DDAT
Derby Diocesan Academy Trust

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy ASI

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		• Renamed deputy EYFS lead		
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This policy has been prepared in accordance with the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage that applies from January 2024. This policy should be read together with the Statutory framework.

The framework sets the standards for promoting the learning, development and safety of children from birth to five years in Ofsted registered settings and therefore covers all settings in the Derby Diocesan Academy Trust providing education for children five years and under. School leaders within our Trust champion the early years within their setting.

Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy 2024/2025

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- All children access a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the requirements of the Statutory Framework.
- It gives them a strong foundation for learning and the knowledge and skills that they need to make at least good progress throughout their school and life.
- All children within our EYFS are kept healthy and safe and receive the highest quality of care.
- Our settings ensure that children receive a happy, enjoyable and motivating experience that develops their independence, confidence, social skills and resilience**.**
- All early year's providers have a clear understanding of the standards expected to ensure that children learn and develop well.
- A close working relationship between staff, parents and/or carers is developed.
- All children are included and thoroughly supported through equality of opportunity.
- Our work underpins the mission, vision and values of our Trust.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from January 2024 and should be read in conjunction with the statutory framework.

The EYFS Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Accessibility Policy.
- Admissions policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy.
- Suspension and exclusions policy
- Administering Medications Policy.
- Complaints Policy.

3. Principles into practice

Four guiding principles shape practice in our early years settings:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- An acknowledgement that children develop and learn at different rates.

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum based on the EYFS Framework across the prescribed seven areas of learning, using play as the basis for this learning.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discrimination practice.
- Provide early interventions for those children who require additional support.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers.
- Work in partnership with key professionals.
- Plan stimulating and challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment.
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment both indoors and out.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are both adult-initiated as well as child-initiated, supported by the adult where appropriate.
- Provide deliberate practice so that our children master and use new vocabulary.
- Have a key person approach to develop close relationships with individual children.

4. Structure of the EYFS

At All Saints CE Infant school our EYFS provision includes:

- A 60-place provision for Reception aged children. This consists of 2 class(es).

Reception timings align with the Infant school and can be found online: www.allsaintsfed.derbyshire.sch.uk/school-day-3/

5. Curriculum

Our Early Years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from January 2024.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn from 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.

All providers are clear of the school's carefully designed curriculum and what the children must know, with a clear emphasis on communication, language and literacy and personal and social education. This is purposeful to address the vocabulary gap that many children have on entry and they often lack in social interaction. Knowledge is planned and developed over time through a progressive and specifically sequenced curriculum which underpins what will be learnt in Year 1.

6. Planning

The EYFS at DDAT provides a safe, happy, caring and stimulating environment for children which is well organised and allows them to build upon what they already know and can do. The curriculum within the school is carefully crafted to progressively build through deliberately planned activities to sequence the knowledge being taught. 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. The balance shifts to a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children move through the early years and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Staff also consider the individual needs, interests and stages 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. Staff always endeavour to adapt planning for the needs of the individuals.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

- Active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

7. 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 and quality conversations. Staff ensure that the most important aspects of a child's development is addressed throughout these interactions. Where needed, over teaching is provided to ensure that knowledge is embedded and understood. Our outdoor provision mirrors the opportunities available to the children inside offering a mix of adult-led and child-initiated learning.

All children are taught by a qualified Teacher with the support of suitably qualified Teaching Assistants. Across EYFS children may, at some points be supported by student Teachers or staff completing EYFS specific qualifications.

Within EYFS, children will encounter new experiences in order to extend their skills, develop their confidence and build on what they already know. Children will be encouraged through interaction and modelling to deepen their understanding by playing, observing, talking, planning, questioning, experimenting, respecting, reflecting and responding to adults and each other. Play will be a key factor in our daily activities. Well planned play and deepening of understanding through adult questioning will enable the children to learn within the environment and provide challenge throughout the foundation stage.

Throughout the year when children across the EYFS take part in child-initiated learning, they can choose to access provision across many different areas of the EYFS to help them become more familiar with the different learning environments. Children also get the opportunity to work closely with adults across the phase, so relationships are formed as they move though the different year groups.

A daily systematic synthetic phonic session is taught within Early Years. The youngest children build from a focus on listening to sounds within their environment to learning key phonemes and graphemes following the selected scheme. Children are well prepared for their phonic check at the end of Year 1. Shared reading is integral to the EYFS curriculum with core texts selected and used to enhance the curriculum and to develop the children's vocabulary as well as a love of quality texts. Children also follow the DDAT writing framework and assessment which focuses on the physical development of the children as well as mark making and grapheme letter formation. Children also learn the foundations for number, shape and time in relation to their chosen scheme of work.

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.

8. Assessment

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interest and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also consider observations shared by parents and/or carers. This information is used to capture and evidence each child's learning journey and inform the next steps for each child. Our staff act upon information that they gather quickly, to engage all children with the curriculum and prevent gaps from developing. These activities do not take staff away from interaction with the children or involve excessive paperwork. Staff are proactive and work with parents and carers to address any misconceptions and gaps in knowledge.

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

At the end of EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the seventeen 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/carers for their child. The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other schools within the Trust, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. There is an expectation of settings to be part of the internal process for moderation at school and Trust level to ensure practitioners are confident that assessments are accurate and robust.

EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Assessment is an essential part of transition to Year 1 and is shared with colleagues.

9. Working with parents and carers

Within DDAT we are committed to ensuring that a high-quality early years experience is in place for each child. Critical to this is ensuring that a child's social, emotional and educational needs are addressed appropriately. Children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between EYFS staff and parents/carers. This begins with effective transitional arrangements into the school, which is recognised as a process that is carefully planned with parents,

children, and practitioners of the pre-school settings that the children of DDAT Academies attend.

At DDAT we also recognise that parents are the children's first and most enduring educators and that when parents and practitioners work together the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning.

We encourage parent partnership through:

- Showing respect and understanding for the role of the parent in the child's education
- Listening to accounts of their child's development and any concerns they may have
- Making parents feel welcome by being friendly, approachable, and having an open-door policy
- Maintaining an on-going dialogue
- Being flexible in arrangements for settling children in
- Meeting with parents of Reception children regularly to discuss progress
- Inviting parents in to share their child's Learning Journal and see a range of work
- Encouraging parents to make use of the home/school communication book which is looked at daily by an EYFS staff member
- Inviting parents into the school to share their specialised skills, inluding in areas such as phonics and oracy.
- Inviting parents to accompany staff on trips.

10. Transition into the school setting

Parents apply for their selected school directly via the local authority.

Prior to any child being welcomed into our setting, a visit will be made to their current pre-school setting.

The visit will give the staff the opportunity to meet parents/carers and the child in their own familiar and secure surroundings. If home visits are not possible, arrangements will be made for the family to meet in school. Meetings will be used, not only to get to know the parent/carer and child, but additionally to explain routines, times etc. and to answer any questions that may be asked of the setting. They will enable staff to interact with the child and provide them with a reference point for the formal start of their provision in.

Each child is assigned a key person within all the EYFS provision. Their role is to help the child become familiar with the setting and offers security and a settled relationship for the child. The key person helps to ensure that the child's 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 and builds a relationship with

the parents. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

Parents/carers are regularly kept up to date with their child's progress and development and the EYFS profile helps to provide parents/carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. Open evenings are held for parents/carers children during their time in Reception. Parents/carers are actively encouraged to keep their child's teacher updated with the achievements their child makes at home.

11. Transition to Year 1

Transitions are carefully planned, and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At the transition point, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish partnerships with parents/carers and those involved with the child, including those from other settings, e.g. health professionals.

In the final term in Reception, the Year 1 teacher(s) will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher(s) to plan effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children. Our curriculum in Year 1 is carefully planned to build upon the knowledge gained in the Reception year so that the children bu8ild upon what they know, remember and can do.

12. Inclusion

The Trust is determined to meet the educational needs of all our children, to encourage independence and full participation in the life of the school. A number of children will, at some stage of their school career, experience some degree of special educational need. Working within the guidelines of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice, it is our intention that the educational needs of all pupils are identified, and provision made to meet these as early as possible. All relevant information concerning children with special educational needs will be treated with the appropriate respect and confidentiality. We value all our children as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child support that they need and in doing so we work closely with parents/carers and outside agencies.

Further information relating to the Trust's SEND provision, which is applicable to all educational phases can be found https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AkWVKSwOP5s0mDbWpwFH1mX0oM4uJEMp/edit

13. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. Pro-active and dynamic risk assessments are completed by the member of EYFS staff and safe staffing ratios, PFA and other qualifications as detailed in the EYFS framework, are maintained. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risk. We adhere to the Trust Policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety. We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food and snacks, and following set procedures when the children become ill, have an accident or require the administration of prescribed medication. Outside agencies are actively encouraged to support the health and welfare of the children in EYFS through working closely with the school's pastoral team. Behaviours of children are managed in an appropriate way, in liaison with external agencies as required. Physical intervention will be used in exceptional cases and will be administered by trained staff.

The school promotes good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years within the planned curriculum and by talking to children and families about:

- The effect of eating too many sweet things.
- The importance of brushing your teeth.

We introduce supervised tooth brushing, by following statutory guidance for safety around supervised tooth brushing.

Detailed safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in the policies detailed at the beginning of this document.

14. Quality Assurance

The Trust provides termly offer of training and moderation with a Lead Practitioner from the Early Years Hub. Training is therefore relevant and up to date and grounded in research. Moderation takes place termly to validate judgements of practitioners and to ensure consistency across the Trust.

SSIOs work closely with the schools via collaboration and support and undertake regular audits to assess quality. Success is celebrated and improvements are recognised and followed up. Such opportunities allow for the sharing of expertise, examples of exceptional provision and good practice.

15. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Executive Team annually and the policy will be approved by the Education and Standards committee.