



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Relevant to: Maintained Schools, Academies and MATs

Status: Statutory*

*This Policy reflects the requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework. There is no requirement to have a separate policy to cover EYFS requirements – the specific policy requirement in the Framework can be met through the school existing policies. The Statutory Policy requirements for EYFS are set out at Appendix 1.

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1. Introduction

Designated member of staff: Miss Danielle Morris (EYFS Lead).

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) refers to the time from birth to the age of five. This early development and learning stage is a distinct phase in each child's education and should provide an essential and firm foundation for their future school life.

"All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential."

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, Department for Education (DfE), published 8 December 2023, effective 4 January 2024.

This Policy is in accordance with the statutory framework for the EYFS (effective from 4 January 2024). The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

The specific policies required within the EYFS framework are reflected in the Discovery Educational Trust's (DET) and Larchwood Primary School's (LPS) policy framework and details can be found at Appendix 1.

2. Principles and Aims

LPS aims to provide the highest quality care and education for all its children. It aims to give them a strong foundation for their future learning. Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential.

The EYFS sets the standards that all early years' providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding and promoting their welfare. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness', and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

LPS is committed to ensuring that every child learns effectively and is kept healthy and safe.

LPS adheres to the following EYFS guiding principles:

- 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 with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers;

- importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

LPS aims to put these principles into practice by doing the following:

- Based on the EYFS Framework, LPS provides a broad and balanced curriculum across the seven areas of learning and development highlighted in the Statutory Framework recognising that all areas are important and interconnected;
- LPS promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported;
- Where pupils require support, LPS looks to provide early interventions;
- LPS works in partnership with parents/carers;
- LPS teaches children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school, and ensure children's school readiness;
- LPS plans for the learning and development of each individual child, and regularly assesses and reviews what they have learned, including children with SEND;
- LPS considers language a key element, and for children, whose home language is not English, it provides opportunities for children to develop and to use their home language in play and learning, supporting language development at home. LPS ensures that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard of English during EYFS;
- LPS has a key person as an approach to developing a relationship with individual children, to understand their learning and to tailor this to children's individual needs, and to build their confidence and support their wellbeing. At LPS, this key person is the Class Teacher, who is supported by a Learning Support Assistant (LSA).
- LPS provides a secure and safe environment indoors and outdoors for learning and play.

3. Staffing

LPS has two Reception classes, with 30 children in each class. To ensure best practice, LPS has two adults, one teacher and one LSA attached to each class. In addition to this, LPS has support staff, who work within the classes, and provide extra support and intervention, where needed.

LPS staffing ratios within the EYFS setting are in accordance with the EYFS Framework.

LPS undertakes the required safeguarding checks on all staff to ensure that they are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role.

4. Parents as Partners and the Wider Context of Working Together

LPS recognises the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents/carers as highlighted in the Statutory Framework. It understands that parents/carers are a child's first

and most enduring educators. LPS values their contribution to their child's education. A positive partnership between School and home can have an equally positive impact on a child's learning and development.

LPS encourages parents/carers to take an active role in their child's learning and development and asks that they participate in as many ways with the School as they can. LPS tries to encourage regular information sharing to ensure that it has the best knowledge available to help support and develop a child.

A parent's/carer's invaluable insight into the individuality of their child helps LPS to ensure that its learning experiences are challenging and engaging.

LPS engages with parents/carers in the following ways:

- Teachers are available for an informal chat at the end of the day;
- Weekly newsletter published on Tapestry;
- Individual learning journeys posted on Tapestry;
- 'Compliment of the Day' text messages;
- Reading Records;
- Termly Parents' Evening;
- End of Year Report.

LPS also works with a number of other organisations and services within its community to support its EYFS practice. This helps the School to meet the needs of the children in its care.

5. Learning and Development

In order to promote the learning and development of children in LPS' care and to ensure that they are ready for Year 1, the School plans an exciting and challenging curriculum. This is planned in accordance with the seven areas of learning and development (the Early Learning Goals)—to ensure that the children in its care complete the EYFS ready to benefit fully from the opportunities ahead of them. The seven areas of learning and development are all important and inter-connected. In planning and guiding activities, LPS reflects on the different ways children learn to inform its curriculum planning.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

These are the prime areas:

- communication and language;
- physical development;
- personal, social and emotional development.

LPS also supports children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The specific areas are:

- literacy;
- mathematics;
- understanding the world;
- expressive arts and design.

The following Early Learning Goals are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive:

- **Communication and language** development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and to develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.
- **Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, coordination and agility. Children are helped to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food and taking care of their bodies.
- **Literacy** involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest
- **Mathematics** provides children with opportunities to develop their understanding of numbers and number patterns. Children develop a deep understanding of the numbers to ten, subitising, comparing quantities and exploring and representing numerical patterns. Children also develop the skills to count verbally beyond 20, showing recognition of the counting system.
- **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive arts and design** involve enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Each area of learning is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity, including the following characteristics of effective learning:

- **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.

For children, whose home language is not English, reasonable steps are taken to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning,

supporting their language development at home. Sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS is provided.

The EYFS Statutory Framework provides a long-term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the relevant academic year.

Medium-term planning is created and considers individual children's learning and development needs.

Short-term planning covers LPS weekly sessions in School and is informed by current School themes and observations.

6. Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents/carers and the School to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

LPS uses Tapestry and Target Tracker to record the children's progress over the academic year in all areas of learning and development in the EYFS Statutory Framework. It also gathers samples of the children's work alongside the observations. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement

Parents/carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. LPS invites parents/carers to attend a parents' evening on, at least, three occasions during the year and a report is sent to parents/carers at the end of the year.

6.1 Assessment at the Start of the Reception Year – the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts Reception. The RBA assesses a child in early mathematics, literacy, communication and language. This is used to form the starting point for school progress measures. Scores are not shared or published. There is no expected standard and children cannot pass or fail.

6.2 Assessment at the end of the EYFS – the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, an EYFS Profile is completed for each child. Each child's development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. The levels are assessed as:

- 1 - emerging;
- 2 - expected;
- A - unable to assess/exemption applies.

The EYFS Profile provides parents/carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against the early learning goals, expected levels and their readiness for Year 1. A copy of the Profile is provided to Year 1 teachers and parents/carers. Where required, LPS reports EYFS Profile results to the Local Authority (LA).

7. Inclusion and Equality

LPS is committed to supporting the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in its care. The School has created a welcoming environment that is both safe and stimulating allowing its pupils to learn and grow in confidence.

Where a child may have SEND, the School's Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENDCo) provides support and guidance and works with staff and parents/carers to consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

The School looks to identify additional needs and provide additional support as early as possible so that the child gets the support they need following the Trust and School approach to equality and inclusion.

See Appendix 1 for relevant policy references.

8. Safeguarding and Welfare

The safeguarding and welfare of children is of paramount importance and the School takes all necessary steps to keep children safe and well.

In order to fulfil its duties and responsibilities, DET and its Schools have a range of policies in place which are detailed in Appendix 1. These include the specific requirement as set out in the EYFS Framework.

LPS has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and details can be found here:

- Name: Mrs. D. Jaycock.
- Email Address: djaycock@larchwood.essex.sch.uk.
- Telephone Number: 01277 372450.

LPS implements policies and procedures in line with the guidance and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Board, setting out:

- the action to be taken where there are safeguarding concerns about a child;
- the action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff;
- the use of mobile phones and cameras in School;
- the role of the DSL.

8.1 Health and Safety

DET and LPS implement policies and procedures relating to:

- safety, security and suitability of premises and facilities, including environment, equipment, fire and emergencies and risk assessments;

- First Aid and First Aiders, including dealing with accidents, injury and medication;
- Educational trips and visits.

LPS has trained First Aiders and access to First Aid kit appropriate for use with the age range of children in School. The School keeps a written accident/injury/first aid treatment book.

The School informs parents/carers of any accident or injury on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, and of any first aid treatment given.

Details of the LPS paediatric-trained First Aiders can be obtained from the School Office, upon request.

8.2 Food and Drink

LPS is a healthy School and participates in the free fruit and milk for under-fives scheme.

Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, these are healthy, balanced and nutritious. Water is always available for children to drink.

Parent/carers are required to provide the School with details of any special requirement, preferences and food allergies and any special health requirement, where applicable. This information is recorded and acted upon.

8.3 Behaviour

LPS has clear policies and procedures in relation to expectations and management of the behaviour of its children. Refer the LPS Behaviour Policy and Statement of Behaviour Principles.

9. Information and Records

LPS is obliged to maintain records and to obtain and share information to ensure the safe and efficient management of its EYFS provision, and to help ensure that the needs of its children are met. This includes a regular two-way flow of information between the School and parents/carers, and with other providers, where a child is attending multiple settings. All records are held securely and accessible and available only to those, who have a right or professional need to see them, in accordance with the DET Data Protection Policy.

10. Induction

This is an important time for LPS staff to get to know children and their parents/carers, the children's interests and experiences, and any individual requirements that they may have. Each child is assigned to a class with a dedicated class teacher. This helps to ensure that a child's care is tailored to their needs. This also helps everyone become familiar with the School, and builds relationships. If a parent/carer has any concerns regarding the induction and admission process at LPS, they should discuss this with the class teacher or the LSA, in the first instance.

11. Transitions

LPS appreciates how difficult it can be to change settings and it ensures that transitions are carefully planned to ensure a continuity of learning by working closely with other settings as well as parents/carers.

LPS recognises that starting school and moving up to Year 1 has the potential to be a stressful time for both parents/carers and children. By this stage, LPS has established a good understanding of a child's needs and looks to establish effective partnerships, and has a strong set of procedures to ensure that any transition is as smooth as possible.

All children starting school have a play session to meet staff and become familiar with their new surroundings. Parents/carers can ask questions and share information about their child.

The School has a staggered intake in its Early Years in order to ensure that children, who need extra support, are given time to settle in. Children attend school full-time from their start date.

All children starting in Reception have a booklet to complete during the summer break and parents/carers are given a timetable and a 'School Readiness' booklet.

In the summer term, all LPS Reception children visit their new teachers on numerous occasions prior to them starting Year 1. Reception teachers pass on their knowledge of each child's 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.

12. Complaints

The School encourages parents/carer to raise any concerns with their child's class teacher or the Headteacher (HT) in the first instance. LPS is committed to seeking to resolve concerns or complaints swiftly and effectively.

DET has a Complaints Policy and Procedure, which documents how complaints are dealt with (refer Appendix 1).

Appendix 1: Policies and Procedures

DET and its Schools have the following policies, which apply to the whole Trust, including the EYFS setting. These are available on the DET and the LPS websites.

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| LPS Accessibility Plan |
| LPS Admissions Policy and Criteria |
| LPS Anti-Bullying Policy |
| LPS Attendance Policy |
| LPS Behaviour Policy and Statement of Behaviour Principles |
| DET Complaints Policy and Procedure |
| DET Data Protection Policy |
| DET Educational Visits Policy |
| DET Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy and Equality Statement and Objectives |
| LPS First Aid (including the administration of medication) Policy |
| DET Health & Safety Policy |
| DET Raising Allegations and Low-Level Concerns Policy |
| LPS Relationships and Sex Education Policy |
| DET Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy |
| DET Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and LPS SEN Information Report |
| DET Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy |