



# Downlands Community Primary School EYFS Policy

Reviewed/ amended	October 2020
Ratified by Governors	
Next Review	February 2022
See Addendum re COVID 19	September 2021

# Downlands Policy on the Foundation Stage

## 1. Introduction

*'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five 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 together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'*

'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'  
Department for Education 2017

Downlands is a 'Rights-Respecting School' therefore the values and language of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) underpin the core values and ethos of the school.

### 1.1.Principles

- **A unique child.** We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement as well as celebration and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude towards learning.
- **Positive relationships.** We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.
- **Enabling Environments.** We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations, we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.
- **Learning and Development.** The Foundation stage base is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The unit is set up in learning areas where the children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Children develop and learn in different ways (see 'the characteristics of effective teaching and learning' at paragraph 7) and at different rates. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework covers the education and care of all children in early years' provision, including children with additional needs and disabilities.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Downlands we greatly value the importance the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

The EYFS is for children from birth to 5 years of age. All children begin Downlands with a wide variety of experiences and learning. It is a privilege for the adults working in the Foundation Stage to build on that prior learning experience. This is achieved through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents/guardians, support staff and the Foundation Stage team work together effectively to support the learning and development of the children in their care.

## **2. Aims and Objectives**

Every child has the right to be happy, safe and healthy, to enjoy learning and to achieve to the best of their ability. The EYFS aims to help young children achieve these outcomes.

## **3 Teaching and Learning Style**

We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

3.2 The more general features of good practice in Downlands that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between keyworkers, teachers and parents that helps our children to feel secure at Downlands, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that keyworkers and teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned progressive curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between Downlands and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining Downlands;
- the relationship between FS1 Dandelions and FS2 Chestnuts class for a smooth transition to school;
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working in the Foundation Stage.

## **4 Play in the Foundation Stage**

4.1 Through play, our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them to make sense of the world. They practice and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears, or re-live anxious experiences, in controlled and safe situations.

## **5 Inclusion in the Foundation Stage**

5.1 We believe that all of 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 we are planning for their learning (see our policy on inclusion).

5.2 In the Foundation Stage, we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We help them do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with additional needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

5.3 We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively;
- offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- employing resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress, and providing support through various and appropriate intervention programs, as necessary.

## **6 The Foundation Stage Curriculum**

6.1 Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals. This academic year (2020-2021), we at Downlands have become 'early adopters' of the new EYFS framework before the statutory national implementation in September 2021. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas. Learning and Development is categorised into three prime areas of learning: -

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, social and emotional development

Additionally there are four specific areas of learning: -

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

The children achieve these prime and specific areas of learning by: -

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and Thinking critically

These are the characteristics of effective learning.

## **7 Observation, Assessment and Planning**

7.1 The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observation, and this involves all staff who work in the Foundation Stage. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

The planning within the EYFS is based around the children's interests and needs. These plans are used by the EYFS team as a guide for weekly planning. However, we may alter these in response to the needs and interests of the children.

7.2 During the first half term in the FS2 class, the teacher assesses the ability of each child, using a Baseline Assessment. From September 2021, this will be the National Reception Baseline. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual and groups of children. We share the information contained in the Foundation Stage Profile at our parent consultation meetings and through regular written reports. We consistently use our online learning platform called 'Seesaw' to regularly share observation and assessments with staff working within the Foundation Stage and parents.

7.3 At the end of the final term in FS2, we send a summary of these assessments to the LA for analysis. There are seven summary scales. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information at parent consultation meetings, in the child's summer written report and at transition meetings with the Year One teachers.

7.4 Each teacher and keyworker keeps an online Learning Journey called Seesaw, unique to each child. They use this to record examples of each child's learning activities. The Learning Journeys contain a wide range of evidence that is shared with parents. Parents are given a code enabling them to access the learning journey and can add to it from home.

## **8 The Role of Parents**

8.1 We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We therefore recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- offering stay and play in FS1 to help children to settle in, along with regular planned sessions for parents to stay during the morning;
- providing a termly information newsletter which outlines routines, curriculum themes and expected parental involvement;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts in FS1 and FS2;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress through termly parent consultations (Autumn/Spring FS2 – Autumn/Spring/Summer FS1) and informal conversations on request;
- providing progress reports to parents (FS2 Autumn/Summer – FS1 Summer);
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's keyworker or teacher if there are any concerns;
- Informing parents if there are any areas that they can support their child with at home and offering advice and guidance for this;

- Informing parents of the expectations of suitable clothing, healthy lunchbox items, home learning and involvement e.g. Teddy Bear's Picnic, assemblies, sports day, performances;
- offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents.

## **9 Resources**

9.1 We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

## **10 Monitoring and review**

10.1 This policy is monitored by the Governing body, and will be reviewed in two years, or earlier if necessary.



# **ADDENDUM TO REFLECT COVID 19**

## **EYFS Policy**

This policy remains current however learning through play and exploration will be adapted to ensure that the government guidance for EYFS on social distancing and limiting the spread of the virus is implemented as practically as possible.

This will include limiting class pupil numbers, social distancing during free play and teacher led learning experiences, limited use of resources, thorough cleaning of resources and the use of outside space as much as possible.

Packed lunches brought from home for lunch rather than, hot school meals.