



Early Years

Foundation Stage Policy

Date Issued:	February 2024
Prepared by:	Head Teacher
Review date:	February 2026
Date Adopted by Governing Body:	February 2021

Early Years/Foundation Stage Statement

We welcome you to our Early Years/ Foundation Stage. Here at Durham Lane Primary School, we pride ourselves in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development for our children. Children have the opportunity to learn through play; learning is fun, engaging and challenging. Adults provide high quality interactions to develop and deepen learning opportunities and are role-models for the children and their learning. We deliver our curriculum through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Vision Statement

Across the Early Years at Durham Lane, we ensure that our children:

- Feel valued as individuals;
- Are happy, healthy, enthusiastic and confident with high self-esteem and self-worth;
- Feel safe and secure and have a sense of belonging;
- Are independent, curious, creative and resilient learners;
- Are courageous and take risks, challenging themselves and each other;
- Establish effective and supportive relationships and are able to work collaboratively;
- Know they have a voice, feel heard and that they can make a difference;
- Are able to identify and communicate their own needs and feelings;
- Are empowered to meet their own needs;
- Respect themselves, each other, their communities and their environment;
- Are life-long learners with a love of learning;
- Have high aspirations, build on their previous best and excel in whatever they choose to do.

We demonstrate this through:

- A seamless education support and care provision which puts the children and families first;
- A stimulating, safe, secure and welcoming environment, inside and outdoors;
- Appropriate, responsive, differentiated, open ended and challenging learning opportunities;
- Respectful, trusting and effective relationships which display emotional warmth;

- Supportive induction procedures and routines;
- Effective systems of communication which are open and transparent;
- A highly-skilled, motivated and committed staff;
- Maintaining professional integrity, high standards and being effective role-models;
- An ethos where we listen, reflect and continuously improve on our previous best;
- Working within all agreed policies, procedures and working practices;
- Supporting innovation by being flexible and playful;
- Promoting healthy lifestyles;
- Ensuring all staff have access to high quality, ongoing professional development opportunities;
- Making the best of all the resources we have available to us;
- Respecting and responding to the voice of stakeholders and partners;
- Sharing and learning from best practice locally, nationally and with our partnership schools.

A Unique Child

At Durham Lane Primary School, 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/ sharing assemblies, rewards, display tables and show and tell, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude towards learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Durham Lane Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

At Durham Lane, we believe that all our 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. In the Early Years, we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of all groups.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning individualised 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.

Keeping safe

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 policy)

Health & Welfare

We believe children learn best when they are happy, healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. At Durham Lane Primary School we:

- Promote the welfare of children;
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- Ensure all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose;
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences, tailored to meet their needs;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe, efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Therefore we:

- Carry out risk assessments regularly within the EY learning environments, both inside and outside and systems are in place for reporting maintenance requirements;
- Follow health and safety guidelines and ensure risk assessments are carried out for all activities;
- Offer a wide choice of fruit, vegetable snacks, milk or water throughout the day;
- Ensure that, on entry to the school, parents are involved in informing us about allergies or special dietary requirements and that copies of this information are recorded and forwarded to the appropriate school staff;

- Take a whole school approach towards safeguarding a child from any specific allergy he/she may be at risk from i.e. wasp sting;
- Are aware of qualified first aid trained staff;
- Follow all school policies and procedures for medicines in school (See administering medicine policy).

Positive Relationships

At Durham Lane 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 and Supporting Learning

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- Offering parents and children 'Stay and Play' sessions prior to the child starting Nursery or Reception;
- Holding formal Parents' Evenings to share achievements and next steps in the Autumn and Spring terms;
- Giving children the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transition times;
- 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 Nursery and Reception classes and allowing free access to their children's work or records. Parents/carers can add comments, ensuring their involvement towards their child's individual curriculum through, 2Buildaprofile and SeeSaw parent share app.
- Having an open-door policy, encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- Sending home a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year;
- Organising a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: family activities, Class assemblies, Sports' Day etc.
- Sharing observational assessments with parents via the 2Buildaprofile and Seesaw Parent Share App.

Supporting Learning

All staff involved with the Early Years aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. All staff meet regularly to share knowledge and information about individuals and groups of children.

Enabling Environments

At Durham Lane Primary School, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging, but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the Early Years uses objectives from the Development Matters document. Early Years staff work on a topic-based approach, following a 2 year rolling programme. Staff ensure that all objectives are covered using rigorously planned Topic Maps, ensuring curriculum coverage and progression. Weekly planning is carried out which also reflects the children's needs and interests.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Early Years is carried out through planned and incidental observation of the children during child-initiated and adult-led activities. This involves all of the Early Years staff as appropriate. These observations are recorded in children's individual 2Buildaprofile app. These may also contain information provided by parents and other settings. Floor books displaying a range of activities covered and individual workbooks, that help track the progress each child is making during the Early Years.

Each child's skills and abilities are demonstrated in relation to the three characteristics of effective learning and these are also shared with the Year One teacher.

All assessments are shared during the transition process with the Year One teacher.

The Learning Environment

The Early Years classroom is 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 classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Early Years have their own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

Wider Contexts

At Durham Lane Primary School, we endeavour to forge and build relationships with other settings, organisations and services. We believe that through sharing expertise, listening and involving the children, we can achieve positive contributions both to our school and the wider community.

Special Educational Needs

The school has a detailed Special Educational Needs Policy. As with all children, full access will be given to the curriculum in accordance with statutory requirements and the school's Special Needs Policy. All staff are aware of the recognised procedures for Child Protection and of the Code of Practice with regards to special education needs.

Transition

Nursery through to Reception through to Key Stage 1.

At Durham Lane Primary School, the Early Years has close links with the rest of the school. In order to ease these transitions, we do the following:

- Reception and Nursery classes share the Early Years enclosed outdoor learning area;
- The outdoor area is staffed by teachers and teaching assistants from both Reception and Nursery and children are encouraged to use the whole area;
- Reception join the whole school celebration assembly and, where appropriate, for other assemblies;
- Provide parental guides and workshops to help them understand about the progress of Reading and Mathematics skills;
- Ensure that Year 1 teachers have a range of opportunities to visit the children within the Early Years setting and the children regularly visit the Year One classrooms at the end of the Summer term;
- The Year One and Reception teacher have transition meetings to discuss children's progress towards the early learning goals and to set their next steps for the beginning of Year 1;
- The Reception and Nursery teachers and support staff regularly complete shared observations of the children;
- Have transfer sessions into the next class;
- Continue the EYFS profile for assessment of children who are not yet ready to access the National Curriculum in Year One;
- Share assessments during the transition process with the Year One teachers;
- Ensure the commentary on each child's characteristics of effective learning supports future curriculum planning and provides Year One teachers with important information about each child's approach to learning;
- Early Years staff and KS1 staff work together to moderate pieces of work enabling staff to make accurate and consistent judgements.

Learning and Development

At Durham Lane Primary School, 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 interconnected.

Teaching and Learning

See whole school teaching and learning policy.

Purposeful Play

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play, children learn at their highest level; play with peers is important for children's development. Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children, as well as their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Characteristics of effective learning

At Durham Lane Primary, we are committed to ensuring that children become effective learners; the characteristics of effective learning play a central role in this. The three characteristics of effective learning are:

- Playing and exploring;
- Active learning;
- Creating and thinking critically.

We ensure that children are given continual opportunities to develop the characteristics of effective learning and that these underpin all the areas of learning.

Equal Opportunities

All children are given equal access to all areas of the curriculum, regardless of race, gender, religion and home language.

Behaviour

The Early Years follow the whole school behaviour system, sanctions and rewards. (see whole school behaviour policy)