

# LOWER PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

## POLICY FOR EARLY YEARS EDUCATION AND INDUCTION



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## **Policy for the Early Years Foundation Stage at Lower Park School**

*“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”*

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012

### **Intent**

At Lower Park School we intend the EYFS Curriculum to be fun, engaging and child led. We have a broad outline of what we wish to deliver, however, we also leave room for the exploration of the children’s ideas and interests they wish to pursue in the topics, encouraging and enabling child led learning. We make sure that reading, writing and mathematics in our Reception classes are given sufficient direct teaching time, with frequent opportunities for children to practise and consolidate their growing knowledge.

At Lower Park we make language a priority, embedding spoken language, vocabulary development and listening comprehension into all aspects of the children’s work. Reading is at the centre of our curriculum, with books at the heart of our learning. We teach reading in a systematic and structured way, building up children’s phonic knowledge and skills explicitly, following the Read Write Inc. approach. We also provide regular story times where children can be taught to understand what they have heard.

We teach writing composition by building on children’s spoken language and their comprehension of stories as well as teaching spelling and handwriting directly. In Mathematics we deepen children’s understanding of core mathematical concepts rather than moving them on too quickly to formal calculations and written algorithms.

We give children opportunities to secure personal, social and emotional readiness to learn, including resilience, perseverance, concentration, the ability to listen, to take turns and to cooperate. We also promote independent learning and exploration through play in continuous and enhanced provision.

Play underpins learning in our EYFS classes. We believe that play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Children have daily access to the outdoor environment for both continuous provision and focused activities. Wherever possible, inside and outside complement one another, and learning in one area reinforces learning in the other.

Our intent is also underpinned by the whole school intent statement and the Lower Park Values of Respect, Responsible, Active, Brave, Curious and Creative.

### **Together we achieve the extraordinary!**

1. To ensure that all children receive excellent provision and have equal access to this provision.
2. To help every child achieve the ‘Every Child Matters’ outcomes of Staying Safe; Being Healthy; Enjoying and Achieving; Making a Positive Contribution; Achieving Economic Well-being.
3. To ensure we meet the 4 overarching principles of the EYFS and set up opportunities for children to achieve the Characteristics of Effective Learning.
4. To set high standards for learning; development; care and welfare and progress to ensure that no child is left behind.
5. To provide equality of opportunity. To ensure that there is no discrimination and that there is full inclusion for all.
6. To build a strong and effective partnership with parents and professionals, and the different settings.
7. To build a foundation for future learning by meeting the individual needs and interests of the child.
8. To establish effective strategies for observation and assessment.

## **Implementation:**

1. The statutory requirements of the '**Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage**' will be met.
2. We will take account of the statutory guidance and will demonstrate clear reasons where we decide to depart from it.
3. In our teaching, learning and planning we will take account of the four overarching principles of the EYFS Framework: **A Unique Child; Positive Relationships; Enabling Environments; Learning and Development**
4. Children will be aware of the Characteristics of Effective Learning.
5. We will ensure that we meet the legal requirements for safeguarding and '**Keeping Children Safe in Education**' by promoting children's welfare, health and safety. We will ensure that we employ suitable people using the Safer Recruitment Policy in accordance with **Prevent Duty** guidelines and ensure that our premises, environment and equipment are safe, secure and fit for purpose with robust risk assessments for indoor and outdoor learning.
6. We will put into place effective organisation for the EYFS and we will keep appropriate documentation as required by the Framework.
7. We will meet the learning and development requirements by developing our curriculum, teaching and learning in the Areas of Learning. We will work hard to ensure that the **Early Learning Goals** are acquired by the end of the academic year in which children are five.
8. We will use the Educational Programmes of the EYFS Framework to develop the skills and knowledge to be taught and we will put in place effective arrangements for assessing children's achievement and progress.

## **Entitlement**

Early Years education refers to children up to the end of Reception Year aged 5. The appropriate curriculum for children at this time is defined in the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage** and we follow the guidance given within **Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation stage**. We therefore ensure that all areas of learning are planned for and we continually assess children to plan their next steps.

## **Principles of Early Years Foundation Stage**

We are committed to underpinning our provision with the four principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage in both of our reception classes.

1. **The unique child**- All children are treated as individuals throughout their primary school life at Lower Park, starting in Reception through to Year 6. We understand all children learn and develop at different rates and in different ways. The characteristics of effective learning support our children to become motivated and effective learners. Children play and explore and are encouraged to have a go and persevere. Children develop resilience and enjoy achievements through active learning when they make links, explore ideas and develop strategies for problem solving through creating and thinking critically. Practitioners support children in developing all of these characteristics by engaging and playing alongside them and where necessary scaffolding and supporting learning. All children are treated fairly and welcomed into our setting so that they feel included, safe and valued. Being safe at Lower Park is taught from Reception onwards; educating children on boundaries, rules and expectations. We encourage a healthy lifestyle including exercise and eating healthy food.
2. **Positive relationships**- We believe all individuals flourish and learn when they experience positive relationships with others. At Lower Park we promote positive relationships between children, staff and parents. Practitioners care for all children and respect the feelings and beliefs of children and their families. We teach the children the importance of difference and tolerance of different beliefs to promote fundamental **British Values**. We work closely with parents as we understand the significance part parents play in their child's early education. We pride ourselves in knowing all our children as individuals and forming good relationships by engaging with them in all aspects of their learning.

3. **The enabling environment**- In the EYFS at Lower Park we recognise the importance of a rich learning environment both indoors and outdoors. We prepare and plan areas of continuous provision in our entire EYFS environment to enable children to learn with and without the presence of an adult. The organisation of resourced areas indoors and outdoors changes on a termly, weekly or daily basis in response to the children's needs and stage of development. Adults facilitate and scaffold learning by providing additional resources in specific areas in response to children's interests and requests.

4. **Learning and development**- There are seven areas of learning which are interconnected.

The three **prime areas** are crucial to develop lifelong learning and help children form relationships.

### **Communication and Language**

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.



### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.



### **Physical Development**

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practise of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through four specific areas:

### **Literacy**

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).



### **Mathematics**

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

### **Understanding the World**



Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction,

rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

### **Expressive Arts and Design**



The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their

understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

**The seven areas of learning provide a firm foundation for the National Curriculum, we push our children beyond this to meet the challenges of the 2020 curriculum.**

# Characteristics of Effective Learning

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'.

*'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, 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.

*'Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.'*

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.

*'When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.'*

Children are given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

# Teaching & Learning

Teaching to include:

- thorough knowledge and understanding of the EYFS curriculum and it's delivery
- challenge and inspiration to encourage children to achieve their best
- methods to enable children to learn effectively
- good management skills that lead to high standards of children's behaviour

At Lower Park we have an intake of 40 children per year group. Legislation states that no class in KS1 or FS should have more than 30, therefore, we have a Reception class of thirty children and a Reception/ Year one class where we have ten Reception age children. Within the FS and KS1 we have four classes and due to the mixed-age classes we have a two year cycle of topics. In doing this we ensure continuity and progression for all children regardless of the classes they will be in.

(See 'transition to school' for how we decide on the class each Reception child will enter.)

Both classes focus on the same overarching topic each term, e.g. Paddington and Friends. We use this topic as a basis for our planning ensuring that we plan meticulously for the level at which each child is working. For the children in the Foundation Stage we have a clear intention of what we wish the children to learn, we also use our observations and assessment to plan further learning experiences, ensuring that we plan from the children's own interests ensuring a child centred approach. Our planning will always take into account the four main themes and the level at which the children are working using Development Matters for guidance.

- Each Reception class has support from a teaching assistant. We encourage parents to help in school on a regular basis.
- A particular emphasis is given to personal health and hygiene. Safe use of equipment is taught and the idea of a safe environment is promoted.

## Early Years Environment

- A warm, comfortable and welcoming place in which, the atmosphere and provision, lead to effective learning. This includes taking account of children's differing experiences, backgrounds and cultures.
- The use of materials, colour, texture and display areas are considered in creating a suitable setting for learning.
- Provision is given for children to have time and space to stand back from the outside world in a secure and relaxing atmosphere. Children are enabled to explore and come to terms with their own feelings.
- Structured play is recognised as an important learning opportunity for Early Years children. Situations are provided, such as role play in the home corner, where a range of emotions can be experienced and explored. Children are encouraged to participate as cooperative members of a group and the whole class. They are helped to consider the needs of others.
- Children are given the opportunity to become involved in a wide range of practical work leading to the acquisition of knowledge, skills and concepts.
- Physical education plays an important role in the curriculum for Early Years children. They are given experience of a range of activities and apparatus to promote confidence, competence, co-ordination and to develop manipulative skills.
- Children are helped to foster a sense of awe and wonder and to explore and develop their own creativity.

- Children are encouraged to develop confidence and independence by being helped to develop a sense of responsibility, to take increasing control of their own feelings and to express them in acceptable ways.
- Outdoor play is an integral part of the EYFS. A safe, secure area is provided in order to extend physical, social and intellectual opportunities as well as creative and explorative play. The outdoor area is currently under development to provide further opportunities to enhance outdoor learning in zoned areas that lend themselves to creative, child led, unstructured play.

## Resources

- Both classrooms are organised into specific learning zones. Within each zone, resources have been arranged into low level storage boxes or baskets to allow children the opportunity to access all equipment during their play.
- The outdoor area has also been designed with low level storage of resources which the children can take to different areas outside including the mud kitchen, den making area and reading area.
- Each year new resources and equipment are purchased to ensure that they are always of a rich quality and excite and inspire all children to learn.

## Equal Opportunities

On entering the Reception class, children bring with them a depth of knowledge, understanding, beliefs and skills. These include:

- language which enables them to express ideas and feelings
- curiosity which urges them to ask questions and demand answers

Considerable variations between individuals are acknowledged and we recognise this range of different backgrounds and experiences. This is encouraged through:-

- carefully selected resources and materials to represent different images of society
- attention to range of visitors brought into the child's world
- thoughtful organisation of class groupings encouraging children to work with a range of people
- boys and girls given equal access to and encouraged to take part in all activities

## Special Educational Needs

All children receive provision and support appropriate to individual needs with reference to the SEND Policy.

## Inclusion

Early Years Curriculum provides for the abilities of all children taking into account the child's gender, culture, religion, ability and disability so that it celebrates similarity and difference, ensures access and presents positive images. Encouragement is given for children to respect themselves and others.

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at Lower Park School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school 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 for their learning.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs to our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children



who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

See also SEN policy and Disability and Equality policy

## Fundamental British Values in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act places a duty on early years providers “to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism” (the Prevent duty).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>.

At Lower Park the children in the early years are taught about ‘Lower Park’s British Values’. There is a display that is referred to in assemblies, but in practice we teach each theme of British Values in a simplified way:

- **Democracy: making decisions together**  
As part of the focus on self-confidence and self-awareness as cited in Personal, Social and Emotional Development, staff encourage children to see their role in the bigger picture, encouraging children to know their views count, value each other’s views and values and talk about their feelings. For example when they do or do not need help. When appropriate they demonstrate democracy in action, for example, children sharing views on what the theme of their role play area could be with a show of hands.
- **Rule of law: understanding rules matter as cited in Personal Social and Emotional development.**  
As part of the focus on managing feelings and behaviour, staff ensure that children understand their own and others’ behaviour and its consequences, and learn to distinguish right from wrong.
- **Individual liberty: freedom for all**  
As part of the focus in Personal Social and Emotional development and Understanding the World, staff provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities.
- **Mutual respect and tolerance: treat others as you want to be treated**  
As part of the focus in Personal Social and Emotional development and Understanding the World: Staff create an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where views, faiths, cultures and races are valued and children are engaged with the wider community.

## Transition to School

Admission arrangements are in place to secure a smooth and happy entry into school. We begin the induction process soon after the Easter holidays. The majority of our children now enter school after attending the Hollies preschool which is now located within school premises. A lesser number transfer from other pre-school settings around the Poynton area.

- After the Easter holidays the Reception teachers begin to visit the Hollies preschool to read a story and introduce themselves.
- A new intake meeting is held late May/early June. This meeting invites all new parents to come to school and meet key members of staff. The Head teacher gives a welcome address and FS staff speak to explain admission procedures; school policies e.g. reading and mathematics; and administrative arrangements. The School nurse, PTA chairperson and a Governor also speak to welcome new parents.
- The children who will begin school in September join the current Reception children for Sports day and are invited to the PTA disco.
- The Reception teachers visit the majority of children at their pre-school setting. At this visit teachers speak to each child individually as well as speaking to the preschool staff to find out what that child likes and enjoys as well as discussing their progress and current level of development.

- At the pre-school visit Reception teachers are able to discuss with preschool staff which children they think would be ready to enter the Reception/Year one class. We predominately look at those children who are an Autumn birthday and who are quite confident and gaining independence. This is also discussed with parents where it is appropriate.
- Children begin school on a part time basis for 1 week. Within this period Reception teachers spend time settling children into the new routines of school as well as showing them around their new environment. Baseline assessment also begins.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school at any time, as needs arise or problems occur.

## Transition to Year one

We have an excellent transition process from Reception to Year one. The children have opportunities to visit their new class teacher before the new academic year. These sessions may include stories, 'welcome to your new class' and creative activities. Those children who have securely achieved the Early Learning goals or have exceeded them and are therefore ready to/or have been working on the National Curriculum, then will be placed in the Year one/two class. Those children who have met the Early Learning Goals or who are still emerging will be placed in the Reception/Year one class. Those children who are at the emerging level will still have the opportunity to be within the current environment with experienced FS staff, allowing them to meet the expected level before working on the National Curriculum. For those children that have reached the expected level they will be taught against the National Curriculum and lessons are appropriately differentiated and challenging activities are always planned.

## Parents and Carers as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Asking parents about their child before they start school.
- Offering both parents and children the opportunity to spend time in the Foundation Stage before starting school.
- Operating an open door policy for parents with any queries.
- Offering two parents evenings per year as well as a flexible appointment system at any time.
- Sending an Early Years Foundation Stage Profile report on their child's attainment in each area of learning at the end of their time in the Foundation Stage.
- Developing a range of activities throughout the year that encourages collaboration between child, school and parents
- Inform them weekly on their child's progress and learning through their Online learning Journey via Tapestry.

After the Autumn half term the children start a 'Busy Bee' book. This is a scrap book in which the children can add in anything that has interested them over the week or something exciting that has happened to them.

The prospectus emphasises the school's commitment to working in partnership with parents. We particularly value parents' help in the teaching of reading and they are encouraged and supported to work with their children at home.

## Record Keeping, Assessment and Monitoring the Impact of the EYFS

In order to plan appropriately for all areas of learning, the Reception teachers assesses the children's continuing needs and achievements. This includes liaison with the children and their parents as carers. All have a valuable contribution to make.

- The Foundation Stage Profile is carried out during the first year at school. The observations for the assessments are made as part of the normal classroom practice and referenced to development matters and the characteristics of effective learning. All adults within the Foundation Stage make observations that are then recorded and used to assess each child using Development Matters for guidance. Some specific assessment activities maybe planned, purposeful, well-resourced and flexible in approach. The profile is completed at the end of Reception year in school.
- As well as completing the statutory baseline, arrangements for baseline assessment are as follows.
  1. A series of open-ended tasks/activities are set up and the children are observed within them and assessed using guidance from Development Matters.
  2. The Reception Baseline is completed in the first 6 weeks.
  3. By the end of their 6th week in school the children will be placed either 'on track' or emerging.
  4. This data is then analysed as a cohort using Insight.
  5. Any children that are working below the expected level are raised as a concern and discussions are held as to how to best support that child and, if needed, discussions are held with parents.
  6. Any child who is exceeding expectations in any or all areas of learning are also highlighted and a plan is discussed about appropriate challenge for that child.
- Every effort is made to ensure early identification of children with special needs. These are carefully monitored and their development reassessed at appropriate intervals, following guidance given in the Code of Practice.

Importance will be given to: connection, play and the balance between adult-led and child-initiated activity.

We will recognise the individuality of children and accept that, due to different rates of development and progress that children make, some will achieve, some will exceed and some will be working towards the early learning goals by the end of foundation stage.

We will ensure that all children in our care will achieve their full potential in partnership with parents and by following the principles of Early Years.

This policy should be read in conjunction with all our other policies which apply equally to Foundation Stage.