



# Longford Primary Academy

Member of staff responsible: H. Wareham

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## The Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

### **The context of our EYFS**

At Longford Primary Academy we have a Nursery cohort accommodating both the rising three and four year olds. Children within this cohort are described as either 'Nursery' or 'Pre-school' where we offer 26 spaces in the morning and afternoon. Parents are able to utilise the universal or extended hour's entitlement in order to access the provision at our school or choose to pay for additional hours based on need. The morning session for these pupils is aligned towards the pre-school children whereas the afternoon is aligned more towards the Nursery pupils (the rising three year olds) so that planned learning and provision can be tailored to the need of each development stage and prior experiences. The Reception cohort has a PAN of 60, but for this and previous academic years, we have one class accommodating the numbers on roll.

### **Aim**

We aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe, stimulating and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident, creative and caring individuals. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS (2021) and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. 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 and/or carers. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

### **Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning**

At Longford Primary Academy 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'. 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. 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. 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.

## **The EYFS Curriculum at Longford**

We greatly value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for every child's future learning and development.

Our curriculum follows the learning and development requirements as set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021) where we cover the seven areas of learning and the educational programmes as set out for each area.

**The Prime Areas** (where we build the foundations for a thirst for learning, forming relationships and thriving)

1. Communication and Language
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

**The Specific Areas** (where the prime areas are strengthened and applied):

4. Literacy
5. Mathematics
6. Understanding of the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

In addition, we also draw upon non-statutory curriculum guidance to support the delivery of these learning and development requirements.

The Intent of our curriculum is to ensure that each pupils' wellbeing is at the heart of our curriculum where we enable and motivate children to confidently take risks, explore, create and feel immersed in play whilst feeling valued and listened to. We make use of high-quality texts, a rich language environment and the children's interests to centre our teaching and learning as much as possible as we recognise that high quality engagement leads to high levels of attainment with high levels of wellbeing.

**Please refer to Nursery and Reception's Curriculum Overviews and the school's maths, physical education, writing and phonics and early reading policies for further information.**

## **Observation, Assessment and Planning**

### **Observations**

The Early Years Foundation Stage practitioners use observations as the basis for planning and assessment where the primary focus is to understand each child in our setting.

Practitioners are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests, what we want them to learn and their next steps for learning but we also trust that they 'know' our children because of the time they spend with them as well as their own expert professional judgement.

Both formal and informal observations of the children then lead the direction of the adult led and enhanced planning of the continuous provision in the learning environment. As a school we believe that if we are capturing the moment, we cannot be a part of the moment therefore, we only record relevant and significant observations that are then logged onto each child's online learning journey through the portfolio on Class Dojo.

Home observations are also encouraged using this same platform as we believe that parents also have a pivotal role in enhancing and promoting the learning at home.

Additionally, the children's own observations and reflections of their learning are added to their individual display 'locker' each half term which encourages the children to take pride and ownership of their creations and achievements. After each half term, the contents of the 'locker' are either collated in school or sent home to share their learning with their families.

## Assessments

### Formative Assessment

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process for our children. With that in mind, we regularly analyse our observations of the children and their learning discussing as a team what this tells us about individuals or groups of children. We then use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate.

### Summative Assessments

The children's level of development is recorded using the Development Matters age-bands as 'Met' or 'Not There Yet.' During the first six weeks, the teacher, in conjunction with other EYFS practitioners in the environment, assesses the ability of each new child using a baseline assessment called a 'Starting Point.' This is used to identify children's starting points and children not yet meeting age-related expectations. This process involves:

- A short video of the child at play which will then be shared with parents to start conversations about their child's interests and needs.

Following the baseline assessments (Starting Points,) each month there will be a group of 'Spotlight children' who are chosen based on attainment, chronological age or identified as potentially falling behind. During this time: -

- Staff will spend time observing children's play and learning.
- Complete a 'Spotlight' at the end of the month.
- Actions will be planned to promote thinking and learning to support the child's development.
- As a team we will meet to share what's next for children.
- Staff meet with parents to discuss current knowledge and plans. Observations of the child at play will be shared.

Two months later: -

- The key person brings their knowledge of the child's play and learning over the last two months.
- Plans set for the child are evaluated

These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. Following the summative assessments, we record each child's level of development against the appropriate age band for each area of learning as 'Met' or 'Not there yet' on DC Pro termly, to ensure children are on track and meeting age-related expectations.

Information is shared with parents twice across the year during the appropriate 'Spotlight' month meeting and in the end-of year report. Parents receive an annual written report that discusses the child's characteristics of effective learning and offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. In addition, it highlights the outcomes of the child's Early Years Foundation Stage Profile giving a well-rounded picture of the children's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

**NB: Please note that part of this summative assessment system was created by Barnet Early Years Alliance (2018) and forms part of their 'Observation of Play and Learning' system**

### Statutory Assessments:

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). 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 or,
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers, the local authority and the Reception cohort's new teacher to support their transition into year 1. A percentage of the children's EYFS profile is moderated internally referring to the Early Learning Goals as set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021) and in partnership with other trust schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements.

## Planning

Our EYFS pedagogy implements each area of learning and development through planned, purposeful play, taking into account the particular strengths and needs of the children that have been identified through careful observation and assessment. We draw on a balanced mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities involving:

- Creating a rich learning environment
- Joining in with play when appropriate
- Setting challenges for children enabling them to explore and find their own solutions to problems
- Modelling and scaffolding
- Encouraging collaboration with peers so that they can learn from others
- Guiding learning in a playful way
- Discussing ideas and utilising questioning to extend, challenge or support their understanding
- Commenting on what is being done
- Directly teaching a new skill, concept or important piece of information.

As much as possible, learning is centred around a high quality text to drive and capture their motivation to learn. Equally, we believe the use of these high quality texts enables the children to further develop their communication and language and vocabulary skills. Practitioners readily respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction to ensure their wellbeing is high.

Timetables are set for each year group and are adapted based on the needs of each cohort and the age and stage of pupils within the setting

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively across all areas of learning, as well as offering them opportunities to develop their cultural capital - where each child arrives with a number of experiences and ideas based on their own personal circumstances.

In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas – building the foundations learning and creating a thirst for acquiring new skills and knowledge. Staff also take into account 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, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. They also show ambitious intent for all children.

Staff are expected to develop a strong continuous provision, and then plan enhanced, skill based provision and additional adult directed activities to support this. As children progress through the EYFS, key group work, adult-directed and whole class work will be planned, as appropriate for the age and stage of the pupils.

In Reception, the class teacher utilises national, validated schemes of work to support the progression, frequency and repetition of skills across both mathematics and literacy which align to the educational programmes and early learning goals as set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021)

## Working in partnership with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong, respectful partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers thus setting the foundations for children to thrive in our school.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development regularly over each academic year through daily 'at the door' discussions, consistent online interactions using Class Dojo and termly 'Spotlights' and end of year reports.

The Statutory assessment of the EYFS profile at the end of Reception also helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities when leaving the EYFS and their readiness for year one.

Each year, every child is assigned a key person (the class teacher) who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home as we recognise that the home learning environment can have a significant impact on each child's learning. Through this, we encourage all of our parents to talk, play and read with their children regularly. The key person also helps families to engage with more specific or specialist support, if appropriate

### **Transition**

At Longford Primary Academy we recognise that starting school and moving up classes has the potential to be a stressful time for both parents and children. To this end we have established a strong set of procedures for transitions to be smooth as possible.

All children starting in our Nursery have home visits (where possible) prior to their child starting nursery as this gives children the security of meeting with their teacher in a safe, familiar environment and gives parents time to ask questions and share knowledge or any concerns they have about their child. In addition to this, all the children have a play session in the Nursery to meet the other staff and get familiar with their new surroundings.

All children starting Reception have a 'stay and play' session with their new class teacher and teaching assistant. Parents are invited to attend and are familiarised with the school and school day. Parents can ask questions and share information about their child. Those children coming from different settings to our Reception are visited, where possible, by the Reception teacher and their progress and development shared by their Nursery key worker.

With our transition approach, we want to ensure that each child's personal, social and emotional wellbeing is at the forefront. Therefore, we stagger the times in which the children begin Reception so they are not overwhelmed by the experience or the size of the cohort but settle into Reception as seamlessly as possible.

In the summer term all our Reception children visit their new Year 1 teacher on several occasions prior to them starting Year 1. Reception teachers pass on their knowledge of each child's interests, development, progress and achievement towards the early learning goals to ensure that all teachers have a well-rounded picture of the children prior to starting the new school year.

### **Safeguarding and Welfare**

We understand that we are legally required to comply with the safeguarding and welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2020):

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children. It is important to us that all children are 'safe'.

At Longford Primary Academy, 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. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See our

Safeguarding Children Policy). “Intimate” care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children should be able to carry out themselves when arriving at Longford. However, depending on a child’s age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene. Intimate care procedures are discussed with parents and permission is gained prior to starting school. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child.

Care Plans Where a pupil has particular needs (E.g. wearing nappies or pull-ups regularly, or has continence difficulties which are more frequent than the odd ‘accident’, staff will work with parents/carers (and health visitors/school nurse, if appropriate) to set out a care plan to ensure that the child is able to attend daily. The written care plan (Appendix A) will include:

- Who will change the child on a day to day basis
- Contact details for the person coming in to change the child (if appropriate)
- Where changing will take place
- Clarification that the parent/carers is responsible for the provision of the resources and equipment.

**Please also refer to the school’s Safeguarding, Behaviour and Health and Safety policies for further information.**

Appendix 1 - Intimate Care Plan



Name of Child	
Name of main person(s) changing the child	
Name of person(s) to change the child if the main adult is unavailable	
Where the changing will take place.	
Person(s) providing resources and equipment (not school)	
Disposal of products in:	
Special arrangements for trips and visits	
When the plan will be reviewed	
<u>Initial Comments</u>	<u>Review Comments</u>