Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

"All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential. The EYFS sets the standards that all early years providers must meet 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 right foundation for good future progress through school and life." (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)

Aims

This policy aims:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a wide range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Through the ongoing cycle of observe, assess and review, learning and development opportunities are adapted to meet the individual needs of the child.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- A close partnership working between practitioners and parents and/or guardians.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti discriminatory practice.

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 with teaching and support from adults
- Learning and Development

In addition to this policy, please also refer to the following: Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy; Monitoring and Evaluation Policy; Teaching and Learning Policy; Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy; Marking Policy; Learning Enhancement Policy; Curriculum Policy for the Prep; Phonics Policy; Behaviour Policy for the Prep. The Lodge

Food and Drink Policy; Behaviour Management Policy for The Lodge. Missing Child Procedure; First Aid Policy; Health and Safety 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

"All children deserve high quality early education and care. This requires a quality workforce. A well-trained, skilled team of practitioners can help every child achieve the best possible educational outcomes. Children need to build an attachment with their key person for their confidence and well-being. The key person also promotes children's learning by developing a deep understanding of their individual needs and children can particularly benefit from their modelling and support.." (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 including good 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.
- mealtimes (snack and lunchtime), children are always within sight and hearing of a member of staff.
- 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.
- All EYFS practitioners will have up-to-date Safeguarding training (including FGM) and Prevent Duty training.
- All EYFS volunteers will have completed Safer Recruitment checks.
- No prescription medicines will be administered unless prescribed for a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist. Robust systems are in place for obtaining and updating medical information for pupils. For those with more complex,

ongoing medical needs (i.e. allergies), key workers will work in close partnership with the child's parents, or guardians, and with the school Matron to devise a personalised Healthcare Plan.

- Parents/guardians will be informed of an accident or injury sustained by the child on the same day as soon as reasonably practicable after, and of any first aid treatment given.

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 (1:5 in certain circumstances as legally required)
Aged 3-4 – 1:8
Aged 4-5 - 1:13 (with EYTS or QTS) 1:8 (without EYTS or QTS)

At Ipswich Prep School we will always work within the following ratios:
Reception – 1:30 (with EYTS or QTS) or 1:13 (Level 3 and above)

**Please refer to Early years qualification requirements and standards document from DfE.*

These ratios are also adhered to during break and lunch times in Reception along with wraparound care.

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, at our Late Stay and Breakfast Club facility 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 of The Lodge or Lower Prep and EYFS Lead and additional meetings can be arranged if and when required.

Managers and The Lower Prep and EYFS Lead 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 settling in sessions (1 hour session and one 45 minute session)
- 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 in Reception 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 and book looks, 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 and ongoing assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. This is an integral part of the learning and development process. 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. In Reception these would be reflected in pupils' books.

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.

Two Year Check-When a child is aged between two and three, practitioners must review their progress, and provide parents and/or carers with a short written summary of their child's development in the prime areas.

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. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or guardians and the Year 1 teachers to ensure a smooth transition.

All children who will turn 5 years old within the Summer Term will also have their EYFSP data shared with Suffolk Local Authority due to statutory requirements.

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, Active Learning and Creating and Thinking Critically

"Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals, and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play and learning that is guided by adults. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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. Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things." (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 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.

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**
- **Physical Development**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Four Specific Areas

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts 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 ELGs that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Phonics

At Ipswich Prep we use the Read, Write Inc (RWI) programme to get children off to a confident start with their literacy and language. RWI is a teaching method based on phonics

(the units of sound within words) and we teach children to recognise and apply the phonics in both their reading and spelling. Evidence suggests that fidelity to a well-structured and systematic phonics scheme is the best, and fastest way of teaching children to decode.

The RWI programme is delivered to pupils in EYFS who are learning to read and write and they will take part in daily phonics sessions. Set 1 Speed Sounds are first introduced in the Michaelmas term of Pre School. These sounds are then revisited once the children start Reception in the Michaelmas term.

September 2024