



**Approved by: GB**

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## **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy**

### **Rationale**

This policy outlines the teaching, organisation and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage at The Duston School.

“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, March 2021.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception Year. At The Duston School, we have two reception classes. We believe that early childhood is the foundation in which children build the rest of their lives. At The Duston School, we value the importance of the EYFS immensely. We know that it acts in laying secure foundations for future learning and development; and we hold that in high regard. We are committed to underpinning our provision with the four themes of the Early Years Foundation Stage:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

### **Aims and Purposes of the EYFS**

We aim to be inclusive in supporting all children to become independent and collaborative learners. Across the Foundation Stage, 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. We have high expectations of all children within our care.

At The Duston School, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging provision of learning and development for the children to experience for a solid start to their school journey.
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum that is relevant, fun, creative and book based; and sets in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Prioritise choice and decision making, fostering independence, self-confidence and PSED skills.
- Use and value each child’s own capabilities, assessing their individual needs and next steps and help each child to progress. We will use a variety of assessments methods and tools, including formative and summative assessments.
- Develop positive relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children’s academic progress and wellbeing.
- Provide a caring, inclusive and considered learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child; including those who have additional needs.

## **The Early-Years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:**

- It creates a learning journey that builds on children's previous knowledge.
- It ensures we have high expectations for all children no matter their background or needs.
- It offers a consistent and safe place to learn in which areas of development are clear and appropriate.
- It provides a natural, rich yet calm learning environment that promotes independence and structure.
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers and the benefits of sharing both successes and concerns with them.

## **A Unique Child**

We recognise that children learn and develop in various ways and at different rates. This is reflected in our provision. The characteristics of effective learning support the child to become an independent, motivated, and effective learner. Children will play and explore and become skilled at using resources within their learning environment, developing their language and experiences. Children will become resilient and enjoy achievements through both structured and active learning. They will make links, explore their ideas and strategise in problem solving through creating and thinking critically. Practitioners support children in developing all these characteristics through extending the child's learning in play by developing relative language; and scaffolding their progression through considering their interests and next steps.

Children are treated fairly, regardless of race, religion, gender or abilities. We welcome all children and families into our setting so that they feel included, safe and valued.

## **The Learning Environment**

At The Duston School we take pride and time to create a learning environment suitable in supporting children and for them to be independent in their learning. Each area of learning is relevant, self-accessible and will include enhancements that reflect the curriculum. We carefully consider how we use our indoor and outdoor areas. There are opportunities to extend every area of learning both inside and outside which is then implemented by well trained and curriculum aware adults.

We consider our children's needs within our daily timetables. This allows consistency and routine for the children which they need to thrive. We use allotted carpet time to ensure there is quality first teaching of phonics, mathematics, reading and understanding of the world. This is to ensure all children are making progress every day. We use formative and summative assessment to inform groupings when required for carpet teaching and small group work. As teachers and EYFS practitioners we take responsibility for all children across our base.

We value outdoor learning time and how this is relevant to our cohort of children. We have developed a well-established area where children can explore and learn. We recognise how outdoor learning can impact children's well-being and hold this in high regard within our setting. Our children are safe to explore, use their sense, be physically active and exuberant in our outdoor environment.

## **Learning and Development**

Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the learning aims and objectives set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in all early years' settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected, and none can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning requires a balance of adult led and child- initiated activities for children to develop effectively and to give them the best chance of obtaining a good level of development at the end of their Reception Year.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive

### **The three Prime Areas are:**

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – children develop confidence and self-esteem, learn how to manage feelings and respect others
- Communication and Language – children have opportunities to speak and listen in a range of situations and experience a rich language environment
- Physical Development - children have opportunities to be active and develop coordination (both gross motor and fine motor) and they learn about healthy choices.

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

### **The Specific Areas are:**

- Literacy – involves children learning how letters link to the sounds and begin to read and write
- Mathematics – children have opportunities to develop counting and calculating skills, to use numbers in everyday activities
- Understanding of the World – children have opportunities to find out about people, culture and communities, the past and present and the natural world
- Expressive Arts and Design – involves creating with a variety of materials and exploring feelings and ideas through music, dance, role play and design

We follow the children's interests when planning for each group of children and involve the children in choosing activities and resources. Children and parents are encouraged to be involved in the next steps for learning through sharing the children's learning, sharing curriculum foci, homework and parent consultations.

Child-initiated learning and adult led activities are focused on the children's interest and current curriculum foci. We extend children's learning through observing, getting involved in their play, supporting their thinking and asking open-ended questions. 'High-quality early years education, with a strong focus on communication, is good for every child. It is especially positive for disadvantaged children.' Development Matters, (2021).

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, this information is shared with parents. If a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers to agree how to support their child.

## **Planning and Teaching**

Within our EYFS, we take a book-based approach to our curriculum and, therefore, our teaching in the classroom and we ensure learning builds on from one term to the next. We use the Development Matters Statements within our planning to ensure there is progression throughout the year in our expectations of the children.

Children will engage with first quality teaching of phonics and maths everyday within carpet time sessions. We prioritise story time every day and use carefully considered texts. We use whole class language interventions through the teaching of concept cat (a mathematical and language-based approach). We use targeted reading sessions such as blending and segmenting to ensure progress for children from the start of the year in their reading skills. Children also work with adults throughout the week to consolidate their learning in small groups for maths, reading and writing.

Planned and immediate intervention is used to fill gaps in learning, meet next steps and use children's interests to further their own learning in the moment.

## **Assessment and Expectations**

Children are assessed on entry within each class using the NFER Reception Baseline. Children are then assessed half termly to ensure planning and intervention are in line with development. We collect evidence of the children's progress in a variety of ways. We collect physical evidence in books and for use within working walls in the classroom. We use assessments for teaching of phonics when teachers feel it is appropriate to ensure children are within the correct grouping to meet their level of progress. Most importantly, we use teacher knowledge and judgements to inform our assessments of the children. We make sure we completely know our children and frequently have discussions with other practitioners within the base to moderate judgements.

## **Working with Others**

When appropriate we engage with external agencies e.g. Health Visitor, Speech and Language Therapist, Educational Psychologist etc. in order to improve the provision for all children including those with Special Educational Needs. See SEND and Inclusion Policy.

## **Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

As a provider of the EYFS we take our duties in relation to safeguarding and welfare of children extremely seriously. We have created a welcoming environment that is both safe and stimulating allowing our pupils to learning and grow in confidence.

We have a policy framework here at The Duston School that is referenced below and this contains stringent policies, procedures and documents that ensure children's safety, including but not limited to safeguarding children, suitability of adults who have contact with children, promoting good health, managing behaviour and maintaining records. Our staff are trained on our policies and procedures and have up-to-date training on matters relating to safeguarding and child protection.

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Mrs Loomes (Head of the Primary Phase), Mrs Pragnell (Deputy Head of the Primary Phase) and Miss Page (LKS2 Phase Leader)

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

## List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Procedure for Admissions	See The Duston School's Primary Admissions Policy on the school website
Behaviour Management	See the Primary Phase Behaviour Policy available from the school office
Safeguarding Policy and Procedures	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy on the school website
Procedure for Responding to Illness	See Health and Safety Policy on the school website
Administering Medicines Policy	See Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy available from the school office
Emergency Evacuation Procedure	See Health and Safety Policy on the school website
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy on the school website
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy on school website
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See Complaints Policy on school website