



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 our school children are able to join The Lodge Day Nursery from three months and the Pre School Class in the September before they enter Reception; all children join us full time in Reception at the beginning of the school year in which they turn five.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

In addition to this policy, please also refer to the following: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy; Teaching and Learning Policy; Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy; Marking Policy; Learning Enhancement Policy; Behaviour Policy.

A Unique Child

At Ipswich Prep School and The Lodge Day 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 and 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 for Reception, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at Ipswich Prep School and The Lodge Day Nursery are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families matter and are valued within our school. 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 or disabilities, children who are more able, 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 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;
- effectively differentiating by 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 school 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 wellbeing of all children.

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." (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)

At Ipswich Prep School and The Lodge Day 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. 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 Ipswich Prep School and The Lodge Day 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.

Suitable Staff

At Ipswich Prep School and The Lodge Day Nursery we employ a highly qualified team of Early Years Practitioners, we work with high staff to child ratio, usually above the statutory guidance, to provide excellent quality of care. We aim for the majority of practitioners to hold at least a Level 3 qualification, and have several at Level 6 or QTS.

At The Lodge Day Nursery we will always work within the following ratios:

Under 2 – 1:3

Aged 2-3 – 1:4

Aged 3-4 – 1:8

Aged 4-5 - 1:13 (with QTS) 1:8 (without QTS)

At Ipswich Prep School we will always work within the following ratios:

Reception – 1:30

We aim to have all staff working within the EYFS hold a current Paediatric First Aid certificate. There will always be at least one qualified member of staff on site and accompanying a trip outside of school.

Staff have regular supervision with their manager, the purpose of which is to provide staff with the opportunity to:

- Discuss any issues – particularly concerning children’s development or well-being
- Identify solutions to address issues as they arise
- Receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness.

Supervisions are organised by the Manager or Head of Lower Prep and additional meetings can be arranged if and when required.

Managers ensure they visit each room every day and speak to all members of staff. Communication lines are therefore always open and supervision is entrenched in the everyday running of the School and The Lodge Day Nursery.

Parents as Partners

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

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

- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- The Lodge Day Nursery have two additional 90 minute settling in sessions
- Informing parents that they can arrange an individual meeting with their child's Key Person if they would like to do so
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress at the beginning and end of each day and at specific parents evenings
- Encouraging parents to contribute to their child's Learning Journey on the News from Home page, providing "Wow Moments" from home and sharing Learning Journeys with parents, including Eylog in The Lodge Day Nursery
- Providing parents with a written report on their child's academic and personal progress at the end of the Michaelmas and Summer term in school and every 4-6 months in The Lodge Day Nursery
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: parent pop-ins, school fairs, Harvest/Christmas concerts, open afternoon, special person breakfast, class assemblies, sports day, parents induction meetings for transition between The Lodge Day Nursery and Reception class

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. Members of staff in The Lodge Day Nursery have a group of "Key Children"; in Reception the class teacher is Key Person for all children in their class and the Reception teaching assistants are "Shared Key Person". Staff from across the EYFS meet regularly, along with daily discussions, where there is the opportunity to share information about the children.

Enabling Environments

At Ipswich Prep School and The Lodge Day Nursery we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We observe the children and assess their interests, development and learning, and plan challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

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 observations and annotated photographs. These observations are recorded in children's individual Learning Journey. They also contain information provided by parents and other settings.

Within the first six weeks in our Reception class, we carry out an adaptive Baseline assessment on the children, using CEM Base online assessment. The Base assessment is repeated with an end of year follow up assessment to measure each child's value-added progress. Also at the end of the Reception year, we use the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile to assess each child's progress against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs), assessing whether they are emerging or expected in each area. We also highlight the children who are exceeding in these areas for internal transition information as the children move into Year 1.

At The Lodge Day Nursery we also use the WellComm Pack as part of our assessment toolkit in monitoring Children's Speech and Language for Intervention in the Early Years. The WellComm Pack uses a unique traffic light system to help us understand the child's current level of speech, language and understanding. This will aid us in providing a pathway for action, ensuring every child gets the support they need. We use the WellComm Pack as part of our transition process to assess children's communication skills when transitioning between rooms.

Within The Lodge Day Nursery we provide written feedback on the Areas of Learning every 4-6 months. In Reception, parents receive a full written report at the end of the Michaelmas and Summer Terms. We hold at least two parents' evenings each year, providing verbal feedback to parents about their child's development.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classrooms are 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 classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS has outdoor areas which are organised to ensure all areas of learning are represented. 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. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

All but one room has a sheltered outdoor area which can be accessed directly from the room and there are well resourced grass areas which are used throughout the day.

Learning and Development

At Ipswich Prep School and The Lodge Day 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 school/nursery. The features specific to EYFS are:

- the partnership between the teachers/practitioners and parents, so that our children feel secure at school/nursery and develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- the understanding that teachers/practitioners 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
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the ELGs 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;
- the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do
- the regular identification of training needs of all practitioners working within the EYFS

Play

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.” (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build on 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.” (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)

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

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.” (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)

Our children are given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults 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 classroom to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

(As taken from the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)

Three Prime Areas

- **Communication and Language** – The development of children’s spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children’s back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children’s language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – Children’s personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.
- **Physical Development** - Physical activity is vital in children’s all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child’s strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both

objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

Four Specific Areas

- **Literacy** – It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).
- **Mathematics** –Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.
- **Understanding the World** - Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster

their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

- **Expressive Arts and Design** - The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

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 ELGs that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

** See also supervision arrangements for The Lodge Day Nursery and Ipswich Prep School EYFS*

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