



Yarrells School & Nursery

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

Policy Lead (Position (and Initials): **Head of Pre-Prep (TW)**

Date of Last Review: **April 2021**

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This policy was written after discussion within the Early Years department and outlines the purposes, nature, education, learning and development, management and leadership of Early Years' Department at Yarrells School.

The term Early Years is used to describe the children who are in the Little Nutkins (2 – 2.5 years), Nutkins (2.5 -3 years), Squirrels (3 - 4 years) and Reception (4 – 5 years) classes.

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1. Aims and Objectives

At Yarrells Prep-School and Greenwood Nursery we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education. It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being.

The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. All children begin at Yarrells with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of the practitioners working within the EYFS to take on the opportunity of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents and all school staff work effectively together to support children's learning and development.

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to his/her full potential.
- Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child has individual/tailored teaching meeting every child's needs.
- An approach to learning geared to the needs of young children, emphasising first hand experience, play and talk.
- An environment which values contributions from parent, practitioner and child, and which feeds and supports children's learning.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

Our objectives for work with children in their Early Years are:

- The child is at the centre of the decisions about the curriculum.
- The curriculum should reflect the way young children learn, preserving the place of talk, play and first hand experiences.
- We recognise the child's previous learning in identifying the next steps in learning.
- The curriculum for early years is an intentional curriculum which cannot be left to chance.
- We recognise and accept that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) can and should be defined, and we use the seven areas of learning and development and characteristics of learning to define the curriculum for early years.
- The child has the right of access to a planned purposeful curriculum which reflects and meets her/his needs.
- The curriculum is planned to ensure coverage, continuity and progression.
- The role of Early Year's practitioner is highly skilled and complex and requires knowledge of child development and an appropriate curriculum. There is a need for trained, experienced knowledgeable staff.
- Materials and equipment play an important part in the presentation of the curriculum and the learning which develops from activities.
- Children need to be actively involved in their understanding of tasks so that they know what is expected, why, and how this helps their learning. Children learn through playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically.
- Learning happens in a variety of settings including outdoors and indoors, groupings and situations.
- Learning is subject to many influences, some of which are beyond our control such as time, support, home circumstances, society and the media, health and the influences of adults and other children.

An effective early year's curriculum must be based on an identification of the needs of young children in order to ensure accessibility of learning experiences, moving on from the home environment and providing continuity with statutory provision.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

3. Structure of the EYFS

Our EYFS unit is based in our purpose built Pre-Prep eco-friendly Early Years Centre called Greenwood, tucked into a safe and snug corner of our Prep School. The structure of Nursery is:

Nutkins – 2 Year olds

Little Nutkins – 2 ½ Year olds

Squirrels – 3/4 Year olds (the year before starting school).

The children then move into the Reception class.

Organisation

Admission, induction and entry arrangements, including the age of admission and transfer can be found in our Admissions Policy.

Session Times

The children can attend Breakfast Club at 7.30am which is housed in the dining room of the main school building. Greenwood opens at 8am and the children are looked after by EY staff in the Sunshine Room. The school day starts at 8.30 am when the children then go to their classrooms. All children have to be in school by 8:50am. For all of the children within the Nursery the day has 2 sessions. The first sessions finishes at 12.30pm (the morning session includes lunch) and afternoon sessions start at 12.30pm and finishes at 3.30pm. Any children within the Nursery may chose to stay for a full day. Reception day finishes at 3:30pm. Children have a morning snack which is provided by school and as a school we encourage healthy eating. Lunch is provided at additional cost or parents can choose to provide a packed lunch. Children's dietary requirements are displayed in the Greenwood staffroom and the catering team also has a set of dietary cards.

Organisation of classes

Up to 8 children in the Little Nutkins room class ratio 1:4, up to 12 children in the Nutkins room, class ration 1:8 and up to 26 children in the Squirrels class class ratio 1 adult to 13. We have up to 24 children in each Reception class ratio 1 adult to 12.

Classes might be mixed at the end of the Reception year (end of EYFS) before going into Year 1.

All groups are supervised at all times by trained members of staff.

Outdoor Play

The outdoor play space is securely fenced and provides an ideal/safe/purpose build play space where children can develop across all seven areas of learning and development.

All children are encouraged to participate in outdoor and physical activities. Outdoor play is a very important part of children's development. We provide sessions of outdoor play and learning during each day. If it is deemed unsafe for the children to go outside there is opportunity to use the sunshine room.

All of the children within the EY have morning play in the Greenwood garden 10.15 to 10.45 am and lunch play 12.15 to 1.15 pm. If numbers increase in the Nursery then Reception children might go to the Paddock for playtime.

Whole School Activities

The children in EY take part in whole school activities such as Science and Book Days, and various celebrations during the year. The Nutkins, Squirrels and Reception join the Pre-Prep for assemblies on Mondays and Squirrels and Reception children join the whole school for our celebration assemblies on Fridays.

All of the children in the EY have 1 x 30 session a week with the school's music teacher.

Nutkins and Squirrels have 1 x 30 session a week for P.E. with our specialist P.E. staff.

Reception have a 1 x 30 minute tennis lesson with our tennis coach.

Transition and Reception have 1 x 30 sessions a week for French with a specialist teacher.

All of the children in the EY have 1 x 30 dance sessions with the HOD of dance.

In the first half of the Autumn Term and the Summer Term Squirrels and Reception have 1 x 30 swimming session a week with a specialist swimming teacher. This swaps to gymnastics for the rest of the school year.

Staff working within the Early Years Department may request the advice/guidance/help from the following specialist staff: Art and DT, Music, Computing, P.E. and Science.

Transition from Home/another Setting into Nursery

See below for information before and after admission into Yarrells.

- The school requests a report/any other useful information from the children's parents/carers.
- All of the children/parents are invited into school for some settling in sessions.
- The Little Nutkins teachers have a 15 minute meeting with just the parents to welcome them to our Setting and discuss points such as their child's routines, potty training etc.
- In September staff write to all of the children starting in their class. At the beginning of the academic year all parents are invited to attend an information meeting about the year ahead and receive a handout.
- The Reception Teachers and Nursery Leader send home a weekly email.
- Parents are invited to attend celebration mornings that take place throughout the academic year.

Transition from Little Nutkins to Nutkins to Squirrels and Squirrels to Reception

- If a child moves from Little Nutkins to Nutkins during the academic year they have a few settling in sessions. The last 2-3 weeks of the summer term, children visit their new classrooms. This is to prepare them for their move to their new room in the autumn term. We have a whole school moving up morning.
- In the September of the new academic year an evening meeting is arranged for parents and staff to discuss the year ahead. (Handout given out).

- Tapestry data, Early Years records and portfolios are passed to the staff plus other useful records/observations made by the staff during the year.
- A hand-over meeting is arranged with the staff at the end of the academic year to pass on any information to the new teacher.
- If possible there are some teaching assistants who work across Nursery and Reception to help with a smooth transition.

Transition from Reception (Early Years) to Year 1 (Key Stage 1)

- In the summer term Reception children visit their new class and teacher 1-2 times
- In the September of the new academic year an evening meeting is arranged for parents and staff to discuss the year ahead. (Handout given out).
- Early Years Records/ Tapestry data including a copy of each child's profile scores and end of Reception report covering the Characteristics of Learning are passed to the Year 1 teachers.
- A hand-over meeting is arranged with the Reception and Year 1 staff in June. At this meeting staff will report on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three characteristics of learning.
- Year 1 staff visit Reception classes in summer term to see where the children are with their learning

Information for Parents and Opportunities to join in our activities

The following information is provided for parents -

Before admission:

- The school prospectus contains information about Early Years provision.
- All parents are encouraged to visit and have a tour of the school before putting their child's name on the waiting list.
- Children attend a taster session.
- Each parent has a meeting with the head before their child is admitted.
- Photos of the staff are displayed on in Greenwood of staff working with the EY.
- Curriculum planning (theme plans) are displayed on the whiteboards in the Nutkins and Reception classroom.
- Each child is expected to visit their class with their parents once before being left for a session unaccompanied.
- Information on emergency contacts and medical conditions is collected for each child and regularly updated (stored on ISAMs).

After admission:

- Parents are encouraged to share books with their children at home, bring items for the various interest tables and class topics.
- Parents have a log in to their child's Tapestry account. They can see images of their child's work and also upload their own images.
- Parents are encouraged to share their skills and interests with the children at home and at school.
- Daily post are uploaded on The Greenwood Nursery Facebook page.
- Whole school newsletters are circulated to parents weekly.

- Reports are sent home every autumn and summer term.
- Two parents meetings are offered during the school year in autumn term and spring term. Parents can make appointments at other times to discuss their children.
- Parents are sometimes invited to help on school trips.
- The school has an active PTA.

4. Curriculum

Every Child Matters Outcome – ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING.

What will the children be learning and when? How is the curriculum organised? What is the progression of teaching and learning?

Children who attend our EYFS are given excellent opportunities and a head start on their learning journey with access to all of the wonderful facilities at Yarrells. The curriculum fully embraces the EYFS principles as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS.

The seven areas of learning and development and the Early Learning Goals now provide a national framework for individual schools and other pre-school settings in planning, teaching and assessing the early year's curriculum and each child as an individual. They also provide an essential link between the statutory Early Years Foundation (EYFS) and the Key Stage 1(KS1) programme of study. We have adopted these areas of learning and development as the basis for our planning, as they provide a framework which enables us to achieve our aims for our under five provision.

We have amplified the curriculum outlined in the DfE documentation to extend the range of experiences provided and emphasise the first hand nature of the curriculum.

Our curriculum framework covers the educational programmes for the seven areas of learning and development –

PRIME

- Personal and social development –involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.
- Communication and language – development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- Physical development– involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical development, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

SPECIFIC

- Literacy – development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

- Mathematics – involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- Understanding the world – involves guiding the children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- Expressive arts and design- involves enabling children to explore and play with a range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Our curriculum is planned through a series of themes and topics, each of which offer experiences in all seven areas.

Our planning covers themes (over half a term) and core aspects (such as book experience, outside play activities, free exploration of natural materials and opportunities for writing).

Teachers and Early Years Practitioners plan together to provide a linked series of activities over each term, week and day.

Staff ensure that all children are encouraged to experience all areas of learning and development during the week, although they may not experience them each day.

We plan a mixture of adult-led, adult guided, child-initiated and planned purposeful play activities everyday.

We are very fortunate to be able to use not only the facilities of the Prep School but also some of their specialist teachers who teach French, swimming, indoor/outdoor sport, music and gymnastics to the children in the EYFS.

4.1 Planning

Good planning is the key to making children’s learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children can do. We have a highly qualified, specialist and dedicated staff who 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.

Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS will be put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of our children. This enables staff to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning. All practitioners who work within our EYFS are involved in this process. There are planning boards in the Pips classroom and Reception classrooms that all members of staff follow add ideas as well any suggestions by the children. There is also a planning board in the ‘Sunshine Room’ for our outside area. Parents are also encouraged to look at these boards and offer any suggestions.

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

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. We also have access to teachers or teaching assistants from across the whole school that have had specialist training in areas such as speech and language, let's move and ELSA support.

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

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. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

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.

5. Assessment

At Yarrells Prep School and Greenwood Nursery, we undertake assessment for learning. Within the EYFS we use Tapestry an on-line learning journal to share this practice not only with colleagues but also with parents. Tapestry is about capturing the magic of child's early years experience, and recording children's learning in a way that is easy and fun but also secure and private.

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.

When a child joins Nutkins, the 2 year check is carried out with a parent during their first term.

Reporting:

Little Nutkins and Nutkins: staff review their progress and provide parents with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas twice a year in December and July. These 'progress checks' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed. Staff have daily contact with parents and also have a formal parent/teacher consultation twice a year in October and March.

Squirrels and Reception: the parents have a written summary of the child's development across the EYFS in December and July. Staff have daily contact with parents and also have a formal parent/teacher consultation twice a year in October and March.

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
- Exceeding expected levels or,
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers in their final written report. Reception and Year 1 work together to make the transition from EYFS to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible. EYFS profiles and Characteristics of Effective Learning are discussed with KS1 teachers regarding individual needs of children in July.

The Head of Assessment and Head of Pre-Prep also meet termly with the Nursery Leader and Reception teachers to reflect on the on-going assessments on Tapestry to look for any strengths/ weaknesses and to inform future planning, resourcing or training of staff. If any children are showing concerns then the Nursery Leader or Reception Teacher will raise their concerns with the Pre-Prep SENCO at any point during the academic year. A child may be given 'A waves of provision' to identify any additional support given to them within the setting. If a child is exceeding in an area they may be put on the Gifted and Talented register.

6. Working with parents

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

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through observation, assessments and monitoring their individual progress. This creates knowledge, understanding and a concise overview of the child's learning journey. We also encourage parents to come in and talk to the children maybe about their jobs, hobbies etc. linked to our topics.

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 and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate. All staff have daily contact with parents when they drop off/pick up. All children in Pips also have a daily record where staff record details such as food eaten, number of nappy changes etc. Parents can also write notes in these books.

Throughout the year we have celebration mornings where parents are encouraged to stay for the first session of the day. They can follow their children around, get involved in different activities, circle times etc. It is a wonderful occasion for them to get an insight into their child's day at Nursery. Parents are also invited to watch the children in Reception, Transition and Kindergarten take part in a Christmas performance and an end of year concert.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

"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." (DfE, 2014)

At Yarrells School and Greenwood Nursery we provide a welcoming, safe, secure and stimulating environment enabling all children to develop into independent and confident individuals.

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy. All staff who works within the EYFS have pediatric first aid training.

8. Staff development and support

How do we improve our teaching skills and knowledge of how children learn?

Appraisals

The arrangements for appraisals include all staff and is carried out annually according to the programme in the Appraisals Policy (December 2018). It includes a structured discussion and lesson observations for each member of staff, where achievements are recognised, needs for training are identified and targets set for the forthcoming year.

Staff Training, Meetings, Professional Development and Staff Supervision

All staff are involved in 6 INSET days every year. The dates and focus are agreed in advance. Early Years meetings are held once a week.

Whole school staff meetings are held weekly. Early Years' Practitioners have the option to attend these- the Head of Pre-Prep will inform EYP's if they do need to attend. The Lead of Nursery and Reception teachers attend these meetings.

There is a morning briefing once a week at 8.00am . The Lead of Nursery and Reception teachers feed back to EYPs.

Staff have the opportunity to meet the Head of Pre-Prep once a term or more often if required to discuss any issues particularly about individual children's development and well-being and to identify solutions to address issues as they arise and receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness.

An induction programme is provided for all newly qualified and newly appointed staff. This includes support and monitoring by a named member of senior staff, training and opportunities to shadow more experienced members of staff. During induction staff are given the Safeguarding Policy to include Designated Safeguarding lead, Staff conduct and the document KCSIE (2020).

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by our Head of Pre-Prep and Early Years (TW) every year.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board and all staff working within the EY.

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

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according the EYFS statutory framework.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policies
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety and First Aid policies
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety, Fire and Lockdown policies
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection, safeguarding, supervision and uncollected child policies
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy
Procedures for COVID 19	See Covid 19 Policy and Risk Assessment