



**Ivingswood Academy
Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

October 2023

Approved by LAC October 2023.

To be reviewed October 2026

1 Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

“The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years’ providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children’s ‘school readiness’ and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.”

(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2017)

The Early Years Foundation Stage at Ivingswood Academy applies to children from the age of two to the end of Reception year. In our school, all children move to the Reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child’s fifth birthday.) Key Stage 1 starts at the beginning of Year 1. The Early Years Foundation Stage is fundamental in preparing children for education and we recognise it as a crucial stage in preparing children with the basic skills that they will need for their later school years. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children joining our school may have already learnt a great deal. Some have been to one of a range of settings that exist within our community. 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 activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- it provides a rich and stimulating environment accessible for all.

2 Aims of the Foundation Stage

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At Ivingswood Academy, 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 celebration and rewards to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Positive Relationships

At Ivingswood Academy, we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from developing secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Enabling Environments

At Ivingswood Academy, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classrooms and outside areas are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. Classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to source equipment and resources they need independently

The curriculum of the Early Years Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development;
- Physical Development;
- Communication and Language;
- Literacy;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design.

We aim to deliver all the areas of learning through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

3 Teaching and Learning Style

The features of good practice in our school that relate to the Early Years Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how young children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through

- observations, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- the regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

4 Play in the Foundation Stage

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas while learn how to regulate themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

5 Inclusion in the Foundation Stage

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that our children have the best opportunity to meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of all children including children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary. This may involve referral to external agencies.

6 Behaviour in the Foundation Stage

An effective behaviour and behaviour management policy is one that has high expectations and supports children in developing self-discipline and a positive self-image. Self-esteem affects all thinking and behaviour and we believe that this impacts on learning and performance. We aim to provide positive experiences and reward good behaviour. By reinforcing good behaviour, we

provide role models and emphasise our high expectations and encourage achievement. Our School Values and School Rules reflect our approach:

School Values:

- Respect
- Aspire
- Integrity
- Nurture

School Rules:

- Be Ready
- Be Respectful
- Be Safe

Examples of strategies we use to support promoting positive behaviour are:

- Regular weekly circle times that are timetabled as part of PSED/PSHCE
- Our PSED/PSHCE programme
- Values displayed in each classroom and regularly referred to
- Carefully challenging unacceptable behaviour
- Stop, Think, Make a good choice
- Celebrating positive behaviour, effort and achievement
- Stickers and certificates
- Regular meetings with parents
- Individual behaviour charts, as needed
- Marbles in a jar, Raffle Tickets, Happy faces

Rewards and Sanctions

We reward positive behaviour in the following ways:

- Verbal praise, e.g. 'Well done for...'/ 'I like that because...'
- Establishing individual schemes that reward positive attitudes in work and behaviour e.g. smiley faces, stickers, stamps, positive written comments etc.
- Sharing achievement with another teacher and class
- Establishing class schemes that foster respect for others and valuing team work e.g. star table, super tidying, 'I am helpful'/kind' stickers, 'Star worker', 'Super listener' stars etc.
- Praising positive behaviour through our observations

Sanctions we use when dealing with poor and unacceptable behaviour may include:

- Making our disapproval obvious through facial expressions and gestures
- Talking to children and listening to their explanation
- Moving their name on the behaviour chart to highlight warning
- 'Thinking chair' or 'Time Out'
- Withdrawal of privileges such as part of playtime or part of lunch time
- Sending pupils to another class for a 'cool off' time; sending pupils to a member of SLT
- Drawing up Individual Behaviour Plans

We must ensure that in dealing with such behaviour we use appropriate sanctions which are age appropriate, immediate, fair and consistent. We make clear why the sanction is being applied and what change in behaviour is required to avoid future punishments. We try to avoid group sanctions as they can breed resentment. We are also mindful that it is the behaviour rather than the child that is being punished i.e. 'Your behaviour is ...'. We also believe that we must apply a sense of proportion to all situations and that the sanction is appropriate to the offence.

7 The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage in our school reflects the areas of learning identified in the Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

Our Early Years Curriculum is based on the revised EYFS and is planned to lead smoothly into the National Curriculum at KS 1 in a way which is relevant and meaningful for all children. It is structured into a 2-year cycle of topics in Nursery and a one year cycle in Reception. The EYFS curriculum stresses the importance of the child's personal, emotional and social development, the role of physical development and emphasises that early literacy and numeracy lay the foundation for the future learning of all children. The EYFS framework is organised into seven areas of learning and development, all of which are interdependent and of equal importance.

Three Prime Areas of Learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development;
- Communication & Language;
- Physical Development;
-

Four Specific Areas of Learning:

- Literacy;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding the World;
- Expressive Arts and Design;

At Ivingswood Academy we are working towards children achieving the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. Development Matters age-related bands (Unique Child) help staff identify children's developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes as they make progress towards the early learning goals, throughout the foundation stage. We use the Development Matters seven key features of effective practise when planning our provision to support learning and development across all seven areas of learning and development. We reflect on Characteristics of Effective Learning to ensure our teaching and learning planning is effective for each child's individual learning journey.

During the Reception year, the children will have access to daily English, Mathematics and Phonics sessions as well as many additional sessions throughout the week that are based on various areas of learning. In both Reception and Nursery pupils follow the Read, Write, Inc Phonics programme. In Reception, English is supported by our own Literacy scheme of learning and Mathematicsteaching follows White Rose Maths scheme.

The EYFS provides the basis for planning throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. Our medium-term planning is completed half-termly and identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals.

8 Assessment

We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage takes the form of observations, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate.

During the Nursery years, children are observed and progress is noted in individual records.

During the children's year in the Reception class, the teacher continues to make observations and assesses the ability of each child using the EYFS Profile linked to the Early Learning Goals. We use this information to modify the teaching programme for individuals and groups of children and to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort of children. We share the profile information with parents at parental consultation meetings each term. The results of these assessments are sent to the LA.

Observation notes, photos and samples of each child's work are kept and analysed during the school year. This offers opportunities to identify any learning gaps or additional needs the child may have.

Progress is shared with parents to make them aware of the child's strengths and development needs and targets to give details of the child's general progress. Parents are given a record of their child's progress.

In the Nursery provision, regular assessments are also taken of the children's learning and are recorded in the same way as the rest of the EYFS. In addition to this, a two year old check is also completed for those children that have not already had one at a previous setting. This will be undertaken by the child's key worker before their third birthday.

9 Key Workers

The children in the Nursery all have a key-worker assigned to them in discussion with the parents. In Reception the children have a class teacher and a teaching assistant as their key workers.

All parents know who their child's key worker is and the key workers develop a good working relationship with the parents and children. This starts with a settling-in period right at the start of their time at Ivingswood Academy and this relationship develops over the time they spend with us.

Please see the Ivingswood Academy Admissions Policies for information on how the children start attending our Nursery and Reception classes. All parents have a meeting with their child's key worker twice a year in addition to the 'informal' chats that key workers have regularly with the parents and carers of the children.

10 The role of parents

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- children having the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts in Reception;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- having flexible admission arrangements as the child starts Nursery that enable children and parents to become secure, and by allowing time to discuss each child's

- circumstances;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
 - offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents. There is regular communication with home in a variety of forms. We invite parents to discuss the kind of work that the children undertake in the Foundation Stage.

11 Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We regularly review the resources on offer and update them accordingly to provide an up to date and stimulating curriculum.

12 Transition from Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development ('expected') or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1. Throughout the Summer term, opportunities are built in for children to spend time in Year 1 and, where possible, begin to build relationships with the Year 1 teaching staff.

13 Safeguarding and Child Protection

Please see the Ivingswood Academy Child Protection Policy for information on our Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.