

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

*"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its' own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance."
(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)*

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year in Primary School.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

Looking at how each child learns:-

A Unique Child

At The Lyme Nursery 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 circle times and reward stickers, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

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Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the Nursery and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at The Lyme Nursery are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our Nursery. In our Nursery we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences 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 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.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Following children's interests providing opportunity for each to take lead of their learning.
- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- 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 taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in the Nursery 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. (See our Safeguarding Children Policy) (Continued...)

Welfare

"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."

At The Lyme Nursery we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good 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 records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Positive Relationships

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

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we highly value the contribution that parents make.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

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- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our Nursery;
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with nursery child carers prior to starting at our Nursery during our "Induction Session".
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress and allowing free access to their children's "My Story" packs and development files.
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's Key Person about any concerns they may have.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, nursery and parents. For example, fund raising days, themed activity days and fundays.
- Providing space in the child's 'Learning Journey' / 'My Story' packs for parents to leave comments relating to the children's achievements.
- There are two Parents Evenings per year (Spring and Autumn) at which time the Key Person and parent discuss the child's progress and development.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

We have good links with local schools. When possible, annual visits are undertaken by reception class teachers of local schools to meet with the children prior to them starting at their new schools. These visits provide the opportunity to discuss individual needs and to meet the children within the nursery environment. Staff also arrange to visit local schools to ensure smooth transition.

Enabling Environments

At The Lyme Nursery we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

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Observation, Assessment and Planning

The Planning within the EYFS follows the Nursery's Long Term Plan alongside Short Term (weekly planning), which is based around the individual children's needs and interests. These plans are used and implemented by the class Key Person who has a good understanding of their children.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the Key Person and other adults as appropriate.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS learning environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The environment is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Nursery has an extensive outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. 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. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 6 areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At The Lyme Nursery we recognise 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 inter-connected.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our Nursery. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between staff and parents, so that our children feel secure at our Nursery and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that staff have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;

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- 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;
- the carefully planned curriculum 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;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;

Play

"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and pre-occupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development."

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, and learn 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. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods."

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

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Creativity and Critical Thinking

"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions."

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the setting to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

PRIME AREAS

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

SPECIFIC AREAS

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

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.