



## Dalmain Primary School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy and Procedures

This policy follows the requirements of the DfE document 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage', which came into force on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

The school uses the Birth to 5 Matters professional development resource to ensure high-quality implementation of both the school's statutory responsibilities and provision.

### RATIONALE

Four guiding principles shape practice in early years settings.

These are:

- 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**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.**

Provision in the Early Years should consist of a balanced mix of child-initiated and adult-led learning both indoors and outdoors. It is vital that we recognise, across the whole school, the value of play. At Dalmain, we do not make a distinction between work and play; we are secure in the knowledge that children are learning when they play. Adults play alongside children and support their play through modelling talk and actions, questioning children in order to enhance their social skills, speaking and listening skills, and thinking and problem solving skills.

*'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.'*

*DfE 2021*

Outdoor play should be given the same value as indoor play. It has a positive impact on children's learning, as well as their mental and physical health and well-being. It allows them the freedom to explore, to be physically active, to work on a large-scale and to experience the natural world. It helps to cater for a range of learning styles, and research shows that children, especially boys, communicate up to four times more outside than in. At Dalmain, the children have equal access to the outdoor and indoor learning environment.

## **The Learning Environment**

The learning environment should be stimulating and offer a wealth of speaking and listening and rich learning opportunities. Resources should be carefully chosen so that they are relevant to, and reflect, all children and communities. The environment should cater for different levels of development, learning styles and interests and it should encourage children to become independent learners who can begin to take responsibility for initiating their own lines of inquiry and investigation.

The continuous provision should support development and learning in all seven curriculum areas (see below), both indoors and out, and should be designed in response to children's prior learning, interests and developmental needs.

Non-negotiables for the learning environment are:

- A well-organised and clearly-labelled environment that allows children to independently access resources and tidy away
- A visual timetable which children are trained to interact with so that they can easily see where they are in the day's routine
- Ample opportunities for children to mark make and write purposefully as they play
- A text-rich environment where labels and other text are used in a meaningful and purposeful way
- A number-rich environment where numbers are displayed in a meaningful and purposeful way - Numbers 1-10 (Nursery) and Numbers 1-20 (Reception)
- An 'all about the number...' display linked to the Maths learning of the week, and updated on a weekly basis
- Alphabet displayed at child level
- Sound mats available
- Keywords on display (Reception)
- Class and school rules, rewards and consequences displayed and explained to children

## **CURRICULUM**

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the EYFS statutory framework. We use the non-statutory framework of Development Matters to enhance and personalise our curriculum to create a bespoke, exciting, engaging and investigative curriculum that meets the needs of all children. The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. Three areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

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

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

## **PLANNING**

Our timetable is set out to maximise learning by using short, focused adult-led sessions to deliver rigorous teaching of literacy, maths, phonics and other areas of the curriculum in the context of long periods of free play and exploration during which adults support children to learn through play. Over the course of the year, the length and content of carpet sessions will change in line with the cognitive development of the children.

In keeping with Ofsted's definition of teaching in the early years, we subscribe to a broad definition of teaching:

*"Teaching should not be taken to imply a "top down" or formal way of working. It is a broad term which covers the many different ways in which adults help young children learn. It includes their interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play and activities: communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges."*

OFSTED September 2015

### **Medium-term provision planning**

Teachers are expected to:

- Plan termly augmentations to the learning environment with the developmental needs and interests of the children in mind
- Use the knowledge gained from the on-going observations of children to generate a medium-term plan for provision in the learning environment
- Use children's prior knowledge from assessment data to inform all planning

### **Weekly planning**

Teachers are expected to:

- Ensure the continuous learning environment is maintained – checking that resources are renewed and reset so that each area is attractive and appealing
- Plan and set up any activities needed to meet the current needs of the class/cohort, including children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- Engage in quality interactions with children to meet their developmental needs and maximise learning
- Plan daily 'carpet sessions' in Topic, Maths, Phonics and other curriculum areas as needed
- Select three/four 'focus children' from their class per week and conduct more extensive observations that week
- Discuss observations made of focus children and share next steps within the team and with parents/carers
- Use information from parents/carers about children's interests to inform planning

Dalmain Primary School is committed to meeting its obligations under the Equality Act 2010, ensuring reasonable adjustments are made to enable all children, including those with SEND and EAL, to fully access the EYFS curriculum and provision. Support for children with English as an Additional Language (EAL) will be tailored to their needs, and cultural diversity is valued and reflected in the environment and resources.

## **ASSESSMENT**

Assessment plays a vital role in the EYFS and should involve all adults that work with children in the EYFS.

### **Formative assessment**

Ongoing assessment, known as formative assessment, is an essential part of the teaching and learning process. It involves practitioners observing children in their play to gain an understanding of their level of attainment, their interests and their learning styles. The observations are reviewed to identify areas for development and to inform future planning. This is an on-going process for every child, but every child should be a 'focus child' at least once over the course of a term, where they are observed and discussed particularly closely.

### **Focus Children**

In order to ensure high quality learning and to guarantee that we develop a detailed picture of each child's abilities and next steps, we follow a 'focus children' system. Each week, teachers choose three/four children from their class to be 'focus children'. Parents/carers are also invited to provide teachers with information regarding their child's current interests and/or significant events taking place at home that can be used to inform and enhance our provision. (Appendix 3)

During the course of the week, teachers and support staff will record a higher number of their interactions with these focus children, covering learning across all seven areas of the curriculum. These observations are uploaded on to Tapestry, our online assessment tool, and will include a brief description of what the child was learning and, where possible, a photograph or video. This is to ensure that adults maximise opportunities to engage with children and the Ipad does not become a barrier to communication.

Where there is a very significant moment in learning, a 'wow moment', an observation may be recorded even when a child is not a focus child for that week. Our rule of thumb is to 'remark on the remarkable' in order to avoid excessive recording.

### **Summative assessment**

When children enter Nursery and Reception, teachers complete a baseline assessment on all children using the descriptors from Development Matters against the Prime and Specific areas of learning and development so that an "On Entry Picture" can be obtained. Development Matters maps out a typical progression in development and learning into broad ranges, which is intended to support knowledge of a general pattern of child development.

This process will continue at the end of each term so that progress can be monitored and teachers can complete a gaps analysis to inform medium-term planning.

Reception teachers are also required to complete the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) for all children in their class within the first six weeks of pupils starting Reception. The RBA is an activity-based assessment of pupils' starting points in language, communication and literacy and mathematics.

In the final term of Reception, the EYFS profile must be completed for each child. A "best fit" judgement should be made on whether a child has or has not met the expected standard in each of the 17 Early Learning Goals. Observations, writing samples and teacher and support staff knowledge about each child is taken into account when making these judgements. Reception teachers should attend in-house and local cluster moderation sessions to help when making judgements for the Profile. Teachers are expected to be able to talk in detail about each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning.

Teachers will share the profile results with parents and Year 1 teachers.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

All EYFS staff will read and follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (which is based on the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)). Procedures referred to there, and in the additional policies noted below, include actions to be taken if there are safeguarding concerns regarding a child and actions to be taken if there are allegations made against a member of staff: they also cover the use of mobile phones, cameras and cloud-based systems such as Tapestry and social media sites.

The school ensures all EYFS records, including digital observations on Tapestry, are stored securely in line with GDPR and the school's Data Protection Policy. Parents are informed about data use and consent is obtained for digital platforms.

(See **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Allegations of Abuse against Staff Policy and Procedures, Staff Code of Conduct, Online Safety Policy, ICT Security Policy, Data Protection Policy.**)

## **STAFFING**

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff: child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

### Nursery

- For children aged 2-3, we have at least 1 suitably qualified (approved level 3) member of staff for every 5 children.
- For children aged 3 and over, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children. At least one member of staff will hold Qualified Teacher status. At least one member of additional staff will hold an approved level 3 qualification.

### Reception

- We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 appropriately qualified teacher for every 30 children during teaching sessions.

In both instances above these are the minimum requirements: at Dalmain, we ensure that sufficient and suitably qualified adults are always present to maximise the safety and well-being of the children in our care.

All EYFS staff receive Paediatric First Aid training, which is renewed at least every three years. Staff also receive training on specific medical conditions (eg. allergies, febrile seizures) where this is relevant to the children in their care.

Whilst eating, children will always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff.

Dalmain recognises the demands on EYFS staff and is committed to ensuring that assessment, planning and observation requirements do not create unnecessary workload or paperwork. The focus is on professional judgement and quality interactions, in line with current EYFS guidance.

## **ROLE OF EYFS LEADER**

- To have a clear vision for Dalmain EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) and be consistent in their approach to this. Aims and visions should be shared and agreed with all EYFS staff and evaluated and worked towards continuously.

- To lead regular meetings with the EYFS team to discuss planning, feedback from courses, transition and any other EYFS news. The EYFS leader should identify subjects for discussion.
- To identify areas for development within EYFS, then discuss and decide how best to tackle these.
- To model practice to staff where appropriate – this should include modelling quality interactions with children and lessons in subject areas that have been identified as areas for development, and sharing ideas about best practice.
- To ensure all staff are aware of and implement inclusive practices for all children (for further details regarding children with SEND, see the school’s SEND Policy and Procedures, SEND Information Report and the school’s Accessibility Plan)
- To attend EYFS leader meetings held by the borough and disseminate news to team.
- To update the EYFS policy.
- To organise transition activities both for transition from Nursery to Reception, and from Reception to Year One. This should include attending transition meetings held by the borough.
- To meet with the Head teacher regularly to feedback on the EYFS.
- To represent the EYFS in staff meetings and share our philosophies with the whole school.
- To speak at ‘Welcome Mornings’ for new Reception parents about what they should expect from the EYFS at Dalmain.
- To track progress across the EYFS
- To monitor teaching and learning

### **ROLE OF CLASS TEACHER**

- To deliver the EYFS curriculum ensuring that teaching is suited to the needs, interests and abilities of each child, and that learning is fun.
- To promote outdoor learning and learning through play.
- To regard each of the seven curriculum areas as equally important and provide for each of them daily.
- To liaise with Subject Leaders for support.
- To use a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs, including children with SEND.
- To develop and update skills, knowledge and understanding of the EYFS through INSET, team teaching and discussions.
- To carry out observations of children, highlighting their progress in learning, and upload them on to Tapestry
- To inform parents of pupils’ progress, achievements and attainment as well as next steps
- To ensure support staff engage in quality interactions and contribute detailed and meaningful observations on focus children
- To adhere to the EYFS assessment calendar, and any other assessment procedures particular to the Borough of Lewisham, or Dalmain School.
- To model good social and speaking and listening skills to the children through their own conduct.
- To follow the Dalmain behaviour policy and be consistent in their approach to behaviour.
- To ensure any other adults working with them are aware of planning, and expectations at Dalmain.

### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

At Dalmain, we aim to have a close working relationship with parents and carers. We recognise that parents and carers are a child’s first and most enduring educator and, as such, encourage a successful partnership between home and school. When teachers and parents share knowledge about a child it results in a positive impact on the child’s development – they settle in more quickly and teachers build up a more rounded picture of the child, enabling them to meet that child’s needs appropriately.

Parents and carers are encouraged to be involved by:

- Being invited to attend welcome mornings, ‘Share a story sessions’, and open days, as well as parent/teacher meetings
- Having an active role in their child’s settling in process, sharing information during home visits organised by the EYFS Leader.
- Being invited to attend workshops for parents focusing on specific curriculum areas
- Being given termly newsletters (in Reception) outlining the focus in teaching and learning, as well as other news pertinent to Reception
- Teachers making termly comments in the children’s reading journals for parents to read. Parents are invited and encouraged to make comments too.
- Teachers uploading and sharing observations of children on Tapestry. Parents are welcome to respond and also to upload their observations of their child at home
- Prior to the child’s focus week, parents are invited to complete a ‘planning for your child’s learning’ sheet where they can highlight their child’s interests and activities outside of school
- Being asked to help with reading or other activities in the class.
- Being asked to contribute to class topics, for example bringing a pet in or cooking with the children.
- Contributing to their child’s profile through the use of “Wow” cards
- Sharing their child’s learning journal and writing books

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