



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy (EYFS)

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. “

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, DFES, 2019

1. Introduction

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. Key Stage 1 begins for our children at the beginning of Year 1. The EYFS is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **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 and 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 and rewards to encourage and 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, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.
- **Learning and Development**
Our Infants learning environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. We aim to provide areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. We aim to provide an environment which enables children to find and use equipment and resources independently and allow for self-selection of activities. Without the above three principles it is difficult to develop a rich learning and development environment.

2. Aims of the EYFS

Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been to one of a range of early years setting that exist in our community. We aim to provide a curriculum that takes account of, and responds to, the children’s developmental needs and allows them to make



progress related to their differing abilities. We will build on what the children already know and can do.

In addition, we aim:

- To ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged, providing equal learning and development opportunities for all children.
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activity that provides opportunities for learning in a rich and stimulating environment, both indoors and outdoors. Learning will be through practical and play activities, which are structured, balanced, relevant to the child and related to the real world.
- To ensure that children have positive experiences of success at their own levels in order to give them confidence and motivation for learning in the future.
- To enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- To provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage One and beyond.
- To create a partnership with parents and guardians and value their contributions.

3. Learning and Development

Learning and development is categorised into three prime areas of learning:

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

Additionally, there are four specific areas of learning:

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

Achievement of these prime and specific areas of learning is achieved through application of the following Characteristics of Effective Learning:

Playing and Exploring

Children are given the time to show curiosity about objects, events and people. A 'Big Book of Questions' is used to provide a space for children to add their own queries and reflect their own particular interests. A 'Curiosity Cabinet' is used to spark curiosity and inquisitive thinking.



We provide open ended activities and resources that allow children to explore, investigate and create. Deconstructed role play resources are provided to allow space for children to represent their own experiences in play, both indoors and outdoors.

We work hard to manage a meaningful and effective transition process, aiming to know our children well from their earliest days in school. Positive relationships with children and families allows us to support them in taking a risk, engaging in new experiences and learning by trial and error.

Active Learning

We believe that, within our school ethos of 'Learning Together, Growing Forever', priority is given to engaging, meaningful and appropriate tasks which are sparked by the children's interests wherever possible.

Children are involved in what they are learning and why, maintaining focus on their activity for a period of time and showing high levels of interest and fascination.

A growth mindset is encouraged throughout the school and our youngest children demonstrate persistence and a willingness to attempt varied approaches to tasks. They know that when something is hard, it's a chance to learn.

Children are proud when they meet their own goals, from independently creating a model, riding a bike for the first time or reading a new word. External rewards are used sparingly for most children to encourage a sense of intrinsic motivation and the purpose of lifelong learning.

Creating and Thinking Critically

Children are encouraged to think of their own ideas and are given time and support for this. Class flipcharts are used to structure thinking and new learning and children are encouraged to contribute with ideas for things that they would like to explore.

Our enabling environment and skilled adults understand the importance of nurturing these characteristics of effective learning, allowing children time to explore, to be independent and to follow their interests.

4. Teaching and Learning

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school.

The features of good practice in our school that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of purposeful play based and child initiated learning and their use of this knowledge in their teaching;



- the range of approaches used that provide first hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk, or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the early years settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- the regular identification of training needs of all adults working in the EYFS.

5. Play in the EYFS

We believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is the fundamental way in which young children learn. Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences that help them to make sense of the world.

In a secure environment with effective adult support, children will be able to:

- practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills;
- learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules;
- have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own;
- communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems;
- take risks and make mistakes;
- express fears to relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Adults in the setting will support play by:



- planning for and resourcing a stimulating environment;
- supporting children's learning through planned play;
- supporting children's learning through spontaneous play;
- extending and supporting children's spontaneous play;
- extending and supporting children's language and communication in their play;
- listening to all forms of children's communication and their ideas and taking these into account when developing play and planning;
- narrating children's play;
- asking questions about children's play.

6. Outdoor Learning and Forest School

“The outdoors should provide opportunities for children to engage in planned and freely chosen play experiences and should offer risk, challenge, variety and fun.”

Learning Through Landscapes

Outdoor play is essential for all aspects of a child's development. It can provide children with experiences which enable them to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically. In doing so it provides a rich context for the development of their language and encourages positive attitudes towards a healthy lifestyle.

Outdoor learning is an integral part of our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision. At Clover Leys Spencer, the aim of both indoor and outdoor activity is to provide a stimulating environment for children in all areas of the curriculum. The provision and planning for outdoor learning must reflect the diversity and richness of the experience and developing interests of the children.

“Some opportunities for learning can only happen outside. The experience of a change in the weather, finding a colony of ants under a big stone, making a large scale construction with huge cardboard cartons or painting on great long strips of wallpaper – all of these motivate children into mental and physical engagement, and can only be done outside.”

Exercising muscles and minds – outdoor play and the early years curriculum

Our EYFS children are fortunate to attend Forest School on a regular basis with a qualified practitioner. This provides the opportunity to spend an extended period of time outside, exploring, investigating and developing skills such as; descriptive language, awareness of seasonal change, identifying hazards and risk awareness, keeping themselves safe, safe use of tools, mark making, cooking on an open fire, sequencing and making observations of our local environment including plants and animals.



6. Planning, Recording and Assessment

Baseline Assessment

Much of the information about the children entering our school is obtained through our excellent transition process throughout the summer term prior to school entry.

This includes; visits to the children in nurseries and settings, individual discussions with parents, groups sessions with parents and transition visits into school by the children. With relatively small numbers of children entering the school each year, we are able to respond to individual needs and adapt our transition process according to our pupils. For example, SEND children may need additional visits either in their familiar setting or into school.

Once children have entered school in September, we follow the statutory baseline process as laid out by the government. This is short (approximately 20 minutes per child), interactive and practical, covering language and communication and early mathematics.

In addition, the development matters and early learning goals within the early years foundation stage profile will be used as a teacher observed, holistic assessment of an individual child's development. This will be used to inform discussions with parents and other professionals and to identify and support next steps for individual children.

Our Curriculum

We believe that great learning opens doors and expands horizons. We aim to instil a love of learning that our children will carry forward as they make the transition from our school to other settings and the wider world.

We understand that children must feel safe, relaxed and happy in their school environment in order to maximize their potential and feel that they are an important part of the school community. They enjoy their time at school, experiencing the intrinsic motivation that comes from attaining new knowledge and learning. Pupils are engaged with their learning and lessons are memorable. Our experienced teachers understand the importance of securing learning by valuing engagement and precise, quality learning opportunities that allow for mastery of concepts.



We promote spiritual development in EYFS ...	We promote moral development in EYFS ...	We promote social development in EYFS ...	We promote cultural development in EYFS ...
<p>By promoting the spiritual context of our school environment through visits to our local Church and participation in community events such as seasonal services.</p> <p>By giving our children time to experience moments of awe and wonder at the natural world.</p> <p>By having moments of quiet and contemplation throughout the school day.</p>	<p>By teaching 'Golden Rules' for the class using a story based approach, further developing these themes through circle time and revisiting these throughout the year.</p> <p>By using older children as role models.</p> <p>By providing time to reflect and discuss any arising events or issues.</p> <p>By trusting our children to take a risk, through forest school, cooking and simple tool use.</p>	<p>By providing a stimulating indoor and outdoor environment which encourages sharing and social play.</p> <p>By giving children time and space to talk to each other.</p> <p>By employing experienced and well qualified staff who value and understand the importance of children's social language and development.</p> <p>By making links with our community, regular visits to our local Churches and to a residential care home 'Dove House'.</p>	<p>By ensuring that consideration is given to diversity throughout our planning and resourcing.</p> <p>By making the most of any home links to other cultures wherever possible.</p> <p>By focusing on similarities with other cultures, as well as differences.</p> <p>By going out into the wider world on a regular basis through class trips, ensuring that pupils have experience of different and more urban environments.</p>

The following 'Curriculum Drivers' have been identified as central to work at our school.

These drivers underpin the framework of our curriculum, linking with our school ethos of 'Laughter and Learning'. Our curriculum drivers are; EVOLVE





Children in Reception work towards achieving a Good Level of Development. This is achieved by reaching at least expected level within the following areas or learning: communication and language; physical development; personal, social and emotional development; literacy and mathematics.

Excellence

Pupils are motivated by adults that know them and their interests. They are motivated by fun, purposeful activities and skilled interactions that help them to develop their own thoughts and ideas. Pupils understand why learning is important and see their older peers in our mixed age class and throughout our school as aspirational role models, developing a sense of intrinsic motivation. They are motivated by setting their own goals and achieving what they have set out to do.

Vision

EYFS children are encouraged to work with independence from their earliest days in school. This might be through managing their own personal hygiene or getting changed for forest school or PE, to being trusted to use tools independently in our workshop or cook a simple snack for themselves. Vision to succeed with independence is intrinsically linked with the trusting relationships that we develop with the children and our knowledge of what they can safely achieve.

Outdoor Provision

Learning outdoors is central to the ethos of Clover Leys Spencer and at the heart of all we do, through forest school sessions for all year groups and our inspiring outdoor environment. Much thought, time and creativity has been given to the development of an outdoor area which provides an extension of the work we do inside. Every day is enriched by our outdoor environment and staff are passionate about outdoor learning. Clover Leys Spencer staff are skilled in this area and have provided training and support for other professionals in our local cluster of schools but remain committed to further developing our provision which is ever changing in response to the seasons and the needs of our children.

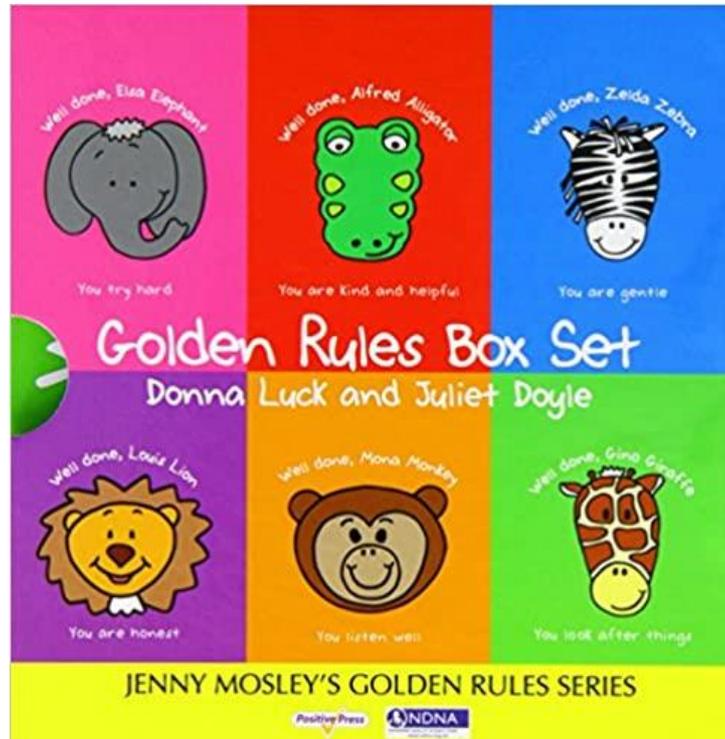
Laughter

At Clover leys Spencer a priority is given to engaging, meaningful and appropriate tasks which are sparked by the children's interests wherever possible. Children are involved in what they are learning and why, maintaining focus on their activity for a period of time and showing high levels of interest and fascination.



Values

Clover Leys Spencer has a focus on four values that underpin British Values; tolerance, respect, friendship and forgiveness. These four values help EYFS child to develop PSED skills needs in their prime areas and support the Golden Rules that are introduced in the first few weeks of school.



Equality and Diversity

We provide an EYFS environment where all of the children have a sense of belonging to our community. We talk about how we can be fair and treat others equally and discuss this as a whole school through assemblies and events such as Anti-bullying week. Resources are carefully selected to show representations of social, cultural and racial diversity and children are encouraged to consider similarities and differences with other cultures. We are aware of our responsibility in educating our children to have an understanding and respect for diversity. We participate in multicultural festivals and discuss a range of religions through our RE work. The book collection 'Little People: Big Dreams' are introduced in EYFS and used throughout the whole school focusing on inspirational pioneers and dreamers.





Child Initiated Planning

We used floor book planning with our EYFS children to enable us to engage with their interests and take account of their ideas. A 'floor book plan' may last for one day or up to one week, being revisited regularly and depending on the interests of the children. Children are invited to contribute ideas and questions to our 'Big Book of Questions' and these are used to guide enquiry and planning.

Objective Led Planning

A range of adult focussed and independent activities are planned on a weekly basis by teaching staff. Children have the opportunity to work in each of the learning areas within our classrooms and outdoor learning area. Whole class, group and individual activities are used throughout the day such as guided and individual reading and writing as well as daily big maths and phonics sessions.

We make regular assessments of the children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects the needs of the learners. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the class teachers and other adults as appropriate. Pupils are assessed using Development Matters and the EYFS profile. These are used as an ongoing tool to track progress and plan Learning Support targets where needed. The 'Derbyshire Tracker' is currently used to track progress and identify patterns related to groups of children, for example gender or date of birth. The Child Monitoring Tool [Learning Journey] is used as appropriate to track Speech and Language development and inform precise planning for additional support where needed. These are used as an ongoing tool to track progress and plan Learning Support targets where needed.

Tracking Progress

Throughout the year, ongoing assessments are carried out through a mixture of informal observation, interaction with the child and regular discussion with all staff. We observe the children working independently both indoors and outdoors. This information is tracked online at through 'Tapestry', an online learning journey produce by the Foundation Stage Forum. Tapestry helps educators and parents to record, track and celebrate children's progress and experiences, as well as monitor development and learning. The journal is shared online with parents, who are able to see special moments and view their child's progress.

In addition to regular updates and access to their child's online learning journey, parents receive an annual report that offers comments on each child's progress in each area of learning and their characteristics of effective learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress. These are completed in June and sent to parents in early July each year.

At four points in the school year (September, December, March, June), pupils are assessed against the Early Learning Goals via the 'Derbyshire Tracker' and this information is used to track progress and identify vulnerable children or those in need of additional support. This data is submitted to the Headteacher.

Data on attainment in EYFS is submitted to the local authority in June. Comparative data is released in Autumn term and analysed by the Early Years Coordinator. A report is then



presented to the Headteacher and Governing Body and key areas identified for inclusion in school improvement planning.

7. The Role of Parents

We believe that parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We achieve this by:

- inviting all parents to a meeting to talk to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- visiting each child individually in their pre-school setting, to ensure that they are building confident and secure relationship with school adults before entry;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents in Autumn and Spring 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 such as 'design and make' or 'brain booster' activities;
- offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents;
- drawing parents attention to their child's individual successes;
- effective use of the home school diary and reading record, including photographs, comments and questions to encourage dialogue between child, parent and school.

8. Induction Procedures for Children

We aim for children to feel confident during their first experience of school. Before children attend their first induction session, a key member of staff will make individual contact with their parents or carers and arrange to visit the child within a setting familiar to them (such as their pre-school or nursery) before they visit school for the first time.

Our formal induction procedure for all children includes;

- Transition visits wherein children visit the provision and meet the older children with whom they will share the class. Children are paired with an older child who will support them in their play and in practical issues such as finding equipment, drinking water or the toilets. These visits are planned so that children have the opportunity to become familiar with all the staff whom they will be working with.



- Meetings for parents and teachers. These are intended to provide parents with the opportunity to discuss and specific areas of concern and also to help us to get to know their child. Parents will be asked to share their child's interests, likes and dislikes in order to inform planning for the beginning of the Autumn Term.
- A meeting for all new parents. At this meeting the aims and principles of the EYFS curriculum are explained and parents are invited to join in with some practical activities and spend time getting to know each other.
- Transition meetings with pre-school settings. Staff will meet in order to share and moderate assessment information and obtain a starting point for initial assessments against the Early Learning Goals.
- New parents are further encourages to contact the school should they have any unanswered queries with regards to their child starting school.
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9. Equal Opportunities, Special Education Needs and Social Inclusion

'Every Teacher a Teacher of Every Child'.

A key value of our school is "Laughter and Learning".

In our school we believe that all children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, gifted and talented pupils, children with disabilities and children from all social and cultural backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all of 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 and 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, such as gifted and talented



pupils. The mixed age nature of our class provides clear opportunities for progression for such children.

- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

We use a 'one page profile' to collect information from the children about how they would most like to learn, and their strengths. This allows us to consider pupil voice for our youngest children.

We believe in early identification and action to support children with SEND. We use observations to identify children with additional needs at an early stage. Staff then work with the SENDCo and headteacher to identify support and provision which can be made for these children, as well as accessing additional support such as Speech and Language Therapy. We track support for children through the Special Needs Register, Provision Mapping and Learning Support Plans. In addition, children causing concern are discussed weekly at staff meetings to allow us to access the expertise of other staff members.

10. Staffing

Our Reception children are taught in one single entry class.. The class is also supported by a TA with other TA hours allocated as appropriate. This gives us a good ratio of adults to children and enables the children to benefit from working in small groups.

11. Management Responsibilities

The EYFS Co-ordinator is responsible for;

- The strategic direction and development of the Early Years Foundation stage, including the development and implementation of an EYFS policy linked with the schools overall aims for pupils.
- Ensuring that all practitioners in the EYFS have a thorough and up-to-date knowledge of the requirements of the phase and leading professional development opportunities where necessary.
- Keeping the Spencer Academy Trust, Headteacher and Governors informed about developments in the EYFS, including improvement targets and actions towards them.
- Working with the Spencer Academy Trust, Headteacher and Governing body to ensure that accommodation in the EYFS is safe, secure and promotes high standards of learning.
- Supporting the Headteacher in the monitoring of the quality of teaching and children's performance across the Foundation Stage, including the analysis of performance data.
- Supporting the Headteacher in developing links with parents of children in the EYFS and managing transition.
- Work with the Headteacher in establishing priorities for expenditure in the EYFS and in monitoring the effectiveness of spending and usage of resources.



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