



Ditton Primary School

EYFS Policy

Ratified: September 2023

Next Review Date: September 2024

Policy Responsibilities and Review

Policy type:	School
Guidance:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This policy complies with Local Authority guidance • EYFS Statutory Framework 2021
Related policies:	This policy should be read in conjunction with DfE Statutory Guidance for Executive Principal, Staff and Local Governing Bodies
Review frequency:	Annually
Committee responsible:	LGC
Chair signature:	Dr Denise Lee
Changes in latest version:	n/a

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“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to reach their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future 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 the 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.”

Introduction

At Ditton we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life in order for them to fulfil their potential. A strong parent partnership will provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. In partnership with parents and carers, we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age 5 have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. At Ditton Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong independent learners from secure relationships. We aim to develop nurturing and respectful relationships with all our children and their families. As children commence their journey at Ditton, we nurture strong positive attitudes where children become proud and respectful of themselves, others and their environment.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS Statutory Framework 2021)

The EYFS principles which guide the effective work of all practitioners are:

- **A Unique Child** - every child is a competent learner
- **Positive Relationships** - children learn to be strong and independent
- **Enabling Environments** - supporting and extending a child’s development
- **Learning and Development** - 3 prime and 4 specific areas of learning and development

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 and at varying rates. We encourage children to develop positive attitudes to learning through praise and encouragement, celebration and rewards. All children are treated equally regardless of race, gender, religion or ability. Every child has the opportunity to achieve their personal goals and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all individuals. We set realistic and challenging expectations to enable children achieve the expected standard by the end of the year.

We do this through:

- Before September, parents complete an ‘All About Me’ form which provides important information about what parents have observed their children achieving at home
- Planning opportunities that build on the pupil’s prior knowledge, experiences and interests

- Routines are established so that children begin to anticipate and feel confident to take the next step
- Pictorial timetables give children the security to know and understand their routines
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on individual learning needs
- Provide a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and help them learn effectively
- Provide resources and activities that reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- Monitor children's progress and take early action to implement any additional support
- Work closely with parents/carers and other outside agencies to ensure the needs of all children are being met

Positive Relationships:

We recognise that children learn best when they feel safe and secure, and all staff work together to develop strong, positive relationships with both the children and their families. We value 'Parents as Partners' and recognise the contribution they play in their child's learning journey.

We develop these relationships through:

- Offering a number of transitional activities before children enter Reception which enables us to get to know the children and parents well e.g. visits to Nursery, welcome meeting, Stay and Play, individual appointments
- Assigning children to a Key Person. Use of the Key Person System allows a smaller group of children to get to know each other better and also establish a closer relationship with their Key Person. If children have done something special or would like to share something parents are encouraged to speak to their child's Key Person who can share this at small group time
- The Reception team provide an education planned around the needs and experiences of each child, so that true potential can be nurtured and realised
- Publishing long term and medium term plans on the website that detail the themes and learning the children will be covering
- Providing a welcome pack with written information about their child starting school
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home/School agreement
- Throughout the year, inviting parents/carers to Stay and Play sessions where they can see first-hand their child in the school setting
- Providing photographs/information on Tapestry and Twitter about their child's week in school
- Providing information about the school's approach to teaching phonics, with links to how best support their child at home
- Sending home decodable reading books with reading diaries that can act as a dialogue between home/school
- Using home/school diaries during the holiday periods to form a basis for oral retell and class news

- Meeting with parents early in the year to discuss how children has settled into the school environment, followed by another meeting in the Spring term
- Sharing snapshots of learning on Tapestry and encouraging parent feedback
- Sending a written report at the end of the year detailing the child's attainment and progress in all the areas of the EYFS framework
- Recognising and sharing in special religious and cultural celebrations
- Inviting parents to a range of activities and performances throughout the year including Christmas, Singing Concert and Sharing a book afternoon
- Operating an open-door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns
- Identifying concerns about a child's rate of progress and discussing this immediately with parent/carers

Enabling Environments

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident secure and challenged. The children have continuous access to both the indoor and outdoor environment that is set up to develop each area of learning through planned Continuous Provision. Play based learning is an essential part of the EYFS curriculum and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned provision provided by staff. We plan a learning environment that reflects the children's individual interests and abilities and allows them to succeed thus developing positive attitudes to learning. We promote and develop independent learners, encouraging children to select resources and activities for themselves. We ensure the environment is rich with a variety of print and vocabulary to develop language skills and create opportunities for communication and language. We have welcoming, child friendly and stimulating indoor and outdoor areas which the children have continuous access to. We provide a rich variety of academic, social, artistic, musical and sporting experiences. Specialised teachers visit Reception to deliver Spanish lessons, PE and performing arts classes.

Outdoor Learning

Children who learn to play outdoors are much more likely to continue to enjoy an active lifestyle as they grow older. We believe that outdoor play is a vital part of children's development and through playing outside children can develop greater physical, social, sensory, language, mathematical and scientific skills. We recognise that outdoor play enables children to do things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. Being outdoors provides children with more opportunities to experience risk-taking. They have the chance to take part in tasks on a much bigger scale and complete them in ways they might not when they're indoors. They can learn to make calculated decisions such as 'should I jump off this log?' or 'can I climb this tree?' Children are encouraged to explore in all weathers, whether sunny, rainy or snowy; learning to prepare for the different elements is seen as an important learning experience in its own right. We believe that our outdoor area is as important as the indoor provision we provide and that the two should complement each other. Our outdoor area is well resourced and offers many exciting, stimulating and challenging experiences. Our Reception team interact and collaborate with the children, and where appropriate support, stimulate and model creative thinking and ideas.

Learning and Development:

We follow the EYFS Statutory Framework 2021 supported by Development Matters 2021. The curriculum identifies seven areas of learning essential in the early years setting. All areas are interconnected and support each other in the learning and development of our children. In order to succeed they must be supported by a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities.

The three Prime Areas provide a basis for the child's early learning:

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

The four Specific Areas in which the Prime Areas are strengthened and applied are:

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

The Early Learning Goals summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that the children should have gained in these areas by the end of the Reception year. Alongside the EYFS Framework children will participate in daily, fast paced and engaging phonic sessions, following the Little Wandle Phonics programme and in line with the school phonics policy.

Characteristics of Effective Learning:

The Characteristics of Effective Learning determine how a child will learn rather than what they learn. We provide an environment that is based on developing and nurturing these attitudes as well as supporting and encouraging them to be creative and adventurous learners throughout their lives.

- Playing and Exploring- Children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things and 'have a go'.
- Active Learning- Children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties. They will be encouraged to enjoy their achievements.
- Creating and Thinking Critically- We encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Transition

Ditton prides itself in supporting each child in transitions. The transitions between Nursery and Reception and then Reception to Year 1 are calm, happy and successful.

This is achieved through the following ways:

- Each child has the opportunity to visit the school during the open day and stay and play sessions

- Our teachers visit children at their nursery setting prior to starting in September
- Parents have individual meetings with the Reception teacher's to share important information about their child
- Parents complete an 'All About Me' questionnaire which is used to inform planning during the settling in period in September.
- At the end of the academic year a transition programme is timetabled to support the transition to Year 1. We aim to help each child develop the confidence to progress smoothly to Year 1 at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The "move up days" at the end of the summer term encourage a gentle transition between the year groups and gives the all staff time to get to know the children.

The Cycle of Observation, Planning and Assessment

At Ditton we hold the individual child at the centre of our planning. This is achieved through regular observation and assessment. This observation and on-going formative assessment is at the heart of effective Early Years practice. We use Development Matters Guidance, Literacy Counts and First for Maths to support our planning. Short term planning is on a weekly basis and is regularly reviewed throughout each week as assessments help to inform future planning. Daily phonic sessions follow the Little Wandle programme. We constantly strive and reflect upon our practice to ensure that the needs of each child are met both academically and emotionally, helping to develop each child's confidence and independence. Staff achieve this through:

- Observing children as they act and interact in their play, child-initiated learning, adult-led learning and observations from home
- Considering the examples of development: observing what children can do, and identifying the next steps in their learning and development pathways
- Considering ways to support children to strengthen and deepen their current learning and development
- Considering the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child. This information is then effectively used to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development
- During our weekly planning meeting the whole team evaluates children's key interests, learning and achievements and this then feeds forward into the following weeks planning

On entry to Reception all children complete the NFER Baseline Assessment. Parents are kept informed about children's progress at Stay and Play, Teacher meetings and formal written reports. Parents are regularly updated about children's progress in Phonics after each half termly assessment.

Assessment at the end of the EYFS

Progress is assessed upon the child's level of development over the 17 areas of learning. At the end of the year a judgement will be made on whether the child has met the expected level of development- Early Learning Goal. If a child has not met this level, it will be recorded

as emerging and targets will be set to support the transition to year 1. Parents receive a written report at the end of the year that highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress. Parents are given opportunity to discuss this report with the teacher. In compliance with Early Years regulations parents may have access to developmental records about their child e.g. Early Years Foundation Stage Profile etc.

Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Special Needs

The Early Years Foundation Stage is taught in accordance with the present policy for Equal Opportunities. Children are encouraged to develop a positive attitude towards people of different ethnic groups, cultures, beliefs, gender and ability. We support the belief that everyone is unique in their own right and act upon it.

- The setting is wheelchair accessible and a disabled toilet is available within the setting to cater for children with physical disabilities.
- Our curriculum respects a child's ethnic faith and cultural heritage, and the special needs of each child, by ensuring that these areas are covered within our indoor and outdoor activities, circle time and assemblies, visitors, role play, books and positive images.
- It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that we identify and help those children in our care with additional educational needs including gifted children. We liaise with the school's SENCO and assessment leader to identify next steps in learning in partnership with the parents.

Further information regarding the EYFS may be found on the DfE website www.education.gov.uk