



DOWNSVIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Originators: Cassy Cristiano and Emma Ricketts

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Downsview Primary School
Biggin Way
Upper Norwood
London
SE19 3XE

Telephone: 020 8764 4611
Email: sec1@downsview.croydon.sch.uk
Webpage: www.downsview.croydon.sch.uk



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life 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.” - Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012

Rationale

At Downsview we believe that all children are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum which is interesting, engaging and provides a range of learning opportunities that help develop children’s life-long love of learning. We strive to meet every child’s entitlement to develop a love of learning that will enable them to have the best possible future life chances.

At Downsview our curriculum is planned to ensure that every child has the opportunity to develop:

- Socially, emotionally, intellectually, physically, spiritually, morally, culturally.
- Positive attitudes, healthy relationships and essential life and work skills.
- The ability to make informed choices, gaining experiences and developing responsibilities for their future.

Aims

It is every child’s right to grow up **safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being**. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these five outcomes.

Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

At Downsview Primary and Nursery School, we aim to:

- Enable all children to reach high standards of attainment.
- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is fully inclusive and sensitive to the needs of each child.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and value their contributions, ensuring that the needs of all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability are met.
- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.
- Develop independent learners who are creative, confident, resilient, empathetic and able to solve problems.

Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Learning and developing – an acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

At Downsview we put these principles into practice by:

Building Positive Relationships

At Downsview Primary and Nursery School we recognise that children learn to be resilient and independent from secure and healthy relationships. Parents/carers are their children's first and most enduring educators and the establishment of effective partnerships with parents/carers is very important to children's development and learning. Parents/carers play a central role during our transition process as they have much to tell us about their children, their strengths, likes and dislikes. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. As such we work with our parents / carers as partners through:

- Holding individual meetings with families in the Summer term as part of the transition process.
- Induction sessions in the summer term where the child familiarise themselves with the learning environment and members of the EYFS team meet with parents.
- Asking parents to complete an admissions pack and all other relevant forms.
- Inviting parents to attend parent / carer workshops, Bring Your Parent to School Days, Celebration assemblies and special events, such as sports day, throughout the year in order to strengthen the home/school partnership and ensure understanding of the key learning in EYFS.
- Autumn and Spring term parent consultation meetings where parents / carers are updated as to the child's progress and next steps. Parents / carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.

Contributions by parents/ carers to their child's learning through 'Proud Clouds'.

-ClassDojo which is used as another method of communication with parents and a way of further informing them as to what is happening within the classroom. Parents are able to use ClassDojo to individually contact teachers.

- A curriculum overview which is sent out on a termly basis, our Home Learning grid is sent out every half-term.

Yearly 'Come dine with me' event whereby an adult from each family is invited into school to have lunch with their child.

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. At our school, the EYFS teachers act as 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the other practitioners.

We have high expectations for our pupils' behaviour and follow the whole school Behaviour Policy (see appendix 1). We develop and review our class rules regularly, which incorporates rights and responsibilities. The school has chosen to adopt 6 core values we actively teach and promote – Diversity, responsibility, trust, love, resilience, and cooperation which are permeated through the school life by staff and governors modeling the values through their own behaviour; the school actively encouraging parents to promote the value (through e.g. newsletters); the discreet teaching of the meaning of the value during RE / PSHE (Jigsaw) lessons and assemblies and the effective use of the Restorative Justice Approach to ensure children have time to reflect about choices they have made and the consequences of their actions.

Acknowledging the Unique Child

Positive early school experiences are crucial as children's attitudes to lifelong learning begin in their first experiences of school life. Children will have a wide range of life experiences, skills and interests when they start school therefore, provision, both indoors and outdoors, is designed to allow children to develop and build upon what they can already do. 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, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as stickers and certificates, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

We support individual learning needs, by using our formative and summative assessments to determine what the children need. Children will, at times, work in special groups' i.e. Fine motor development group. They may also get individual help i.e. speech support.

Providing an Enabling Learning Environment

Our EYFS classrooms are organised to encourage children to explore and learn securely and safely, without fear of failure. We aim to create attractive and stimulating learning environments where children feel confident and challenged. These are set up to provide play contexts which enable children to appreciate the multi-cultural society in which they live and to develop imagination and creative thinking. The reception and nursery classes are zoned to give children a wide variety of learning experiences and both areas and resources are clearly labelled and accessible to all children, this promotes independence and facilitates child-initiated learning. Open-ended challenges, linked to the week's key learning objectives, are planned for and children are encouraged to do each challenge that has been set up.

All the reception classes share the outside learning environment. There are areas where the children can be active or take things more quietly. The Nursery class has its own enclosed outdoor area. Planning incorporates outside learning and challenges are also set. Learning outside builds on similar skills to inside, generally on a 'bigger scale', but also incorporates activities that are only possible in the outside environment.

All Reception Class teachers and LSA's are equally responsible for setting up outside equipment and putting it away. The children are also encouraged to treat their environment with respect and to take responsibility for ensuring that it is kept tidy. There is always adequate staffing outside, though the number of adults depends upon numbers of children choosing to use the area. .

All staff in EYFS have the relevant qualifications and skills to fulfil their role. Staff levels comply with statutory guidance and meet the needs of the children. In Nursery, there is at least one member of staff for every 13 children, one member of staff is a qualified teacher and one member of staff hold a relevant level 3 qualification • In Reception, class sizes are limited to 30 children. Classes are led by a qualified teacher and supported by staff with suitable qualifications.

Promoting outstanding Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas."

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, Social and Emotional development.

The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive Arts and Design

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. In Reception, children will have specific teaching targeted at their own level of learning in phonics and maths, and in other areas in the form of interventions and focused groups. If appropriate, children will be placed in fluid groups which are regularly reviewed to ensure that activities are being pitched at the right level for all children. We aim to ensure all pupils have opportunities to develop and demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning.

Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Persevering
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things
- Problem-solving

Play is used as an essential part of children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play and by taking part in play, which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children and activities led or guided by adults. This is done by practitioners deciding when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

Assessment and record keeping

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs. All staff who work in the Foundation Stage are involved in this process. Initially we use the information received during transition and our 'on entry' observation based assessments to identify next steps and children who need additional support or challenge. In addition to our own assessments, we are required to carry out the National Standards and Testing agency within the first six weeks of each child's entry into reception.

The planning within the EYFS is based around the children's interests. These plans are used by the EYFS team as a guide for weekly planning. However, we may alter these in response to the needs of the children. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of long, short and recorded observations and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded and used to inform next steps for learning development and planning. Each child has their own Learning folder and this is where key observations, work and photos are kept. Parents/carers are encouraged to share their child's learning during 'Bring your parent/carer to school days' and are also given the opportunity to meet with the Foundation Stage Team each term and, at the end of the third term, we provide a written summary in relation to the children's early learning goals and their characteristics as a learner.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Children with special educational needs will be supported, as appropriate, to enable them to access the curriculum fully and become independent learners. This includes children that are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Individual Education Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, commensurate with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. The school's SENCO is responsible for providing additional information and advice to staff and parents and for arranging external intervention and support as necessary.

There are many languages spoken in our school. We place a very high value on linguistic and culture diversity and provide children with opportunities to both use their home language and draw on their cultural experiences in their play and learning. We understand that children learning a new language spend a long time listening before speaking and so use a variety of methods to support this through the use of gesture, visual cues, widget symbols, signs, facial expression and a wide range of other resources. Learning opportunities are planned that help develop speaking and listening and bi-lingual support is targeted to help extend vocabulary and develop understanding of new concepts.

In line with the school's Equalities Policy, we will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, with equal access to all aspects of

school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes. In Early Years we ensure that all children have equal access to experiences.

Admission and transition to Foundation Stage

Nursery:

Children can apply to the school for a Nursery place and can join the Nursery Class in the year they turn four. All children are entitled to a 15 hour funded place, this is normally either 5 mornings or 5 afternoons a week. Some children are given funding for 30 hours – further information in terms of criteria and eligibility can be found at: www.gov.uk/30-free-childcare. Places are allocated using Croydon's admissions criteria and taking parental preferences into consideration as far as possible. Parents will be able to pay for extra sessions subject to availability.

An individual school – family meeting is held in the summer term, usually at the child's home and then an afternoon play session takes place also in the summer term. Additional 'stay and play' sessions are also offered, on an individual basis, if parents / carers feel that this would be beneficial. Children starting in Nursery will transition on a part-time basis in order to ensure that they feel safe and secure in the environment. The length of transition is decided on an individual basis in agreement with Nursery staff and parents / carers.

Reception:

Parents must make a new application to the Local Authority for admittance to the Reception. Once they have been given a place by the Local Authority, children will be allocated to classes ensuring there is a balance of gender, term of birth, EAL, SEN and friendship groups for those transferring from nursery and based on information given by parents or carers.

We appreciate that the transition from nursery to school can be a daunting experience for many children and bring with it many changes and challenges. As such, we aim to make this experience as easy as possible by including everyone involved; children, parents/carers and Nursery staff. We begin by holding individual new parent/carer meetings in the summer term, where there is an opportunity to meet the teachers, ask questions, talk through any concerns and discuss the transition into Reception. This is normally a home visit so that the staff can meet each child for the first time in a familiar environment. Induction sessions in July are then held; the child familiarise themselves with the learning environment and members of the EYFS team meet with parents. We liaise with as many prior settings as possible and visit children, where appropriate, to ensure a smooth transition. At the beginning of the Autumn term, the children start school on a part-time basis as this enables staff and children to form positive relationships and ensures staff are able to start carrying out accurate 'on entry' observations. This period is very short, and normally just over the first week, but if any children are finding the transition from nursery to school difficult, for whatever reason, they may continue to attend part time until such time as they are able to cope with a full day at school. We will provide them with any additional support needed and work closely with parents/carers during this time to slowly extend the period of time spent at school, until they are able to comfortably attend school on a full time basis. We acknowledge that parents have the right to request a part-time timetable for their child until the term after their fifth birthday. We will liaise with parents to agree arrangements that are in the best possible interest of the child – these will be set for the half-term and then reviewed and adapted if needed.

Policy on Placement of Twins in Reception:

At Downsview, we recognise the unique circumstances presented by twins entering reception, and we are committed to providing a supportive learning environment that meets the individual needs of each child. Our policy regarding the placement of twins is as follows:

Once the children are on roll, parents of twins can request a meeting to discuss their preferences for the placement of their children with the EYFS lead. We value parental input and strive to accommodate parental wishes to the extent possible while considering the best interests of the children and the overall learning environment.

Educational Assessment: Prior to finalising placement decisions, our teaching staff conducts an assessment of each twin's individual needs, including academic abilities, social skills, and any special educational needs (SEN) or accommodations required. This assessment informs the placement process to ensure that each child is appropriately supported in their learning journey.

We carefully consider the impact of placing twins together or apart on the overall classroom dynamics, including peer relationships, classroom management, and opportunities for social interaction and independent learning. Our goal is to create a balanced and inclusive learning environment that promotes the well-being and development of all students.

Our experienced teaching staff provide valuable input based on their observations of the twins' interactions, academic progress, and social behaviour. Teachers play a key role in the placement decision-making process, offering insights into the individual needs and dynamics of each twin.

While recognising the strong bond between twins, we also emphasise the importance of fostering independence and social development in all students. Depending on the circumstances, twins may be placed in separate classes to encourage individual growth, diverse peer relationships, and opportunities for independent learning and social interaction.

We maintain open communication with parents throughout the placement process and encourage ongoing dialogue to address any concerns or adjustments that may be needed. Additionally, we regularly review the placement of twins to ensure that it continues to meet the evolving needs of the children and the school community.

We are committed to providing a supportive and inclusive learning environment that recognizes and respects the unique circumstances of twins. Our placement policies are designed to promote the academic, social, and emotional well-being of all students while honouring the preferences and individuality of each child.

Transition to Year One:

At the beginning of the year children have time to adapt to a new setting when coming from Nursery to Reception. In the same way this process is repeated at the end of Reception with the transition to Year One. Towards the end of the summer term, children meet their new class teacher and spend time in their new classrooms. Year One staff will also come into Reception and spend time with the children in their own setting. Reception and Year One teachers meet, the summer term, in the second half of the summer term for a detailed handover during which they discuss children's achievement, progress and needs on an individual basis. Year group and individual provision maps will be reviewed and new ones agreed by both teams. In Year One, classrooms are organised in a very similar way to EYFS ensuring consistency for children. There is a very gradual transition to more structured learning during the summer term.

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Management Policy, medical and managing conditions policy, First aid policy, Health and safety Policy, SEND Policy, Equalities Policy, Attendance policy, and other curriculum policies which are relevant to the EYFS.

Early Years

Whilst our Early Years classes follow the principles of the school's behaviour policy, they use an adapted version of the procedures and a visual display- Ready to Learn Chart:

- A rainbow, sun and reflection cloud are used and all children start each day on the sun. The chart is fluid and children might move across the chart over the course of a day.
- If a child is seen consistently making the right choices and modelling expected behaviour then they continue to remain on the sun. They will receive verbal praise, Dojo points and stickers.
- Moving to the rainbow is recognition of behaviour beyond what is expected for their age, it could also be where a child has made significant effort in something they have found challenging. It is at the teacher's discretion but we try to recognise children over the year for always trying their best. If they are on the rainbow at the end of the day they are given a special rainbow sticker.
- Each term our Reception children are also aiming for a Platinum award which is recognition of their impeccable behaviour over a period of time. See page 4 and appendix 2 for more information.
- If a child makes a wrong choice, they are given a verbal warning, which makes clear what the wrong behaviour is and some strategies as to how they can change this. If this continues, they are moved to the reflection cloud.
- When their name is moved to the cloud, it comes with a conversation where it is explained to them in a restorative manner, and in a safe and gentle space, that their choices are not helping their learning, and they are then encouraged to make better choices. We try to 'notice the children being good', and once the teacher can see they are making the effort to make good choices, their name is moved back to the sun, to visually represent and acknowledge the positive choices they are now making.
- If it is deemed necessary, any child on the cloud may need thinking time in their classroom, using a timer.
- If a child continues to make wrong choices and is disrupting the learning of others, then they may need to be removed from the classroom/situation to have reflection time with another adult. As part of this reflection, it might be appropriate for the child to think of ways they could make amends which may include them apologising either verbally or in the form of a card.
- All children are given the opportunity to adjust their behaviour with support from the adults.

Beyond the reflection cloud, it might be necessary to remove a child from the classroom or situation if the behaviour incident is deemed severe enough to do so, e.g. they have or intended to cause harm to somebody else. This will be at the discretion of the adult. The school will inform the child's parents of this incident.

Where there are persistent wrong choices being made, members of the EYFS team will meet with parents to agree a way forward, this may include an individual, positive behaviour plan.

