



# **EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY**

**POLICY AGREED: SPRING TERM 2022 BY FULL GOVERNING BOARD**

**POLICY TO BE REVIEWED: SPRING TERM 2024**

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this policy document is to summarise the key features of the Early Years Foundation Stage in Dee Banks School.

*'Every child should be supported individually to make progress at their own pace and children who need extra support to fulfil their potential should receive special consideration.'*  
DES 2014

The nature of our EYFS delivery at Dee Banks is to provide for such individual needs as well as deliver a stimulating environment in which a young child's sensory, physical, creative, intellectual and play skills can be developed. It is also seen as fundamental in providing a complete profile of the child by liaison with parents and other professionals to obtain an accurate 'picture' of the child's abilities on which to base individual educational programmes which will provide the basis for all future planning.

## **Access and Entitlement**

Young pupils of Dee Banks are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum. The activities will be presented in a context suitable to the pupil's age and ability and they will be planned to ensure that all the areas are covered to support a rounded approach to their development. Early Years at Dee Banks is a department which encompasses classes who follow the EYFS curriculum and elements of the Semi-Formal Curriculum Model dependent on the child's age and ability. (See Semi-Formal Curriculum Policy.) All children will have the opportunity to develop in the areas outlined in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage.

Prime areas include:

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

Specific areas include:

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

## **Methodology**

We will follow the four guiding principles that help shape excellent practise which include:

- That 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, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.



Our children are encouraged to play and explore their environment in order to develop their levels of engagement. Children with Severe Learning Difficulties can find it difficult to learn incidentally and to initiate activities that will lead to learning opportunities. Children with Autism can be very restricted in the range of activities that they will expose themselves to independently. It is because of these factors that the implementation of the curriculum is more structured and prescriptive than with mainstream EYFS children. There are as many opportunities as possible for free play, but the pupils will need to be encouraged to explore the setting to attempt new activities and taught how to use certain apparatus. Child initiated activities are fewer but are consequently celebrated more.

### **Curriculum Overview**

Activities are planned and guided reflecting on 'The Characteristics of Effective Learning'.

These are:-

- 'Playing and exploring' - children can experience and investigate things and 'have a go'.
- 'Active learning' – children can demonstrate persistence and 'keep on trying' if they run into difficulties. They can also celebrate achievements.
- 'Creating and Thinking Critically' – children have their own ideas, can develop them and make links between ideas.

The areas of learning and development consist of **three prime areas** and **four specific areas**. The prime areas are 'crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning'. **The prime areas are:-**

**Communication and language development** involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves whether that be orally, use of tone, gesture, sign, symbols or body language; and to use the range of methods to communicate and listen in a range of situations. At Dee Banks we use a holistic approach to this area using all the different techniques to extend the ability of those who have severe and complex difficulties and who may only have non-verbal means of communication; for those who have limited verbal communication, gesture, Makaton signs and PECS are used to aid expression and reinforce understanding.

**Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be aware of their bodies and be encouraged to be as active and interactive as possible; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement in a progressive way. Access to swimming, Rebound Therapy, Sensory Circuits and Tumble Tots are important elements in helping ensure our children are as active as possible. Where possible, children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity.

**Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves and in some cases to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; express them in acceptable ways; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities. A focus will be on children learning to play and for some, initiating play with others. Children will be encouraged in independence, dressing and hygiene skills.

The specific areas are also important areas of development in which 'the three prime areas are strengthened and applied'. **The specific areas are:-**

**Literacy development** involves encouraging children to show interest in books and rhymes, to look at books independently and to listen and join in with stories. For some it will involve mark making through a wide range of mixed media, sometimes distinguishing between the different marks they make and even extending to using clearly identifiable letters. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, cause and effect books, information books) to ignite their interest. Children will experience, listen and respond to stories, songs and nursery/action rhymes.

**Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their experience and awareness of number names through their enjoyment of sensory and messy play, action and number rhymes and developing number language. For some, it will involve beginning to identify numbers, ordering and categorising objects, ordering numbers and showing interest in numerals in the environment. Children will also be able to experience and develop their awareness of daily routines through a sequence of actions and time based events. Children will experience and explore shape, space and measure.

**Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe, experience and find out about people, places, technology and the environment. Educational visits into the local community are an integral part of allowing children to experience and explore their local environment and to become familiar with features in the environment.

**Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing and developing their thoughts, ideas, curiosity, imaginations and creativity and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

### **Assessment**

A detailed assessment of a new pupil is undertaken to provide a baseline using EYFS Early Learning Goals Indicators to establish the developmental level of a pupil, their level within Routes for learning for children with Profound Multiple Learning Difficulties and their placing within the EYFS. Objectives and targets will be taken from the children's EHCP and together with information gathered from the aforementioned assessments they will be used as a basis of their Personalised Learning Intention Map (PLIM). The Early Years curriculum at Dee Banks is assessed using PLIMS, EFL (Evidence For Learning), MAPP and external moderation for progress within EYFS. Please see separate Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy. The EHCP is reviewed annually and a full report is made on the pupil's progress is written every year. The Speech and Language therapists, Physiotherapist and the Occupational Therapist will do their own assessments which play a part in the Annual Review.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All activities are available for all the children whatever their gender, ethnicity, culture, religion or ability. Our curriculum will allow the children to experience stories, poetry, music, art and cultural celebrations from a wide and varied range of different cultures.

### **Intimate Care & Administering of medications**

Please refer to Dee Banks policy on these two areas for a complete overview.

## **Health and Safety**

Please refer to Dee Banks policy on Health and Safety for a complete overview.

## **Admissions**

Admissions are guided by County who places pupils after they have been through the EHCP process and only very occasionally before this if complete and the needs of the child dictate urgency.

## **Involvement of Parents and Carers**

Parents, families and carers are encouraged to visit the school before the child starts and at the initial meeting the admission procedures are explained, a prospectus given, a tour of the school, a meeting of possible staff who will work with the child and an opportunity to ask any questions they may have. If possible, the child may spend time both with and without parents before their official admittance. Most of the children who come to school do so on transport provided by the LA so school will work hard to ensure both parents and carers feel involved in their child's education. Questionnaires are given out to provide information about their child's likes and dislikes, routines, important people in their lives and favourite things so that the staff have a detailed background knowledge of the child. Home/School books are completed and sent home each day as a way of keeping in touch with parents and carers on a daily and weekly basis. EFL is updated regularly so that parents can see their child's progress and learning journey. PLIMS, timetables, permission slips for trips out and swimming are regularly updated. Parents are encouraged to provide on-going updates on EFL about achievements at home to allow us to see a true picture about what their child has achieved improvements and changes. Dee Banks runs an open-door policy and throughout the year parent's evenings, assemblies, plays and coffee mornings allow opportunities for visits to school. A regular Parent group is held to discuss issues with are important and allow sharing of information.