

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Larkspur Primary School



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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the updated Early years foundation stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework 1st September 2025.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

3. Structure of the EYFS

At Larkspur the Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a nursery and reception class which work together as a unit.

Reception children attend 5 full days from 8.45am until 3.10pm.

We offer 15 hour funded nursery spaces (2-3 year olds) which includes 5 morning sessions 8.30am until 11.30am.

We also offer 30 hour funded spaces, for nursery children, which includes 5 full day sessions from 8.30am until 3.10pm.

A free breakfast club is also available for reception children from 8.15am.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the updated Early years foundation stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework 1st September 2025.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. 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, form 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

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective learning. The EYFS teachers plan activities with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics 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.

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage 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.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

Medium term plans are drawn up based on observations and assessments of the children in the previous term. Key objectives are identified and used as a focus for the adult led activities.

Short term plans are then devised for the adult led sessions each week.

At Larkspur the cycle of observation, assessment and planning is carried out on a moment by moment basis during child-initiated activities. We call this 'planning in the moment'. We work this way because high level involvement occurs in child initiated activity. The adults work alongside children to support, extend and challenge their learning.

4.2 Teaching

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and support what the child is doing.

In some cases the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible.

By the Summer term in Reception the children will experience many more adult directed tasks as they prepare for their transition to year 1.

Play

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classroom. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world.

They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practice skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions.

We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play.

5. Assessment

At Larkspur, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

On entry to Nursery and Reception we carry out baseline assessments for each child. The class teacher submits end of term assessment data to the Head Teacher showing each child's development across the seven areas of learning.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 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 then shared with parents and/or carers.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

Prior to children attending the nursery the class teacher will visit the child in their own home wherever, possible, to get to know them and their families. Nursery children then attend the nursery for a short one hour session on their first day. Staff then work with the parents/carers to devise an appropriate transition schedule suited to each individual child. This could mean that some children attend full sessions very quickly and some have a longer transition period. We strongly believe that the transition period should be based on the individual needs of each child.

Parents are invited to stay and play sessions regularly to play with their child and speak with the staff. Regular craft mornings, performances and parent workshops are held throughout the year to encourage good relationships between the staff and families.

Parents are also invited to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher at parent's evenings during the autumn, spring and summer terms.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Mr Sean Gray and Miss Lisa Graham every year.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according to the EYFS statutory framework.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	Medical Conditions Policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy