



**Downsway
Primary
School**

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their year in Foundation Stage. At Downsway Primary School, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they turn five. Children enter our school with a variety of pre-school experiences and we value highly our partnership with parents/carers and pre-school settings to enable us to build on children's previous learning.

The EYFS prepares children with the skills, enthusiasm and independence to learn as they progress throughout the school. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of their time in Foundation Stage and we aim to continually develop our provision to ensure that every child is given the opportunity to meet these goals.

Our provision is based on the four themes and principles from the EYFS which are:

- **A Unique Child** – Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** – Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.
- **Enabling Environments** – The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.
- **Learning and Development** – Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

Aims and Objectives

At Downsway Primary School, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- 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 and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents/carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.
- Ensure a smooth transition into Foundation Stage as well as from Foundation Stage to Key Stage One.

The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents/carers.

Transition to School

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily. Our transition programme includes;

- **Transition Visits** - We have two transition opportunities where children starting our Foundation stage visits Downsway in a small group. During these visits, the children are paired with a current foundation stage child and spends the afternoon getting to know the environment and adults in the classroom, as well as becoming familiar with their new school surroundings.
- **Changeover Morning** - Changeover morning is the first time all the Foundation Stage pupils come together as a whole class. The children have a morning of activities and gets to know other children and adults further.
- **New Parents/Carers Picnic** - After change over morning we invite parents/carers to bring a picnic lunch to share with their child, in the school grounds, together with the staff from the Foundation Stage.
- **New Parents/Carers Information Evening** – Parents/carers are invited to attend the information evening, where they have an opportunity to meet the Foundation Stage teacher. The session covers the expectations of starting school and our Foundation stage routines etc.
- **Foundation Stage Garden Visits** - At the beginning of the September term, we hold visits to the Foundation Stage garden. These visits happen shortly before the children start at school, after the summer holidays. Garden visits are a chance for the children to visit the Foundation Stage outdoor area with their parents. They enable the children and their parents to meet the class teacher again and ask any questions.
- **Staggered September Start** - To ensure that we can address each child's individual needs and to ensure that we get to know all child during their first week at school, we have a staggered start over the first few weeks.

Planning and Organisation

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning and it is through these areas that our planning is approached. None of these areas can be taught in isolation from each other. Our planning is therefore cross-curricular and all areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. These seven areas are separated into prime and more specific areas. The prime areas are as follows:

Prime Areas of Learning:

- PSED – Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- C&L – Communication and Language
- PD – Physical Development

These prime areas are those most essential for the children's healthy development and future learning. The prime areas will then help the children develop skills in the following specific areas:

Specific Areas of Learning:

- M – Mathematics
- L - Literacy
- UW - Understanding of the World
- EAD – Expressive Art and Design

In Foundation Stage, planning is an on-going process to ensure children's current interests, needs and abilities are considered and planned for. Weekly planning includes opportunities for independent, child initiated learning and adult led activities. These plans are shared with all staff members within Foundation Stage to enable them to become familiar with the tasks available to the children and to provide the necessary support to extend their learning. Observations are considered during planning sessions to ensure activities and objectives are relevant and interesting to the children.

Cross-curricular links

Cross-curricular links are embedded in the planning, teaching and learning within Foundation Stage.

Information and Communication Technology

The use of ICT and the teaching of ICT should enhance, develop and support pupils' learning within the Foundation Stage.

Homework

Appropriate homework will be set by the class teacher to enhance and develop children's learning.

Equal Opportunities and Special Needs

Every pupil will be given equal opportunity to follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS) irrespective of their ethnic or linguistic background, gender, disability or religious beliefs.

Children with Special Educational Needs will have full access to the Foundation Stage curriculum. Those identified as most able, will be given opportunities to develop their skills. This may be through differentiated activities, opportunities for problem solving, research activities, higher order questioning or more open-ended tasks.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment, record keeping and marking will be carried out according to the school's policies. In alignment with the EYFS, observations will be made of the children during both adult led and child initiated activities and used as evidence to monitor the progress and learning needs of each individual child. Observations made of the children at home along with examples of work and photos will also be included.

Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's profiles.

All observations and a selection of significant work will be collected in each child's 'Learning Journey'. This portfolio is shared with parents/carers at our parent-teacher meetings and is also sent home with a school report at the end of the year. Each child's progress is recorded and monitored against the development matters, and early learning goals, at the end of the academic year. Using the evidence collected and our own judgements, the age band that the children have achieved are selected. This data entry occurs on a termly basis. All members of staff in our Foundation Stage are involved in making observations of the children.

Monitoring

The monitoring of the Foundation Stage will take the form of classroom observations, monitoring of planning, work sampling, learning walks and monitoring of the classroom environment.

Safety, including safeguarding and welfare requirements

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount at Downsway Primary School. We have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure their safety.

In Foundation Stage we provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to take risks, follow rules and stay safe. We comply with the welfare requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and understand that we must:

- Promote the welfare of all children;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately;
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the environment is safe and all equipment and furniture is fit for purpose;
- Ensure all children have a challenging and enjoyable learning experience.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, access to water throughout the day, allocating significant time for physical development and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Staff and visitors are prohibited from using their mobile phones in our classrooms, only the class iPads are used to photograph children (for observations and assessment purposes) and children must be appropriately dressed in photographs.

Downsway Primary School has robust systems in place to ensure that all practitioners who have regular contact with children are suitable for their role.

The EYFS staff hold the Paediatric First aid qualification, which is a statutory requirement of the EYFS.