

THE DUSTON SCHOOL

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

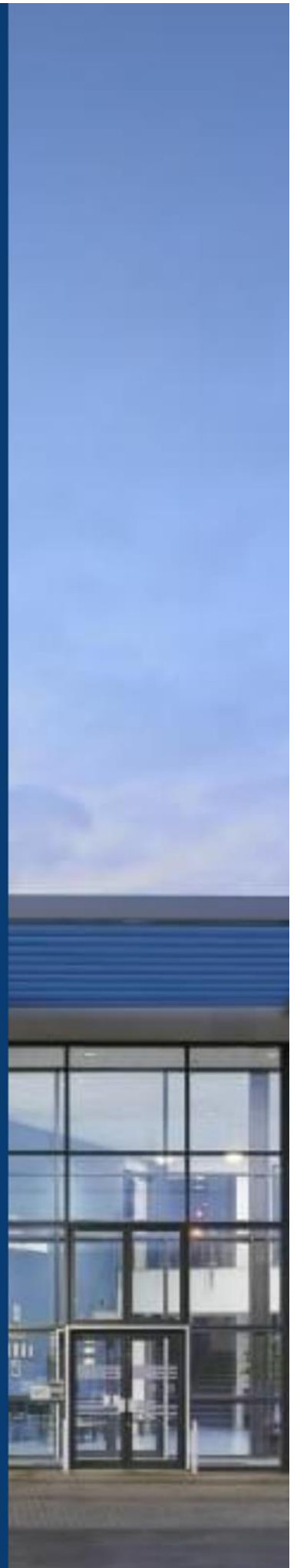
Approved by: Primary Phase Committee

Date of Approval: April 2025

Date of Review: April 2026



www.thedustonschool.org



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.

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. 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 and we meet these in the following ways;

- **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.
- **Positive Relationships** - we aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families. Through secure and trusting relationships children develop the confidence to take risks and cultivate their independence. We highly value the parents'/carers' role as educators and work hard to develop a partnership with them in their child's learning. In our school, we do this by running regular stay and play sessions for parents, phonics and early maths workshops and providing opportunities for parents to see their child's work and progress in school.
- **Enabling Environments** - we recognise that the environment plays a key role in the learning and development of young children. Through careful planning and skilful intervention from staff, children's play is an extremely successful vehicle for learning. The outdoor environment is used as much as possible to provide opportunities for exploring and creating on a larger scale. In our learning environment we aim to provide places where the children can be loud, quiet, creative, physical and reflective. **Within each classroom there is a cosy reading area full of high-quality books which allow children to develop a love of reading.** Our outdoor area provides opportunities for children to develop their gross motor and problem-solving skills with large scale building and a variety of bikes and vehicles to ride.

- ***Learning and Developing*** - staff have a clear understanding of how young children develop and learn and how this impacts their teaching and interactions. We feel that it is important that children are provided with opportunities and freedom to lead and control their own play and learning. Staff are well trained in how to facilitate children's learning and we feel strongly that through scaffolding children's play we encourage improved language development, knowledge, skills and understanding. Providing a balance of adult and child-initiated tasks is fundamental to the acquisition new learning, consolidation of skills and further development of understanding.

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 understand 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 senses, 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. We recognise that the seven areas of learning cannot be delivered in isolation and seek opportunities to make links between them. 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. We aim to deliver the curriculum through planned, purposeful learning experiences and present new concepts in meaningful contexts that enable the children to build on what they already know.

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.

We 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

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).

Teaching and Learning

Within our EYFS, we take a book-based approach to our curriculum and we ensure learning builds on from one term to the next. We use Development Matters Statements within our planning to ensure there is progression throughout the year and that the expectations of our children are high. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

Our children will engage with quality first 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 to increase our children's vocabulary, as well as introducing them to a wide range of vocabulary via our curriculum and key stories.** 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 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

The Baseline Assessment is administered within the first 6 weeks of children starting school and ascertains children's starting points in language, communication and literacy and mathematics. The series of short, narrative statements that teachers receive, tells them how their pupils performed in the assessment and are used to inform teaching within the first term.

Formative assessment for learning is an integral part of teaching young children and observation, assessment and planning are part of professional practice.

Summative assessments are used in phonics and maths with a purpose to inform planning and interventions. Read Write Inc phonics assessments take place six times each year and the data provided is used to ensure that children are grouped to optimise their learning. Termly maths assessments are used to ensure that early maths learning is retained and built upon.

The EYFS profile is a statutory assessment of children's development at the end of EYFS and is made up of an assessment of the child's outcomes in relation to the 17 early learning goals across all 7 areas of learning in the EYFS. It is intended to provide a reliable, valid, and accurate assessment of each child's development at the end of the EYFS. Practitioners are expected to use their professional judgement to make these assessments based on their knowledge and understanding of what the child knows, understands, and can do.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

Parent Partnerships

We recognise the role that parents play, and their future role, in the education of their children. We do this through:

- having high quality discussions with parents/ carers during our induction process by individual EYFS tours for prospective parents, a new parent tea and coffee event and welcome meetings.
- developing positive relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children's academic progress and wellbeing.
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers.

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 Lead is Mr. Dewes (Vice Principal and DSL) and our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads for the Primary Phase are: Mrs Loomes (Head of the Primary Phase), Mrs Pragnell (Deputy Head of the Primary Phase) and Miss Cassidy (SENDCo and Year 6 teacher).

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 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 Safeguarding Policy on the school website
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Safeguarding Policy on school website
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See Complaints Policy on school website