



THE LOUGHBOROUGH Schools Foundation

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Loughborough Schools Foundation (LSF)
Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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. 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.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for group and school-based providers 2024 sets the standards that all school-based early years' providers must meet and 'have regard to', to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The EYFS at LSF seeks to provide:

- Quality and consistency in all early years' settings, so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind;
- A secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly;
- Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

LEGISLATION AND INSPECTION

The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for group and school-based providers (2024) sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to 31st August following their fifth birthday under the Childcare Act 2006. Development Matters (2023) is the non-statutory curriculum guidance for the early years foundation stage. The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 apply to all a settings' pupils from the age of two upwards, but do not include children below the age of two. Regulatory compliance with these Regulations is carried out by the Independent Schools Inspectorate.

A setting must register with Ofsted on the Early Years Register any care or education that is provided for children aged under two. The Ofsted Registration certificate must be displayed and shown to parents on request. These settings are inspected by Ofsted. Under several specified circumstances (see EYFS statutory framework 2024 for further details), Ofsted will be notified within 14 days but preferably in advance of any changes taking place.

The setting will notify parents about an inspection once they have been notified. A copy of the final inspection report will be supplied to parents of children who attend the setting regularly.

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

EYFS at LSF is based upon four guiding principles:

1. A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
2. Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.

3. Enabling environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual interests and needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
4. Learning and developing – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates

1. 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, 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/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

2. Positive Relationships

At LSF we recognise that children learn to be strong, independent and form secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

We recognise that parents and/or carers are the children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents and/or carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through a variety of ways such as:

- talking to them about their child before they begin their education at LSF;
- giving the children the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- inviting them to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- encouraging them to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents and/or carers twice a year at which the teacher and they can discuss the child's Learning Journey and general progress in private. Parents and/or carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- the teachers and nursery nurses/Teaching Assistants talk to them at the beginning and end of each day about any noticeable achievements or concerns;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents and/or carers: celebration assemblies, school visits (e.g. open classrooms, maths mornings, Forest School Visits), Christmas productions, Harvest festivals, Sports Days, etc.;
- providing them with an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development;
- offering parent/carer drop-in times as well as the acknowledgement that parents/carers can ring school to contact their child's 'key person' as necessary;
- ensuring that parents/carers know which staff member is their child's 'key person'; and
- should it be required, teachers invite parents and/or carers for meetings where more sensitive issues can be discussed in a quiet and confidential area.

All staff involved with EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. Each child has an allocated 'key person' to ensure that

every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents.

3. Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision, as well as the addition of 'Forest School' learning opportunities. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. Classrooms are set up so that children can find and locate equipment and resources independently. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales, than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

4. Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas." The prime areas are;

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development.

The specific areas are;

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

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part of children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. LSF will respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As a child grows older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help them prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

LSF recognises that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates and these are reflected in practice. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter-connected. The three main characteristics of effective teaching and learning that are used are;

- playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and

- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Effective teaching and learning builds and extend upon prior learning and following children's interests. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual 'Learning Journeys'. Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They can think creatively alongside other children as well as 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.

Features of effective teaching and learning that relate and apply to the EYFS setting at LSF are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents and/or carers, so that our children feel secure at School and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have, of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
 - the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication in a language rich environment;
- the carefully planned educational programme that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- 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 indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment and continuous provision that encourages the children to learn in the absence of an adult; and
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents and/or carers.

INCLUSION

We value the diversity of individuals within our Schools and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at LSF are treated fairly, regardless of ethnicity, religion or cultural background. All children and their families are valued within our Schools.

At LSF we believe that every child matters. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences and abilities when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of all, 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.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests and to help develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs, including arrangements to support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from 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 acting to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in our Schools 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 are 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 and staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society (See LSF Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy).

HEALTH AND SAFETY

At LSF, there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see LSF Health and Safety Policy) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during out of school visits and for any aspects of the environment, or provision that may require a further risk assessment. All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure staff and children in their care are not exposed to risks. In addition to this, an annual risk assessment is conducted of the EYFS (see EYFS risk assessment) and in the staff handbook and LSF Child Protection and Safeguarding policy, there is detailed information and procedures to ensure the safety of the children. The EYFS risk assessment must be read in conjunction with other relevant LSF, and school policies and risk assessments e.g. 'Forest School' Risk Assessment.

In line with the EYFS statutory framework for groups and school-based providers 2024, at Loughborough Schools Foundation we undertake and have in place;

- A 'Medical Arrangements' policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication, are kept up to date.
- Fresh drinking water being always available and accessible, and children can bring in a water bottle.

- Children's dietary requirements and food allergies are recorded and acted upon when required.
- Staffing levels to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety.
- Premises, including overall floor space and outdoor spaces, which are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children cared for and the activities provided.
- Access to an outdoor play area.
- Each classroom having an area for snack to be stored and a sink area. Parents are asked to provide healthy and nutritious snacks such as fresh or dried fruit for break time.
- A first aid box with appropriate contents being always accessible and a record of accidents and injuries being kept (see LSF Medical Protocols). At least one member of staff with a valid paediatric first aid qualification will always be available when EYFS aged children are present on site, or on an off-site visit. Parents and/or carers will be informed of any accident or injury sustained by the child on the same day or as soon as is reasonably practicable after, and of any first aid treatment given.
- A health and safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting, and dealing with accidents, hazards, and faulty equipment.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy.
- A telephone being available to meet the welfare requirements of a child that may need urgent medical attention.
- Appropriate clothing is required by all, and staff are expected to wear clothing that supports them in getting to a child's level and playing and engaging with children at floor level.
- An area adequately equipped to provide healthy and nutritious meals, snacks and drinks.
- Training in food hygiene is provided for staff involved in preparing and handling food.
- Frequent checks on sleeping children.
- Adequate provision of suitable toilets and hand basins.
- A 'no smoking' policy.
- A policy on staff seeking medical advice if they are taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children and for any staff taking medication this being securely stored.
- Suitably trained and qualified staff and have passed any required checks to fulfil their roles and staffing levels appropriate to the age and number of children present. Children will usually be within sight of staff and always within sight or hearing. Whilst eating, children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff.
- Measures to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises and agreed procedures for checking the identity of visitors.
- An area where staff may talk to parents and/or carers confidentially.
- An area for staff to take breaks away from areas being used by children.

- A written procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints from parents.
- Children do not leave the premises unsupervised.
- Children are only released into the care of individuals of whom the parent has explicitly notified the provider.
- Procedures for keeping children safe on out-of-'school'-visits.
- Appropriate public liability insurance to cover all premises from which childcare is provided.

All members of staff are given copies of policies and procedures at their induction, and these are accessible and explained to all parents and/or carers, as necessary.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are provided with safe and secure environments in which to interact and explore rich and diverse learning and development opportunities. 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.

“Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.”

(The Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for groups and school-based providers, 2024)

At LSF we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for groups and school-based providers 2024, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018', 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales 2015' and the governments 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024'. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare and safeguarding of children, including the appointment of a Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Promote good health, including oral health, preventing the spread of infection, and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.

- Maintain and make available (as mandated) records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Information that will be made available to parents and/or carers includes;

- How the EYFS is being provided in the setting;
- How parents and carers can access more information about the EYFS;
- The range and type of activities and experiences provided for children;
- The daily routines of the setting;
- How parents and carers can share learning at home;
- How the setting supports children with SEN and disabilities;
- Food and drinks provided for children;
- Staffing in the setting;
- List of staff who have a current Paediatric First Aid certificate.
- The name and role of the child's key person and their role;
- An emergency contact number for parents to use;
- Details of policies and procedures, including
 - The procedure if a parent/carer fails to collect a child at the appointed time; and
 - The procedure for dealing with the circumstances of a child going missing at, or away from, the setting.

Loughborough Schools Foundation endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Guidance on the use of images, mobile phones and cameras in the EYFS setting in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018

Loughborough Schools Foundation aim to strike a balance between safeguarding the children and young people in our care and ensuring families can experience pleasure and pride in their children's achievements using technology. To ensure the safety and welfare of the children in our care this policy outlines the protocols for the use of personal mobile phones and cameras in the EYFS setting;

- Personal cameras, mobile phones or any other device capable of capturing images must not be used (by parents, staff, governors or volunteer helpers) whilst in any EYFS setting.
- A signed consent form is obtained from the child's parent/carer, and is kept on the child's file, stating that images of child are permitted to be used. Where parents/carers have not allowed images of their child to be used all EYFS staff are notified.
- Assuming that consent is given, photographic evidence of the 'Learning Journey' and other pupil achievements or activities can be taken by LSF staff using Schools equipment and downloaded and printed on the school's computers and printers.

- Personal mobile phones or any other personal image recording device held by EYFS staff must not be visible to EYFS children but stored in cupboards/drawers away from the children.
- If worn by staff, smart watches are to be in 'airplane' mode throughout the staff members shift/time on duty and in the presence of the children.
- In an emergency, staff may use their personal mobile phone but only with the approval of their line manager and this should be in a separate area and out of the sight of EYFS children.
- In circumstances such as out of school visits, e.g., a visit to the 'Forest School', staff may use their personal phones in the event of an emergency.
- Where senior LSF pupils have supervisory responsibility for EYFS children, there must always be a member of EYFS, or School, staff readily available and in overall charge.
- All LSF staff have a duty of care and must notify their line manager, the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Head teacher, if they have any concerns regarding the inappropriate use of mobile phones or other devices capable of capturing images.

The Data Protection Act 2018 does not prevent parents from taking pictures or recorded images of their own children at EYFS events for private use, subject to any conditions implemented at the time.

Images taken by the press

If a child is photographed by a newspaper, the photo becomes the property of the newspaper, and the newspaper has the final say as to how it is used. (N.B. images can be placed by editors on the newspaper's website). Generally, newspaper photos of groups of 12 or more children do not have the names of the children attached. Photos of smaller groups might include the full name of the child in the accompanying caption; however, the setting/parents are not obliged to provide children's names, and it is recommended that they do not do so.

TRANSITION AND ASSESSMENT

Following the introduction of a progress check for children aged between two and three years, parents and/or carers are provided with a short-written report of their child's development in the prime areas; identifying the child's strengths and any areas where there is a concern.

• From Pre-school /Feeder settings

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition.

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express.
- During the summer term parents are encouraged to submit background information about their child. It is used during the autumn term to support transition and to inform planning.
- The children are invited to visit their reception class.
- Where possible, when more than five children are coming from a feeder setting, a member of Fairfield staff will visit the feeder setting. Due to the size of their cohorts, a member of Amherst staff can visit every feeder location.

• From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1.

The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and/or carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective teaching and learning (see above). This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the responsibility of all EYFS staff to follow the principles, procedures and policies stated in this Policy as they relate to their work setting.

Mrs Anna Murphy is the named Nominative Governor responsible for the EYFS settings in Loughborough Amherst School and Mrs Ann Clark at Fairfield Prep School. They will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole Governing Body as appropriate, raising any issues that require discussion.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

DOCUMENT CONTROL TABLE

| Version | Date | Description of Changes | Author | Approved by | Effective Date |
|----------------|-------------|--|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1.0 | 14.11.24 | Minor updates to refer to EYFS 2024. Smart watches to be on airplane mode. | Garry Leeson | Foundation Executive Committee | 14.11.24 |
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