

# LION HOUSE SCHOOL

## EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

### GENERAL STATEMENT

*“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use Early Years Services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.” (EYFS Statutory Framework, 2008)*

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Lion House School, children may join part-time at the beginning of the school term in which they turn 3 years old. They begin attending school full time once they enter the Reception class in the academic year that they turn 5 years old.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

### A Unique Child

At Lion House 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, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebrations, sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children at Lion House School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within the school.

At Lion House School we believe that all children matter. We give the children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of the children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of the children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, 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 which are created through observations led by the child’s interests which build upon and extend children’s knowledge and experience. This, in turn, develops their self-esteem and confidence.

- ◆ We create individual targets for each child based on observations and assessment. We work towards these targets through activities based around the child's interest, where appropriate.
- ◆ 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

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well being of all children. (See Safeguarding Policies)

#### Welfare

*"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them."* (EYFS Statutory Framework)

At Lion House School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- ◆ 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 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

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

#### **Positive Relationships**

At Lion House School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent, forming secure relationships with both peers and adults. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

#### **Parents as Partners**

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

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

- ◆ the children have the opportunity to meet with their teacher before starting school during induction afternoons
- ◆ inviting all parents to an induction meeting at the beginning of the school year
- ◆ offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress
- ◆ Parent/Teacher meetings for Reception parents in the Autumn and Spring terms and for Nursery parents in the Autumn and Summer terms. During these meetings the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year
- ◆ providing space in the children's 'Learning Journey' booklets for parent to leave comments relating to their children's achievements
- ◆ encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher if there are any concerns
- ◆ Inviting parents to spend a morning observing the daily routines of the nursery

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all the children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At Lion House School the EYFS teachers act as a 'Key Person' to their children, supported by the Teaching Assistants. EYFS staff meet weekly to discuss the children's progress, allowing for knowledge and understanding about the children as they move throughout the Early Years. Meetings with Key Stage 1 staff also take place to allow a smooth transition from Reception to Year 1.

### **Enabling Environments**

At Lion House 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 to extend the children's learning.

#### *Observation, Assessment and Planning*

The Planning within the EYFS follows the schools' Long Term Plan and Medium Term Plans (MTP's), which are based around half termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning, however the teachers may alter these MTP's in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning. We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. We make quick jottings as well as longer observations. These observations are recorded in children's individual 'Learning Journey' booklets. We keep samples of children's work as evidence of their progress. They also contain information provided by parents and other settings.

At Lion House School, we use the Wandsworth Borough Council's Profile Scale to record judgements against the EYFS Profile. Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. We will indicate whether the children are meeting expected levels of development or if they are exceeding the expected levels or not yet reaching these expected levels (emerging).

### **The Learning Environment**

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. There are opportunities for child initiated activities as well as adult led activities.

The EYFS has the opportunity to access the outdoor area. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children time to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant, encouraging children to remain fit and healthy. The outdoor environment allows

children access to a wide variety of resources. We support the children's learning through appropriate intervention and promote equality of opportunity and access. There are opportunities for child initiated activities as well as adult led activities. We aim to inform all staff and parents/carers of the value and importance of learning out of doors. Nursery take part in Little Gym once a week and Brain Gym 2-3 times a week Reception makes use of Barn Elms sports ground to play games and football. They participate in gymnastics. In the spring term Reception go swimming. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

### **Learning and Development**

At Lion House School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

### **Teaching and Learning Style**

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1. Features that relate to the EYFS 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 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 work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- ◆ 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 shared with parents;

### **Play**

*"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development."* (Statutory Framework, 2008)

Through play the children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise 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. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

### **Active Learning**

*"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods."* (EYFS Statutory Framework, 2008)

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

#### Creativity and Critical Thinking

*“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”* (EYFS Statutory Framework, 2008)

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

#### Areas of Learning

In the Early Years we cover the following areas in Nursery and Reception:

##### The Prime Areas:

- ◆ Communication and language
- ◆ Physical development
- ◆ Personal Social and emotional development

##### Specific areas:

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

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. Staff are organised so that some are leading activities whilst others are facilitating and joining in with child initiated activities to extend their learning. The daily routine offers children the chance to work in depth with and without an adult.

In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

This Statement will be reviewed annually

Reviewed Spring Term 2015	by	Jane Luard Lauren Thornton	Changes
Reviewed Spring Term 2016	by	Lauren Thornton	No changes
Reviewed Spring Term 2017	by	Holly Aston	Changes made
Next review Spring Term 2018			