



**Children First Learning Partnership**  
**Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy**  
**Knypersley First School**  
**January 2022**



The EYFS Policy in respect of the Knypersley First School has been discussed and adopted by the Local Advisory Board in Spring 2022

*Chair of Board:*

*Mrs J Holdcroft*

*Responsible*

*Executive Headteacher – Mrs A Rourke*

*Agreed and ratified by the Local Advisory Board on: 09.02.2022*

*To be reviewed:*

*February 2024*

The overall intent of our school curriculum is to:

**Recognise uniqueness:** in our pupils, staff, resources and whole school community.

**Be Inclusive:** recognising learning styles, learning needs at all levels and providing solutions to any barriers to learning we encounter.

**Engage and Inspire:** Through knowledge rich, highly enriched, progressive and purposeful contexts.

**Promote Aspiration:** offering challenge, accountability and responsibility for their learning.

**Create citizens of the Future:** who thrive on responsibility, see difference as a strength of our community and use democracy to embed their own values and beliefs.

Our EYFS curriculum strives to drive all of these intentions and links very closely to the achievement and development of them all.

### **Intent**

Through our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), we intend to provide children with the best possible start to their school life, providing the foundations upon which their education can be built to enable them to fulfil their potential.

Our Aims:

- To develop a positive attitude and a deep love of learning.
- To provide a safe, caring, and inclusive learning environment where all children feel valued.
- To nurture the children's imagination, language, and curiosity.
- To encourage independence, self-motivation, and confidence.
- To provide children with early reading, writing and maths skills through purposeful teaching and provision.
- To bring learning opportunities to life with enriched, real, and purposeful opportunities through play.
- To build relationships within the local community, and experience cultures around the wider world.
- To work together in partnership with parents and carers, valuing the role that they play.
- To ensure all children make excellent progress in their learning and reach their full potential.

## Implementation

### Curriculum

Our EYFS curriculum has been thoughtfully designed to suit the needs of our children, providing them with a wide variety of opportunities and experiences to learn through play. The curriculum has been split into half termly themes to engage children, building upon prior experiences and expose them to new.

The EYFS curriculum is based upon four guiding principles: -

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development

The Nursery and Reception classes follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1007446/6.7534\\_DfE\\_Development\\_Matters\\_Report\\_and\\_illustrations\\_web\\_2.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1007446/6.7534_DfE_Development_Matters_Report_and_illustrations_web_2.pdf)

**The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development all of which are important and inter connected. (DfE: 2021:1.3.)**

**Prime** areas are fundamental, work together, and move through to support development in all other areas.

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

**Specific** areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

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

Our curriculum is enhanced through literature that has been carefully chosen to introduce new concepts, build upon and embed learning, introduce vocabulary and to excite and engage a love of reading and literature. The thematic books are carefully selected to respond not only to the next steps of the children but are also based on the children's interests.

We strive to provide a broad and progressive curriculum that offers opportunities for every child to achieve and demonstrate talents. EYFS staff work closely with subject leaders across the school to ensure the progression from Early Years acts as a scaffold and is built upon when children move into their following year groups. Staff ensure that children value the importance of the broad curriculum we offer through

facilitation of interaction and achievements. Children are encouraged to access all areas of the curriculum through the 'Rainbow Challenge', where children are rewarded for their engagement towards all areas of learning. Please see (***Our Curriculum Policy for further information***).

To support and develop children's learning across the curriculum, continuous provision, and enhancements to this are carefully planned out to ensure that provision meets the needs of the children and feeds into their natural curiosity and inquisitiveness, encouraging children to ask questions and explore independently.

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

The EYFS also includes the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning. These are regularly observed, planned for, and implemented across our EYFS curriculum.

The three characteristics are:

- **Playing and Exploring** – children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'
- **Active Learning** – children concentrate and keep 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.

We engage children in **playing and exploring** using open-ended resources and encouraging children to think of ideas for play themselves. Promoting and planning for role-play enables our children to re-enact situations, activities, and conversations to make sense of the world and we also provide a secure and safe environment for children to take risks.

To ensure our children are **creative and think critically** we provide them with opportunities for child-initiated play allowing children to take play and learning in their own direction. Staff work alongside the child and use open ended questions to develop problem-solving, sharing their ideas and thinking. Children are encouraged to make links and talk through their learning process.

To encourage **active learning** the timetable has been carefully planned to give children time to become deeply involved in their play and give them the opportunity to find a solution to their problems. Staff offer children praise when they reach a goal and lots of encouragement when they need to persevere with something.

When children display these aspects, their success is noticed by adults and is celebrated and rewarded within their online learning journeys and 'Superhero Stickers' that bring to life the characteristics of effective teaching and learning with a character to represent each.

## **Teaching Strategies**

Adults are actively involved in children's learning throughout the day. This may be in the form of adult-led sessions or as an active facilitator to children's play; challenging and questioning children to embed and extend their learning. We believe that during child led activities the adults' role and interaction with the children is essential to build the children's understanding and guide new learning.

Within the enabling environment, staff ensure that children are given the opportunity to put their new skills into practice on their own and have a go for themselves. Their confidence and independence grow through opportunities to try new things, test ideas and make choices through a safe and supportive environment. We firmly believe that one of the most powerful things we can teach our children is to become independent learners.

## **Early Reading and Phonics**

In the Early Years we believe that reading is an essential life skill and of vital importance. We aim to develop pupils reading through the teaching of systematic and synthetic phonics, shared reading, home reading, individual reading, and library access.

Children in the Early years participate in daily phonics sessions following the Letters and Sounds phonics scheme. Phonics sessions are well matched and suited to the child's ages and stages and equip them with crucial early reading skills. Each child will progress through the phonic phases in lessons as well as accessing independent mastery activities through the enabling environment.

At Knypersley First School we follow the Big Cat Collins reading scheme. Reading at home is encouraged from the beginning of Nursery. Children visit our school library each week to share a story and choose a book to take home to read with their family. Nursery parents/carers are expected to share this book with their child at least once over the course of the week, noting this in their child's home/school reading diary. More able children in Nursery receive a phonetically plausible book each week to read at home with their parent/carer when the children are ready.

Children in Reception also take home a reading book from the reading scheme to share and read with their parents/carers daily. This book is changed regularly. As phonics teaching and learning takes place, the reading book sent home is in line with the child's phonic ability to promote the application of skills and encourage fluency.

Children in Reception read in small groups or individually to an adult at least twice per week. For some children, who need additional support, this is increased to three per week and is recorded in the child's home/school reading diary.

At the end of each day, in both Nursery and Reception, children have story time where they listen to a variety of books including our class spine book collection. These books include poetry, fictional classics, and non-fiction texts. They ensure

pupils engage with a range of texts at a deeper level to promote writing, drama, and role play, develop repetition and language and foster a love of favourite authors. This time is also used to encourage and develop speaking and listening skills through active listening, questioning, discussion and rhyme.

**For further information on early reading and phonics in EYFS, please see the English policy.**

### **Learning through Play**

Learning through play is an important and integral part of the Early Years curriculum and classroom. We believe that children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own developing the characteristics of learning.

### **The Acquisition of Early Language**

We believe that the importance of planning for and providing opportunities, time and space for children to talk, listen and understand is paramount. Through careful planning we have created a broad and rich language environment. We ensure the use of talk partners and that time is given to discussion and the sharing of children's ideas. Children are exposed to read aloud sessions daily. Adults facilitate role-play and small word play to extend children's language. Vocabulary linked to topic and key texts is promoted by adults and these 'wow words' are displayed on working walls and are sent home weekly to ensure new vocabulary taught is heard at home too. Adults skilfully interact with children to model, scaffold language, and ensure the use of open-ended questioning to promote discussion. By developing pupils speaking and listening skills, we enable them to access more areas of learning and communicate with adults and other children.

### **Classroom Organisation**

Our Early Years indoor and outdoor environment are organised and accessible for all children through clearly defined areas that children are encouraged to access independently and safely. Opportunities for outdoor learning are valued and exploited. Being outdoors provides children with more freedom to learn and the ability to take risks, to explore and to become independent. Where possible, Forest School sessions are planned to further learning from within the classroom. Our classrooms have been designed with clearly defined areas of provision including reading, writing, maths, role-play, creative, investigation and physical opportunities. A rich set of resources, offering a wide variety of possibilities, are organised using easily accessible open shelving to promote children's independence and enable open-ended learning. Risk assessments are carried out frequently to ensure our learning environments are safe and secure.

## **Parents as Partners**

We value the role that parents, and carers play in the life of their child. We look for opportunities to work with families to support learning at home and to involve parents/carers in their child's school life. We therefore make it our aim to work very closely with parents. We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the families of the children in our care. We do this through:

- Providing parents with a handbook of information about our EYFS settings and school readiness information.
- Meeting with parents before their children start school at induction meetings and visits to the classrooms with their children.
- Inviting parents to attend informal workshops about the curriculum, such as phonics, reading, maths.
- Holding and inviting parents to 1:1 meetings to talk about how their child has settled into the school environment and to talk about their child's progress.
- Sending written reports home about children's attainment and progress.
- Sending home observations of the children's learning via the Evidence Me App.
- Publishing curriculum topic information on school website.
- Operating weekly drop-in sessions.
- Regular contact through texts, newsletters, email, home school planners.
- Offering a range of activities throughout the school year – assemblies, workshops, Christmas productions and sports days.
- Encouraging parents to be classroom helpers as volunteers.

## **Induction**

It is important to us that you and your child feel happy, comfortable and safe when you join our school family whether it be for Nursery or Reception.

We have developed a robust Induction Programme for our new Nursery & Reception children. It is designed to ensure that both our children and our parents are familiar and comfortable with both the school and the staff before your child even begins school. This means that when your child officially joins our school family they can settle quickly and feel happy in their new school environment.

### **Details of our Induction Programme**

During the Summer Term, prior to starting school the following September, there are several parts of Induction that take place. These are detailed below:

- Parents are invited to attend an 'Induction Meeting' at school to meet the EYFS leader and the teaching staff.
- Foundation Stage staff visit pre-school settings to meet the children and their Key Workers.
- Children and parents are invited to 'Stay and Play' times in school.
- Children attend an 'Induction session' on their own towards the end of the academic year.

- Our induction policy is flexible and therefore we can adapt our policy if needed to meet the needs of the children and families.

In September, the children have a swift introduction to school. All children start in Reception full time. If needed this can be adapted to suit individual needs. It is important to say that if you have any questions, queries, or concerns at any point you are most welcome to contact school.

## **Transition**

We have several transitions throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage that we manage with care. Transitions are times within your child's school journey when they move within our school to their next year group.

The first transition that occurs during Early Years is the transition from Nursery to Reception and we aim to ensure that transition is as smooth and comfortable as possible. In order to do this, parents are invited to a 'Welcome to Reception' meeting during the summer term to provide information about the school, the curriculum, teaching staff and the day-to-day life in Reception. There is also the opportunity to talk about other general information, such as school dinners, uniform and any questions or queries. It is also an opportunity to meet the child's new class teacher and members of the EYFS team.

The children's transition takes place in the whole school transition week in July. During this week all children move into their new Reception class to familiarise themselves with their new classrooms and staff. Early Years staff will also meet in the summer term to share information about each child's development and any key information about each child (e.g., medical, SEN, EAL, etc.).

The second transition is that from Reception to Year 1. During this transition, the children attend transition days as part of the whole school transition week in July. During these days, the children may begin their new topic, complete exciting artwork & displays and spend more time with their new classroom staff to familiarise themselves. Reception teachers continue to support Year 1 for the first Autumn term to ensure a smooth transition, adapting the timetable and classroom environment to suit the needs of the children as they move from the Early Years curriculum to the National curriculum.

## **Impact**

### **Observations, Assessment and Learning Journeys**

On entry to Nursery or Reception the teacher carries out a baseline assessment, these assessments allow us to identify the child's attainment, their important next steps in learning, and any significant barriers to learning. The curriculum is then tailored accordingly for each individual child. As a team, we discuss each child regularly throughout the academic year and reinforce our judgements using the Evidence Me assessment tracking system.



Children in Reception also complete the Reception Baseline (RBA) with a familiar adult, within the first few weeks of starting, in line with Government expectations.

At the end of Reception each child is assessed against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG). They are assessed as either emerging or expected for each of the 17 areas of learning and a report is given to parents informing them about their child's learning and progress in each of the areas of learning. This information is also given to the Year 1 teachers to aid transition.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects children's identified needs. Through the regular monitoring of children's progress, we can initiate early action and support. We work closely with parents, carers, and external agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make progress.

Assessment in the EYFS primarily takes the form of observations, this involves practitioners observing and questioning children to identify their achievements, interests, and next steps for learning. Evidence collection is kept to the minimum required and is used to aid professional discussion or quality assure judgements. This evidence may include images, videos, and observations. This happens throughout the day when children are embedding and extending any previous learning. Observations and assessments are recorded using an online assessment tool, Evidence Me.

As well as an electronic learning journey each child has their own writing journal to evidence and celebrate writing achievements. We are then able to share these experiences with the children's parents sending each child's observation home electronically through Evidence Me and sharing writing journals at parent's evenings. Parents are also informed of their child's progress through termly reports and parents' evenings.

## **Moderation**

In-school moderation takes place termly. Judgements and evidence from all staff for children from both Nursery and Reception are discussed as a team. Evidence is quality assured and standardised across the unit with a focus on a range of Prime and Specific areas over the year. Inter-school moderation will also take place between the Children First Learning Partnership schools twice per year.

## **Role of the EYFS Lead**

Our EYFS lead is committed to raising standards and ensuring each child has the best start on the school journey. We aim to:

- Plan an effective and varied schedule of monitoring so that we know the Quality of Education within Early Years is effectively implemented and embedded.
- Respond quickly and supportively to all barriers preventing outstanding implementation and impact.
- Use monitoring and assessment information to provide effective CPD and challenge.

- Provide clear updates to the Local Advisory Board, Headteacher and SLT.

| <b>Version</b> | <b>Review Date</b> | <b>Changes Made</b>  |
|----------------|--------------------|--|
| V2             | 16.01.2022         | Characteristics of Learning- updated in line with EYFS reforms 2021                                      |
|                |                    | Early Reading & Phonics – Nursery and Reception procedures for reading added.                            |
|                |                    | Observation & Assessment- RBA procedures added, Evidence Me online assessment tool and writing journals. |
|                |                    | Impact- assessment and role of the leader added.   |