



Approved by: GB

Date: March 2021

Last reviewed on:

Next review due by: March 2022

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

Introduction

At The Duston School we aim to provide our children with the best quality of early education, therefore this policy has been prepared in accordance with the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage statutory framework (April 2017).

Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the wide range of knowledge and skills needed to progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning that fosters independence so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between EYFS staff and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported with sensitivity through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

1. Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
3. Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between EYFS staff and parents and/or carers;
4. **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.**

The four Themes of the EYFS are:



A Unique Child

At The Duston School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We know that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by their school and home environments. We observe how each child learns to gain an understanding of the characteristics they develop to become effective learners. We use questioning, praise and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning and high self-esteem. During their first year at school, the children are introduced to good learning habits. They are taught to be observant, investigative, curious, determined, imaginative, adventurous, co-operative and to use reasoning. They develop an understanding that everyone can learn with practice and effort. The children are taught how to learn and how to become successful learners.

Inclusion

All children and their families are valued. We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate because of differences. All children at The Duston School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or stage of learning. We teach the children that practice and effort lead to learning and improvement. Teachers plan activities that enable all children to access learning and to achieve as highly as possible. In the early years the children begin to learn to take responsibility for their learning and begin to understand the concept of challenge. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. Planning for children with additional needs is completed in liaison with the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator.

In the EYFS we have realistic but challenging expectations and meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests and develop their self-esteem and confidence through a creative curriculum and learning environment
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- Providing a wide range of opportunities and environments to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which each child's contribution is valued
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

It is vital that all children in the school are safe. Within our nurturing environment we provide children with opportunities to help them develop the skills they need to keep themselves safe. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards both in the real and virtual world.

Positive Relationships

At The Duston School we recognise that children learn to be confident and independent through the development of secure relationships. We develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents and Carers as Partners

We recognise the important role parents and carers play in educating the children. We do this by:

- Talking to parents and carers about their child before their child starts our school
- Inviting the children to spend time with their teacher in the classroom before starting at school
- Inviting all parents and carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- Encouraging parents and carers to attend parents' evenings to discuss their child's progress
- Providing parents and carers with a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year
- Inviting parents and carers to attend stay and play sessions
- Inviting parents and carers to a curriculum meeting where reading and phonics teaching is explained
- Providing an extensive parents' and carers' EYFS guide where every aspect of the EYFS is explained in detail

Staff develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. We have good links with the local feeder nurseries. The EYFS teachers meet with staff to discuss new intake children.

Enabling Environments

At The Duston School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The role of both the indoor and outdoor environment in learning/organisation of learning provides opportunities for child initiated activities reflecting the curriculum flow being taught and

developing gross motor skills, social skills, etc. We provide stimulating resources which are accessible and open ended so they can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways.

Curriculum Intent

At The Duston School we place great value on the development of children as individuals and providing them with the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to prepare for the challenges in Key Stage One and beyond. Our aim in EYFS is to build strong foundations rooted in academic success as well as moral and spiritual development, so that ultimately our pupils can be successful, go on to be active citizens of society and happy, curious life-long learners. Our curriculum provides the character education and cultural capital we know our pupils need so that they can gain the knowledge, skills and understanding they require for success. They can only do that if we embed the right habits for learning through the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning – Play and Exploration, Active Learning and Creative and Critical Thinking.

We teach pupils how to listen and speak effectively and meet the high expectations for behaviour by working together and being kind. We invest time and energy into helping pupils set and reflect on their goals by aiming high and developing a love of reading, writing and number. This is delivered through a holistic curriculum which maximizes opportunities for cross-curricular links and learning experiences as well as promoting the unique child by offering extended periods of play and sustained thinking following children's interests and ideas. We value imagination and creativity and seek to create a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning through a vibrant continuous indoor and outdoor provision.

Curriculum Implementation

Pupils learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities. The timetable is carefully structured so that children have rigorous directed teaching in English, maths and phonics every day with regular circle time sessions to focus on PSED. These sessions are followed by group work where children work with a member of staff to develop their individual targets. This focused group time means the teacher can systematically check for understanding, identify and respond to misconceptions quickly and provide real-time verbal feedback which results in a strong impact on the acquisition of new learning.

Children are provided with plenty of time to engage in 'exploration' throughout the variety of experiences carefully planned to engage and challenge them in the provision. The curriculum is planned for the inside and outside classrooms and equal importance is given to learning in both areas. It is planned in a cross-curricular way to enable all aspects of the children's development including understanding the world and expressive art and design as well as to promote sustained thinking and active learning. Our EYFS team plan together collaboratively every week. During these planning sessions the teachers reflect on three questions: "What do our focus individuals need to learn or are curious about? What embedded learning have we observed in this area? What can be changed to exploit the learning and interests of the children/individuals in this area?" In this way, we ensure that the children have agency over their environment and that the provision leads to depth of learning across the curriculum.

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum. Children follow the rigorous and highly successful Read, Write Inc programme faithfully. Explicit planned vocabulary teaching across the curriculum helps to close the

vocabulary gap. Texts are shared and read daily to ensure a high level of vocabulary experience and acquisition across the full curriculum.

We follow the White Rose Maths Mastery approach in Reception with an emphasis on studying key skills of number, calculation and shape so that pupils develop deep understanding and the acquisition of mathematical language. Pupils learn through games and tasks using concrete manipulatives which are then rehearsed and applied to their own learning during exploration. These early mathematical experiences are carefully designed to help pupils remember the content they have been taught and to support them with integrating their new knowledge across the breadth of their experiences and into larger concepts.

We understand that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected. The children have time and freedom to become deeply involved in the activities and their learning. Our inclusive approach means that all children learn together but we have a range of additional intervention and support to enhance and scaffold for children who may need further support in reaching their potential for example additional 'catch-up' provision in Maths and RWI 1:1 tuition for focused intervention for phonics, sight words and blending. The characteristics of effective learning are viewed as an integral part of all areas of learning and are reflected in our observations of children.

Our regular monitoring of teaching and learning includes coaching and feedback so that teachers develop a good subject knowledge and feel effectively supported. We tailor our CPD to be specific to staff's needs and we are focused on moderating outcomes across EYFS so that every member of our team feels confident in making accurate judgements about where individual pupils are and their next steps for learning.

Areas of learning

We base our planning around topics and children's interests and incorporate these throughout our free flow activities. We plan first hand experiences and provide opportunities for challenges appropriate to the development of the children.

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

Prime areas

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication & Language

Specific areas

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

These areas are delivered throughout the topic and are linked closely together. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities.

The EYFS classes have their own outdoor area used all year round, in all weathers. Being outdoors encourages learning in different ways. It offers the children more opportunities to be creative and explore on a larger scale as well as to be physically active linking the indoors and outdoors together. Children have opportunity to experience all seven areas of learning whether they decide to learn indoors or outdoors.

Play

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play, children can be inquisitive, creative, questioning and experimental and will learn at their highest level. Playing with their peers is important for children's development.

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. The adults model play and play sensitively with the children fitting in with their plans and ideas. The children are encouraged to try new activities and judge risks for themselves. We talk to them about how we get better at things through effort and practice and that we can all learn when things go wrong. They practice and build up ideas, learning how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own.

Curriculum Impact

Our curriculum needs to meet the needs of our children, including our disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, so we spend time looking at and evaluating how children are learning. The EYFS assessment of attainment and progress is based on observation, discussion, questioning and evidence of children's independent learning.

Valuable evidence of children's learning is obtained through observation of independent and targeted learning. This is achieved through talking to children, looking at their work, observing their learning experiences and analysing data and progress by year group, class, groups and individuals. Every member of the EYFS team uses ongoing observational assessment to identify children's starting points and plan experiences which ensure progress. They also use information provided by parents, carers and other settings.

Each child's progress is also recorded against 17 assessment scales derived from the ELGs (Early Learning Goals). This information is tracked on Evidence Me which enables us to measure our starting points against a national data set. We use this information on a weekly basis to plan learning experiences and next steps so that knowledge and skills are built cumulatively.

Our curriculum and its delivery ensure that children make at least good progress. During their time in our EYFS, children need to make rapid progress so that we meet the national expectation for GLD at the end of the year. We believe high standards are due to the enriched play-based exploration alongside the rigour of assessment and teaching the children well as they move through the early years – a rich diet of balanced learning experiences is undoubtedly the best way to develop happy, curious children.

The Early Years Profile is not compulsory this year, due to COVID, but could be completed as internal assessment if we decide it is appropriate.

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 learn 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

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
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