



Duncombe
School

An Independent Preparatory
School and Nursery

Early Years Policy

Date Policy Reviewed	Policy Reviewed By	Reason/Outcome	Next Review Due
March 2014	Katie Copeman	Review	Spring 2015
January 2015	Katie Copeman	Review	Spring 2016
January 2016	Katie Copeman	Review & Update	Spring 2017

This policy supports the safeguarding and welfare requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2014. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. This policy applies to the whole School and the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Mission Statement

‘Duncombe School will educate the whole child, fostering the individual's highest academic, creative, social and recreational standards within a happy, caring and stimulating environment.’

Mission Statement – Treetops

‘Our primary purpose is to support children and parents through the early years of education. Treetops offers a carefully managed induction programme to School life and subsequently a broad and challenging education within a caring and secure family environment.’

School Aims and Philosophy

- To educate the whole person (academic, spiritual, moral), promoting respect for Christian values but recognising and respecting beliefs, needs and achievements of others in our multi-cultural society.
- To provide a structured and happy environment where each member of the community is valued and secure and where there is a commitment to encouraging individual development.
- To promote high standards in all areas of life.
- To encourage self discipline, self motivation and self respect through promoting competition against self and objective standards rather than each other.
- To provide each child with a broad and balanced curriculum that encourages children to realise their full capabilities.
- To foster a lively and varied learning environment adopting teaching styles relevant to each child's learning.
- To work in partnership with parents encouraging dialogue in the best interests of their child.

Principles and Aims

The Early Years Foundations Stage is based upon four principles:

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

Our Aims

- To provide a solid foundation in the seven areas of learning through well planned activities for both the indoor and outdoor environment.
- To provide a balanced range of experiences and activities to enable each child to develop emotionally, socially, physically, creatively, intellectually, spiritually and morally.
- To enable children to make an effective and happy transition from home, early kindergarten, kindergarten, nursery and School through effective liaison.
- To value children's own experiences, their imagination, their curiosity and the range of skills that they bring into School and to use these as starting points in their learning.
- To ensure the children feel safe and secure within their learning environment.
- To provide a caring, stimulating, challenging and well-structured environment in which children are motivated towards independent learning.
- To ensure equal access and opportunity.
- To prepare children for their continuing education through effective liaison with their next class teacher.
- To value parents as partners in the education of their child. To keep parents well informed about the curriculum and their child's progress.
- To value early childhood itself.
- To ensure that children with special needs are identified and receive appropriate support wherever possible.
- To promote an atmosphere that encourages confidence and independence.
- To plan and structure activities, with clear learning intentions and objectives

British Values

In the early years we are committed to the fundamental British Values: Democracy; Rule of the law; Individual Liberty and Mutual respect.

Democracy: Making decisions together.

As part of the focus on self-confidence and self-awareness as cited in Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

- Staff encourage children to know their view counts, to value each other's views, values and families and talk about their feelings, for example when they do or do not need help. When appropriate demonstrate democracy in action, for example, children sharing views on what big activities to have out by a show of hands.
- Staff support the decisions that children make and provide activities that involve turn taking, sharing and collaboration. Children are given opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are encouraged and valued.

Rule of Law: Understanding rules matter as cited in Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

As part of the focus on managing feelings and behaviour:

- Staff ensure that children understand their own and others behaviour and its consequences and learn to distinguish right from wrong.
- Staff collaborate with children to create the rules and the codes of behaviour, for example, to agree the rules about tidy up time.

Individual Liberty: Freedom from all.

As part of the focus on self-confidence and self-awareness and people and communities as cited in Personal, Social and Emotional development and Understanding the World.

- Children should develop a positive sense of themselves. Staff provide opportunities to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities, for example, setting and achieving their own class goals.
- Staff encourage a range of experiences that allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, reflect on their differences and understand we are free to have different opinions, for example discussing our favourite activities in circle time.

Mutual Respect and Tolerance: treat others as you want to be treated.

As part of the focus on people and communities, managing feelings and behaviour and making relationships as cited in personal, Social and Emotional development and Understanding the World:

- Staff create an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where views, faiths, cultures and races are valued and children are engaged with the wider community.
- Children acquire a tolerance and appreciation of and respect for their own culture and other cultures. They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others and among others families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions and share and discuss practises, celebrations and experiences.
- Staff encourage and explain the importance of tolerant behaviours such as sharing and respecting each other's opinions.
- Staff promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes, for example by sharing stories that reflect and value a diverse range of experiences.

What is not acceptable is:

- Actively promoting intolerance of other faiths, cultures and races.
- Failure to challenge gender stereotypes and routinely segregate boys and girls.
- Isolating children from their wider community.
- Failure to challenge behaviours that are not in line with the fundamental British Values.

Prevent Duty

Prevent is a government strategy designed to stop people becoming terrorists or support terrorists or extremist causes. It covers all types of terrorism and extremism, including the extreme right wing Islamist groups and other causes.

We have the responsibility to protect children from radicalisation and extremism.

For the EYFS children we contribute to the Prevent strategy by:

- Exploring other cultures and religions and promoting diversity.
- Challenging prejudices and racist comments.
- Developing critical thinking skills and strong, positive self-identity
- Promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, as well as British values.

Curriculum

At Duncombe School we offer an academic broad based curriculum. This commences in the Early Kindergarten and continues throughout Kindergarten, Nursery and Reception, where the children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum which is a structured play-based approach to learning. The underpinning principles of this phase of education are to provide a safe and secure foundation in learning and development, respecting that all children are unique. This will enable them to make positive relationships and develop a strong sense of enquiry, coupled with a feeling of 'belonging' within our enabling environments. Seven Areas of Learning are promoted to ensure School readiness with social confidence as children progress through Early Kindergarten, Kindergarten, Nursery and Reception into Year One.

Learning is planned for in Three Prime Areas

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

And Four Specific Areas

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

The children spend much of their day with their class teachers and their qualified assistants, who nurture, observe and plan for each child's individual development. The teaching & learning in these areas is accomplished through a careful balance of teacher and child-led activities.

Each child is appointed a **Key Person** who works closely with the children and parents to tailor the curriculum to meet their individual needs and to guide them through their early learning. This includes keeping a learning journal of the children's progress, which is shared with parents on a regular basis.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning are facilitated through the children's experiences, woven throughout our timetable to incorporate:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically

We deliver learning for all of the areas through purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. –

The role of our specialist teachers is equally as important at this age; our children's learning journey is enhanced through weekly Music, Cookery, Dance, Physical Education, Spanish, French, Forest Schools and ICT.

In addition, the Early Years classes will experience a broad range of visitors from different parts of the School and local community and participate in a variety of educational visits.

A Unique Child

At Duncombe School 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 and 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 Duncombe School we recognise that the staff play a key role in the children's learning. Staff will encourage children to self reflect and extend their learning independently. Children's key persons will value their questions and interests and add to their learning by asking open ended questions. Staff will give children the time and opportunity to talk and think and to express their own ideas. Staff always strive to give feedback and to help children review their own progress and learning. They do this both verbally and with written feedback and in reception the children are encouraged to use success criteria's to record this.

Enabling Environment for Learning

At Duncombe School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences. The environment created by the staff will be stimulating, challenging and aesthetically pleasing. Work done by the children features prominently in displays all around the setting.

The Early kindergarten, Kindergarten, Nursery and Reception classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet, be creative etc. The Kindergarten and Nursery classroom has direct access to an outdoor classroom area, which is also used by Reception three times a week. The free-flow that is possible in the Kindergarten and Nursery rooms between the inside and the outside has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

Teaching and Learning

The following principles will underpin teaching and learning in the classroom:

- Teaching is based on a sound knowledge of the Areas of Learning and Typical Behaviours and the Early Learning Goals.
- Teachers and other practitioners will use a balance of approaches and groupings appropriate to what is being taught.
- There will be a balance of adult directed and child initiated activities.
- Children are encouraged to contribute according to their own experiences and interest.
- Learning will be active, ensuring choice and independence.

- It is recognised that purposeful play is the natural way children learn.
- Learning will take place outdoors and indoors.
- Teachers recognise that all children are individuals and have a variety of needs.

The learning environment will be such that the children feel secure, confident and stimulated. It will be safe and enable children to be independent.

Planning and Curriculum

We recognise that supporting and extending the children's development starts with observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning achievable activities and experiences.

Planning takes the form of:

- Long term plans. These identify main topics to be covered throughout the year.
- Medium term plans. These link the Areas of Learning and Development and the Early Learning Goals to specific planned activities and will identify assessment opportunities.
- Short term plans (weekly/daily). These include specific activity plans, clear differentiation for groups and individuals, and organisational management including the role of the adults

EYFS staff meet together weekly to ensure that there is continuity and progression throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The EYFS planning includes the following:

- **Communication and language development** involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities. It will also incorporate the British Values.
- **Physical development** provides opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children are also helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- **Literacy development** involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

- **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Learning Through Play

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences which help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, and learn how to control 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.

At Duncombe School we do not make a distinction between work and play. Children learn through planned play activities and staff decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective play opportunities. Play in the EYFS is a carefully tailored, observed and planned process with clear links to learning opportunities.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting to Parents

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and staff to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. On-going assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. EYFS staff observe children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. In their interactions with children, EYFS staff respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress, as well as observations that parents and carers share.

- Records will be kept of each child's development and achievement in the form of observations, annotated examples of work, photographs, checklists and dated comments.
- The children's progress is tracked using the early years outcomes, which is updated every half term.
- Assessment will be integrated into planning and the information gathered will be used to inform future planning.
- A two year check will be written and shared with parents during children's time either in Early Kindergarten or Kindergarten.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile will be completed for each child during their Reception year and submitted at the end of the year.
- Nursery and Reception children receive a written report in the Spring term and at the end of the School year.
- Nursery and Reception parents will have a parent teacher consultation meeting in the Autumn and Spring term.

2 Year Check

The 2 year check will be carried out in either Early Kindergarten or Kindergarten as close to a child's second birthday as possible. Parents and or carers are given a short written summary of their child's

development in the prime areas. This progress check will identify the child's strengths, and any areas where the child's development is less than expected. If there are significant emerging concerns, or an identified special educational need or disability, the staff will develop a targeted plan to support the child's future learning and development.

If a child moves settings between the ages of two and three, the staff will liaise with the other setting to ensure the progress check is undertaken by the setting where the child has spent the most time. We will encourage parents and or carers to share information from the progress check with other relevant professionals, including their health visitor, and or a teacher. The staff must have the consent of parents/ carers to share information directly with other relevant professionals, if they consider this would be helpful. The two year check will outline how the School will support the child to reach their next steps and will give helpful suggestions for how the child can be supported at home.

End of the Early Years Foundation Stage Assessments

In the final term of the year in which a child turns five, the EYFS Profile will be completed for each child including those with special educational needs or disabilities by the teacher. The profile will provide parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of the child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child's level of development will be assessed against the early learning goals. The teachers will indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels (emerging).

Year 1 teachers will be given a copy of the profile report together with a transfer document outlining each child's abilities, skills and areas for support.

The School will share the results of the profile with parents and/or carers and explain to them when and how they can discuss the profile with the teachers who completed it.

If a child moves to a new School during the academic year, the School will send their assessment of the child's level of development against the early learning goals to the relevant School within 15 days of receiving a request. If a child moves during the Summer term, the School will liaise with the relevant providers as to which of them will complete the profile.

Duncombe EYFS will submit the EYFS Profile results to the local authority, upon their request and no later than the 30th of June. Duncombe EYFS will permit the relevant local authority to enter their premises to observe the completion of the EYFS Profile, and permit the relevant local authority to examine and take copies of documents and other articles relating to the Profile and assessment. The teachers in the EYFS department will take part in all reasonable moderation activities with such information relating to the EYFS Profile and assessment as they may reasonably request.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within our School and all children are treated fairly, regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All children and their families are truly valued within our School. At Duncombe School we believe that all our children matter and we aim to make them feel loved and welcome every day. We give all our children every opportunity and our dedicated support to achieve their best. We do this by getting to know every child well and carefully planning for their learning in response to their needs. In the Early Years Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children.

Safeguarding and Welfare (See also whole School Safeguarding Policy and Procedures)

It is important to us that all children in our School are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them to understand right and wrong. We provide children with choices and adequate freedoms in order to enable them to develop these important life skills. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. At Duncombe School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and we take these obligations seriously.

At Duncombe School we;

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure that all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe, efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Suitable People (see Safer Recruitment Policy, Staff Handbook)

Parents as Partners

We recognise and respect that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts School.
- Offering both parents and children the opportunity to spend time in Early Kindergarten, Kindergarten, Nursery or Reception before starting School, either as a 'taster day', drop-in sessions or through Treetops Parent and Toddler mornings.
- Operating an open-door policy for parents with any queries including telephone and email contact as required.
- Sharing regularly the children's 'Learning Journal' with parents (including two sharing afternoons) and valuing the ongoing contributions to this from parents.
- Weekly newsletters with events from Treetops.
- Daily hand overs either verbal or via the communication book.
- Reception children receive a weekly news bulletin with guidance on the children's learning and their next steps.
- Offering two parent/teacher consultation evenings per year.
- Sending a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in the Foundation Stage.
- Developing a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, School and parents.

All staff involved in the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

Key Person

At Duncombe Treetops, we believe that every member of the Early Years staff share equal responsibility for meeting the needs of each child in our care. This ensures that there is a familiar and trusted adult working with the child at all times. However, each child is assigned a key person. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to their needs. The key person will observe record and assess the child to establish their needs, achievements and to then inform future planning.

Staff: Child Ratios

At Duncombe Treetops we ensure staffing arrangements meet the needs and safety of the children. Parents are informed of staffing, and when relevant and practical involving them in these decisions. Children must always be in sight and hearing of staff. Staff: child ratios and qualifications abide to the Statutory Framework for the EYFS.

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Duncombe School is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all pupils and a culture of vigilance' to safeguard and protect all in its care, and to all aspects of its 'Safeguarding Policy'.