

LONG MEADOW SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY



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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

School Aims

We promote high achievement and learning for life by working with children to:

- Develop thinking skills – reflecting on how to learn and become better learners
- Become highly motivated life long learners
- Meet the challenges of the modern world as resourceful learners
- Have high self-esteem – belief in themselves and respect for others and the environment
- Be able to work independently and collaboratively
- Achieve high standards in all areas of the curriculum
- Seek to extend themselves in mind, body and spirit

We believe that each child will succeed through experiencing quality in:

- A positive ethos of support, challenge and encouragement
- A relevant, forward thinking, broad, creative and balanced curriculum
- A stimulating, interactive, learning environment
- Innovative teaching and an investigative approach to learning
- A variety of exciting learning resources
- An enriching programme of extra-curricular activities and visits
- Learning partnerships between school, home and the community

In addition to the school aims, the Early Years staff also aim to achieve:

- a positive transition for every child from their home and/ or pre-school setting to school
- a close partnership between school and parents/carers
- a curriculum that is appropriate to the needs of young children
- first hand practical experiences for the children, involving play and talk
- all children having equal access to the curriculum and opportunities
- staff having access to continued professional development to maintain and extend their specialist expertise
- regular observations and assessments to inform planning, through identifying the needs of the individual children.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2023 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

3. Learning Environment

The children in the foundation stage have a designated area which consists of two teaching areas, a practical area, toilets, a cloakroom and a covered outdoor area. The children in the Early Years area share other facilities with the whole school.

The Early Years area is calming, attractive and welcoming for the children. It is well organised, clearly labelled, safe and tidy. A good range of age-appropriate resources are stored to encourage independent access for the children. Children's work is displayed on the walls alongside information for adults.

The Early Years team meets the statutory child:adult ratios and usually consists of a teacher and nursery nurse per class.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2023 EYFS statutory framework.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

In Long Meadow we follow a creative curriculum. The following table provides previous themes as an example of what is used in Early Years:

Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
People who help us Falling Leaves	Festivals.	Fairy Tales	Elmer Superheroes	In the Garden	Animals Dinosaurs

Each half term, parents/carers receive a Curriculum Newsletter to inform them about the teaching and the activities the children will be doing in school. They also receive guidance on home learning ideas to further their child's learning.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

The themes emerge from staff interactions and observations of children's interests. As such, themes are not set ahead of time or dependent on an adult directed planning. There is a balance of both adult-led activities and child-initiated activities. They are appropriately challenging for the children, well-resourced and allow the children to work independently.

At Long Meadow, children start their reading and writing journey using the Read Write Inc programme. Read Write Inc. Phonics is designed to ensure all children learn to read accurately and fluently. Comprehensive planning is provided for teachers so they can channel their energy and creativity into teaching fun and engaging lessons.

Phonics – Each day the children participate in a Phonics Read Write Inc session, in a group with a teacher and nursery nurse. The Read Write Inc' programme provides the basis of the lessons. Additional support or extension is provided following regular assessments of what has been taught so far. Parents/carers are encouraged to support children's early reading skills through regular reading and phonics practice at home.

Reading – In Early Years the children are introduced to the early skills of reading. Children are encouraged to take home picture books to share with their parents/carers. In school, adults frequently read stories to the children to model the process of reading. Every child has a reading journal which they keep in their book bag. Parents/carers are encouraged to write comments when they have read with their child. These are checked by staff once a week.

Handwriting- We make the physical process of writing – handwriting – enjoyable from the start, so children see themselves as 'writers'. We use mnemonics – memory pictures – to help children visualise the letter or join before they write it down. Children need to practise handwriting under the guidance of a teacher so they do not develop habits that will be difficult to undo later. Finger strength and hand grip is developed through regular fine motor activities, such as dough disco or finger gym.

Personal Social Emotional Development – Each day the children take part in a PSHE session, in a small group with an Early Years practitioner. These are fun activities to develop social skills which the children need to acquire, for example listening, speaking, being aware of other children's emotions etc.

Maths- Each day children are challenged to complete a maths activity focused on the learning goal for that week. Number and numeracy mastery is the main focus with additional sessions on shape space and measure activities throughout the year. The Maths Mastery programme provides the core planning and progression for maths lessons, supported and reinforced through continuous provision and child initiated learning.

Every day, children have the opportunity to participate in child-initiated activities, either indoors or outdoors. During these child-initiated sessions, adults are either observing or assessing children through the use of Tapestry, supporting them with their activities, playing with them or working with children individually on specific tasks.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

4.3 Tapestry

Tapestry enables us to track the coverage of National Curriculum subjects and the depth of children's learning within them. Adults can easily record and view learning Flags- areas of the curriculum that have been taught and measure the depth of understanding individuals and groups of children have reached. However Tapestry is not the only way in which learning is assessed or captured.

The communication between staff and parents/carers that Tapestry enables and helps build a shared understanding of how every child can reach their full potential, from their starting point in Reception to the end of Early Years.

5. Assessment

At Long Meadow, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

- Photographs and videos are taken of the children working.
- Examples of children's adult-led and child-initiated work are displayed in the children's Learning Journey Books.
- Read Write Inc Phonic assessment is carried out individually each half term.
- The information gathered and how it will be used is made known to parents/carers during learning conversation meetings.
- Parents/carers are also encouraged to add to their child's Tapestry Journal. They are asked to write down anything their child does at home e.g. reading, writing, cooking, swimming etc. This allows them to have an involvement with the assessment of their child.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to comment on the children's achievements at home on their Achievement Leaves which are put on display on the Achievements Tree in the Early Years practical area.
- When children are ready, they may be given differentiated phonics and spelling home learning to complete with parent/carer support.

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

6. Working with parents/carers

6.1 Induction into School

To give every child and parent/carer the best opportunity for a smooth and positive transition into school the following Induction process is followed:

- Booklet given initially about how to prepare their child for school.
- Early Years Induction evening (Summer term).
- Induction pack given during the meeting includes an invitation for the child to start school, school brochure, booklet for child, various letters and forms.
- Tapestry used to read stories and send video messages to the children.
- Visits to school (Summer term).
- Visits to preschools/ nurseries by Early Years staff.
- Home visit in the September Term to meet the teacher in their own environment.
- Staggered full time entry - across one and a half weeks.
- Starting school- Induction- a staggered start taking into account the cohort size and age range. This may include Autumn/ spring born children attending on different days to give them the time and space to settle without overwhelm (depending on when the school year starts).
- A booklet is given to parents/carers about the morning routine.
- Parents/carers are given the opportunity to attend a coffee morning with PALS on their child's first day of school.
- Information workshops about the curriculum are led during the Autumn term, all parents/carers are invited to attend.

6.2 Partnership with parents/carers

Partnerships with parents/carers are considered high priority in Long Meadow School. A carefully planned introduction, for the Early Years children and parents/ carers, forms the basis of this partnership.

- In the Summer term, prior to the child starting school, every parent/ carer is invited to attend an induction evening to meet the staff, look at the Early Years classrooms and learn more about Early Years in our school.
- Parents/carers of children starting school in the Autumn term are invited to visit the classrooms with their child for 1 session over 1 day in the Summer term prior to starting. This may extend into the Autumn term by adding another stay and play for any that have missed the summer session. This is not set and will reflect the needs and range of the cohort.
- At the start of the Autumn term parents/carers meet individually with their child's class teacher to talk about their child.

6.3 During the year

- In the Autumn term parents/ carers are invited to attend workshops about the Early Years curriculum.
- Parent Consultation evenings are held during the Autumn (online) and Spring term (in person).
- Parents/carers receive an annual report, written by the child's class teacher, at the beginning of the Summer term.
- Parents/carers are invited to attend the Early Years Christmas performance.
- Parents/carers are often asked to support the curriculum, e.g. listening to readers, attending school visits.
- Parents/ carers are also encouraged to use their child's Tapestry as a form of communication.
- During the summer term they are invited into a Learning fayre where the children display their learning and perform for the parents giving examples of what they have learnt.
- At the end of the academic year parents/carers receive a report card informing them if they have met their targets for the summer term.

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents/carers.

Parents/carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents/carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents/carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- Discussions about healthy eating and tooth care. The children have access to a healthy snack and milk every day provided by the government and parents/carers are asked to bring a healthy snack every day with a named water bottle.
- Children have access to water at any point during the day.
- Provision and activities which further promote good oral health as well as good health in general.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Governing body Curriculum Committee every year.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parents/carers failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy