

Linden Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Status

Statutory

Recommended

Good Practice

Purpose

This policy sets the standards we in the EYFS at Linden must meet in order to provide all children with a safe and stimulating environment where children have the opportunity to achieve their full potential whilst with us.

This Policy and Guidance takes into consideration DfE guidance:

EYFS framework 2025, Development Matters 2023, Bold beginnings 2017 (OFSTED), Strong Foundations 2024 (DfE)

Consultation

Staff, governors and parents as appropriate

Links with other policies

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

Curriculum Policies

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Monitoring and Evaluation

Annually Every 3 years Other _____

Headteacher Governing Body Other _____

Dates

Original Implementation July 2019

Reviewed July 2025 Next Review July 2028

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy- Reception

Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential” -Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2024

“A good early education is the foundation for later success!” – Bold Beginnings, 2017

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2024 (updated) statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Principles

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their Reception Year. The EYFS is based upon four overarching 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. (See “the characteristics of effective teaching and learning” at paragraph 1.15). The EYFS framework covers the education and care of all children in early year’s provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Aims

At Linden, we believe that the Early Years framework builds the foundation for the rest of the child’s life. Therefore, all learning in our Foundation stage will be rewarding, enjoyable and will encourage children to practise, revise and consolidate acquired skills in a range of explorative and investigative ways. We want to develop a positive attitude towards learning and growing as a person. We aim to support every child in their wellbeing and achieving their potential by:

- Providing a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of **all** children.
- Providing a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and the transition into Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Using and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress. We will use a variety of assessment methods, including on-going observations, guided and child-led activities and the use of the ‘Evidence Me’ and ‘Insight’ tracking tools.
- Enabling choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Working in partnership with parents and guardians and value their contributions irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability.
- Providing experiences for all children, whatever their needs, which are inclusive rather than parallel.

Learning and development

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 statutory framework of the EYFS. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, the 3 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.

Learning and development is characterised into **3 Prime areas** of learning:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through **4 Specific areas** of learning:

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

These areas develop the child's cognitive, intellectual, physical, social and emotional skills. These areas of development aim to develop the holistic child and are rarely taught or developed in isolation.

These areas are developed by children using **3 Characteristics of learning**:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creative and thinking critically

Teaching and Learning Through Play

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, carefully considered continuous provision and enhancements. This is facilitated through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities, which responds to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

Through play, our children explore and develop learning that helps them make sense of the world. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

We organise the day to provide a balance between the following:-

- **Child Initiated Activities** - children make choices from within the learning environment to meet his/her outcome for learning.
- **Adult Initiated Activities**- practitioners provide the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning.
- **Adult Directed Activities** – children engage in planned activities to meet specific learning outcomes.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Observation is the main assessment tool in the EYFS. Practitioners make purposeful observations whilst playing and engaging with the children. These are shared with the team, either verbally or through the use of Evidence Me. This helps practitioners to understand where the child is working in a particular area as well as what the child needs next. These observations also help the practitioners to understand what is each child's preferred characteristic of learning, meaning adults in the EYFS can cater for this. The online observations are linked to the 7 different areas and sometimes a characteristic of learning, as well as usually having the child's next steps written on. The electronic profile and the big books form a holistic view of the child and are regularly shared with the parents or guardians.

The observations and recorded next steps are used to inform planning. Effective planning provides varied and exciting activities that build upon children's previous knowledge, extending their ideas and consolidating their knowledge. Therefore, our practitioners plan weekly for the children, following the children's interests, considering all areas of development they have observed, as well as the children's learning characteristics.

All members of the EYFS Team take an active part in planning for the children. By taking into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development for each child in their care, they plan challenging and enjoyable learning experiences.

Planning within the EYFS for Reception consists of; a weekly Phonics, English and Maths plan which can be annotated and adapted daily as well as weekly in order to be evaluated and informing planning for the following day/week. Enhancements are planned according to the children's needs and interests.

Forms of Planning in the EYFS:

- Planning for phonics originates from Read, Write Inc. There is a weekly English plan which forms the basis of teaching children to read and write.
- The weekly plan for Maths indicates the differentiated, main teaching activity and subsequent independent activities that are linked to the learning objective for that week. This learning objective is then a focus when adults are engaging in the children's play. Activities are set up to encourage the focus Learning Objective, however, adults are encouraged to engage with children's play and incorporate the focused Learning Objective in what the child is doing at the time. This is then evidenced in the big book and Maths feedback file.
- The Enhancement Plan highlights focus curriculum areas for the week/s that are specific to the needs of the children and covers individual interests to develop a love for learning.
- In the moment planning is a focus in EYFS, practitioners are encouraged to play with the children and move their learning forward in that moment. This could be linked to a specific Learning Objective for the week or could be linked to other areas of child development.
- The 'Big Book' shows our WOW moments and other curriculum areas that have been covered during the week alongside observations, photographs and evaluations.
- Both the English and Maths planning is altered slightly later in the academic year to allow for preparation and to support the transition into KS1.

Assessment:

As with all schools we undertake the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment as well as our own inhouse baseline assessment. Formal judgements of the children's progress in each area of development is carried out periodically, meaning that 5 judgements per child will be made in the school year. Judgements will be made by using the Development Matters document as guidance. These will be recorded on the schools Insight tracking system, for Senior Leadership to view.

Activities that occur in the EYFS:

The EYFS curriculum allows for a diverse and creative approach to teaching and learning. Although there are many opportunities to plan and teach holistically, some sessions call for more direct teaching. This will prepare children for their future educational journey at Linden.

Morning sessions:

- Read, Write, Inc Phonics
- Whole class session moving to small groups dependent on need and ability
- Opportunities to explore and use taught skills independently during learning time, with resources prepared and supplied accordingly.
- An English or Maths: (White Rose Maths) focus input each morning, allowing time for children to immerse themselves in consolidating the taught skills through the exploration aspects of Reception.
- An English adult directed activity per week provides challenge for children through carefully pitched group activities.
- Maths Objective led activities will be undertaken weekly with the transition to more focused group activities being introduced later in the academic year when Objective led planning will be phased out to support transition into KS1.

Afternoon sessions:

- PE x1 a week
- Forest Schools weekly year group sessions.
- Planned and resourced activities linked to other areas of the curriculum and children's interests
- On-going opportunities for children to use and apply skills through play and for the children to lead the learning through their interests

Transition into Linden Foundation Stage

Transition into Linden Primary School starts in the Summer Term before the children begin school. Once the child's place has been confirmed, a Reception Team member will contact the preschool and arrange to visit the children at their Nursery or Preschool setting or complete a handover over the telephone. If visiting the setting school staff will get to observe and interact with the child in a comfortable and familiar environment for them. These communications will provide school staff with the opportunity to have professional discussions with preschool staff that know the child, providing a rounded picture of the child.

The children will also have multiple opportunities to visit Linden Primary School. The preschools that have a high number of children preparing to start at Linden, will be invited to visit Linden for stay and play sessions with their current key workers. All children, no matter which setting they are from will be invited to Linden for a series of stay and play sessions with their parents/carers.

In September, there is a staggered entry. The children are split into groups of 20 with Autumn born children starting first staying for a morning session. The Autumn, Spring and Summer born children will attend on consecutive days, only staying for half a day at first. The children then build up to staying for lunch and after this, staying with the whole class for lunch. By the fourth week children will be staying all day with the whole class.

Partnership with Parents

We recognise that the children's learning starts long before school with their parents and guardians and, as a school, we are committed to developing and nurturing strong home-school links and relationships. This can have a very positive impact on a child's development, but relies on a two-way flow of information and knowledge. Linden develops a positive relationship with parents by:

Parent's meetings- Before the children start at Linden, parents are invited in to talk to the class teachers to discuss any worries they have for their child starting school and for the teachers to find out lots of information about the child. In Autumn 1 an additional parent meeting takes place to provide parents with more information regarding the curriculum and how the EYFS looks at Linden Primary School.

Parent's evenings- These will occur in the Autumn term and Spring term. The Autumn term meeting will allow the teacher and parents to discuss how their child has settled in, and the Spring term will allow a discussion about how the year has gone and to discuss the transition to Year 1.

Reading- Children will take home a reading book and reading record nightly. Parents are encouraged to read with their child 3x per week, and children receive a reward for achieving this. Parents and practitioners record in the reading record when they have read a reading book with the child, allowing parents and practitioners to communicate.

Parent postcards- Parent postcards are available for all parents on the Evidence Me app. Parents are encouraged to share learning and experiences that take place at home with the class teachers and are able to do so on the Evidence Me app. All postcards shared are seen by teachers and go towards building up a bigger picture to the child's learning journey.

Parent share on Evidence Me- A selection of observations from their child's electronic profile are shared with parents weekly, allowing them to view the learning that has taken place that week as well as a regular update on the progress that their child is making throughout their Reception year.

Workshops/Stay and Play sessions- Parents are invited into school each half term (6 times a year) to participate in sessions with their child. These may be performances, classroom based or Forest School based.

Inclusion in the EYFS

At Linden, we believe that **all** our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. In the Foundation Stage, we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. Our planning reflects the needs of both 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.

In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice, the 'Graduated Pathway' is followed with 'My Plans' and 'My Plan+' being written for children with special needs and are reviewed three times a year. Practitioners also work closely with outside agencies such as the Advisory Teacher Service, the Educational psychologist, the Speech and Language therapist and the Occupational Therapist. These partnerships ensure that these children are having all of their need met.

Partnerships with vulnerable children's preschools are also built, with the SENCo or class teacher attending prominent Team Around the Child meetings in the Summer term before school entry. This allows staff and the setting to prepare for the children's arrival, making transition as smooth and successful as possible.

Monitoring and reviewing

It is the responsibility of all staff members to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS (Mrs V. Law). It is the governor's responsibility to monitor EYFS practice and standards and to provide feedback to the Head Teacher and whole Governing Body, raising any issues that require discussion. In addition, the Head teacher and the Senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the SDP and the whole school monitoring schedule.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

It is important to us that all children in our school are safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our **safeguarding policy**.

Date: September 2023

Review: September 2026