors play in the curriculum at Lovers' Lane Primary School and Nursery is given great emphasis, even in the Early Years. We aim to build up to three visits a year; these can range from a visit to a local farm to a visit to a sculpture park or art gallery. For safety reasons we say no to younger siblings coming along on school trips. Visitors also really enhance a topic and we like to have 'experts' coming in to talk to the children, a doctor for example. We often ask parents if they are able (and brave enough!) to share knowledge or a skill, be it cooking, how to bath a baby, painting mehndi patterns on hands or playing guitar.

## **Classroom organisation**

Our Early Years classrooms have defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure children can access them easily. Each classroom is set up in a way to provide children with experiences and activities in all of the seven areas of learning.

Across the two rooms we have a writing area, maths area, creative area, book corner, role play area, construction area, small world area, and carpeted teaching area. A variety of activities are planned for and set up in the different areas each day.

The outdoor area is an important part of the classroom. We try to ensure that the range of activities outside reflects the different curriculum areas, for example setting up quiet spaces for a maths game, reading and for construction. Each child has their own labelled peg and tray. We encourage children to take responsibility for keeping their clothes, book bag and work safely in one place!

## **Assessment, observations and portfolios**

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. To ensure we have evidence of a child's progress in the EYFS we use a range of strategies all of which come together in their individual profile. We are very proud of our profiles: these are collections of children's work, photos and observations which create a detailed picture of the child.

Staff have their own iPad which is used to capture and note observations and next steps for learning which are uploaded onto Tapestry which can be seen by the whole team as well as parents. .

On entry to Nursery and Reception we carry out baseline assessments for each child. Throughout the Early Years the Class Teacher submits end of term assessment data to the Head Teacher showing each child's development across the seven areas of learning. At the end of Reception, the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the Reception child's end of year report.

### **Role of staff**

The role of all staff in Foundation is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs and to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents. All adults within the Early Years setting actively seek to form positive respectful relationships with the children in their care. The formation of healthy relationships between adults and children is essential in enabling children's well-being now and their future successes.

### **Partnership with parents and carers**

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. As well as the Nursery and Reception visit days we offer parents evening in the Autumn Term and Spring term.

In Nursery (and for new children in Reception) we do home visits before they start and we sit down with each parent to learn more about the child and their family. In the Early Years building we operate an Open Door Policy where parents and carers are welcome to talk to the staff at any time. Appointments can be made if parents need to speak to class teachers on a particular subject.

### **Health & safety and safeguarding**

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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2021)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/974907/EYFS\\_framework\\_-\\_March\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf)

It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. This is in line with the Lovers' Lane Primary School and Nursery Safeguarding Policy. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children's profiles, in class displays and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

We are a healthy school and our children receive free fruit and milk from a Government scheme. Reception children receive a free school lunch or can choose to bring their own packed lunch which is eaten in the primary school dining room.

**NB: Some of our policy statements will be subject to change to take account of the current pandemic.**