

Policy for Early years/ Foundation Stage/Reception

For Lowca Community School

This policy was reviewed in December 2019 after staff discussion and Governor Consultation. It provides a point of reference from which we can review and evaluate the curriculum on offer. It is a means of identifying strengths as well as those areas of policy and practice we need to develop further. The policy will be reviewed bi-annually and its implications are the responsibility of all staff.

At Lowca, we are committed to providing a high quality early years' education, which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning. We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. The Reception class teacher is responsible for the wellbeing of all of the children in the reception class and is the 'Key Worker' for all reception children. The Key Worker's responsibilities include:

- helping the child to become familiar with the setting
- building a relationship with each child's parents, working in partnership with them to ensure that the child is being cared for appropriately for each family.
- responding sensitively to the child's needs, feelings, ideas and behaviour.
- ensuring that the learning opportunities on offer meet the needs of each child.

Staffing includes a class teacher and a teaching assistant specifically for reception pupils in the morning, to give them excellent adult to child ratios in order to develop listening and speaking skills, confidence, self esteem, independence and problem solving capability. Other teaching assistants may be deployed in the foundation stage unit based on the needs of the children. Staff are organised to support the children in a balance of adult led and child initiated experiences throughout the day. Most sessions include free flow access to the outdoor area. Practitioners are aware of the need to be flexible in order to respond to unplanned events that the children are interested in.

Planning

The Early Learning Goals are the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the time they reach the age of five. There are three prime areas of learning:

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

In addition, there are four specific areas of learning:

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

Our planning takes account of the children's needs, their interests and their stages of

development. We recognise that the seven areas of learning cannot be delivered in isolation and seek opportunities to make links between them. We aim to deliver the curriculum through planned, purposeful play and present new concepts in meaningful contexts that enable the children to build on what they already know. Long Term Planning ensures a broad and balanced coverage of skills. Practitioners use this flexibly, choosing learning experiences to meet the needs of the children. At the beginning of each topic, practitioners lead the children in discussion to identify areas that they are particularly interested in. These ideas are incorporated into the medium term plan. Adult led activities are practical in nature and based on first hand experiences wherever possible. Children are supported to develop problem-solving skills through open-ended tasks and opportunities to share their thinking with others. The number of adult led activities that the children take part in increases throughout the year, as their concentration develops. Children are also encouraged to complete 'challenges' in the "zones" in order to practice skills, apply their learning, and develop perseverance. They are encouraged to develop a can-do attitude and to take pride in their accomplishments.

Observation and Assessment

Initial assessments are carried out within the first six weeks of children starting Nursery and Reception. These NFER assessments form the baseline for our Observation, Assessment and Planning cycle. Assessments are analysed and used to track children's progress throughout the Foundation Stage. At the end of Reception, practitioners consider the 17 ELGS in the EYFS Profile to decide whether each child is working at the expected levels, exceeding the levels or have not yet met the levels. Judgements against the ELGs are based on ongoing observation; all relevant records; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. The results of the Profile are shared with parents and/or carers, and there are opportunities for them to meet their child's class teacher to discuss this information. They are statutory assessments and this information is also shared with the local authority and national authority to decide if they have achieved a good level of development. At Lowca, we use a range of strategies to gather information about the children's learning and development and use this information to ensure that our planning meets the needs of all learners. During child initiated activities, practitioners make observations which are added to their Learning Journeys. Observations give us information about children's progress towards the 7 areas of learning but also give information

regarding the child's characteristics of effective learning. Parents have full access to these and are encouraged to make comments on their child's learning and to add their own observations from home.. Evidence note books(learning journals) are kept to keep a record of children's achievements in key areas. In addition, each child is part of a 'Focus Assessment' once per term and has an individual tracking assessment record.

We work closely with our feeder settings to ensure that the children make a smooth transition to school. We have contact with local settings throughout the year and invite them to visit us on a regular basis. In the Summer term, there are opportunities for each setting to bring groups of children to visit. A transition meeting is held for new parents in the Summer term, where we outline daily routines and expectations. The children start school on a full-time timetable. We value the contribution that parents and carers make to their child's learning and take every opportunity to work in collaboration with them. Each half term, we publish curriculum information to inform parents of what their child will be learning and how they can support them at home. We hold two parent consultations per year, and a detailed report is issued in the Summer Term. We welcome contributions from home and encourage parents to make notes learning journeys books to contribute to their child's assessments. Children take reading books home to share weekly and may also choose a library book.

Risk assessments are completed for each type of outing.

Fundamental British Values are fostered, such as Democracy eg Staff will encourage children to know their views count, value each other's view and values and talk about their feelings, for example when they do or do not need help. Where appropriate we demonstrate democracy in action, for example: sharing views on which story should be read by a show of hands Staff will support the decisions children make and provide activities that involve turn taking, sharing and collaboration. Children will be given opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued. The Rule of Law- Children are introduced to the whole school behaviour policy. Staff will ensure that children understand their own and others' behaviour and its consequences, and learning to distinguish right from wrong. We collaborate with children to create rules and the codes of behaviour and ensure children understand rules apply to everyone. Individual Liberty- EYFS has opportunities for child led learning,

interests are followed through planned and spontaneous learning experiences. Children will develop a positive sense of themselves, with opportunities to develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities. We implicitly encourage mutual Respect and Tolerance of people's different Faiths and Beliefs. Spiritual or cultural differences are also explored explicitly to develop empathy, understanding and acceptance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'M' followed by a cursive flourish.

Signed Dec.2019 (on behalf of the governors)

To be reviewed Dec.2020