

## Dale Hall Community Primary School

### Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil 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.”

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

#### *A Unique Child*

At Dale Hall Community Primary School, we have the philosophy 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 within a Growth Mind-set culture, to support children in developing 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 Dale Hall Community Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. 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 EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our 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 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.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children about their rights and responsibilities through 'The Dale Hall Way to Bee'. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children are empowered to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children. (See School Safeguarding Children Policy)

### *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."

At Dale Hall Community Primary 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. 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 are 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.

### *Positive Relationships*

At Dale Hall Community Primary School we understand that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. 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 by:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts school.
- Visiting children in their home setting prior to their starting reception

- Giving children the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school through visits to the setting during the summer term.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Inviting all parents to attend workshops in order to educate parents on how they can help their children at home.
- Keeping parents informed of the themes and learning objectives each week through a weekly newsletter.
- Inviting parents to attend a shared learning session once a term.
- Offering parents opportunities to talk about their child's progress and targets through consultation meetings once a term.
- Encouraging parents to view and contribute to observations of their child's learning through our online learning journey.
- Providing parents with a termly report on their child's progress in all areas of learning.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: family learning courses, class assemblies, Sports Day etc.

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

### *Enabling Environments*

At Dale Hall Community Primary School, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's learning and development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, levels of development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend this further.

### *Observation, Assessment and Planning*

The Planning within the EYFS follows the schools creative curriculum which is based around half termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning. However the teacher may alter these plans in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children.

On entry into reception, children are assessed using the developmental statements from the document 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Guidance'. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of formal and informal observations. Staff use the Tapestry software to create 'snap shot' (short) observations and photographs to demonstrate children using skills independently within the provision.

At the end of the reception year in school, all children are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG's) and this is recorded in the Early Years Profile. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's and a short report on the characteristics of effective learning. We also provide the opportunity for parents to download and save their child's online learning journal from Tapestry.

### *The Learning Environment*

The EYFS classrooms are organised to provide learning opportunities in all seven areas of learning which the children are able to explore securely and safely. There are areas within the setting where the children can be active and quiet areas which allow them to reflect on their learning. The learning area is designed to allow children to flow between the two classes in order to access resources and learning activities independently. Children also have free flow access to the enclosed outdoor area which creates opportunities for the children to explore, use their senses, develop their language and be physically active in different ways and on a larger scale.

### *Learning and Development*

At Dale Hall Community Primary School, we know that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape the educational provision in Early Years Settings. These are divided into prime and specific areas. The three prime areas are important in developing children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.

Prime areas;

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

The remaining four areas are called specific areas. Through these the prime areas are strengthened further.

Specific areas;

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

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from each other. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expected learning outcomes for children by the end of the EYFS.

### *Characteristics of Effective Learning*

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.”

Through play our 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.

### 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.” 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.”

Children should be given 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.

### *Monitoring and review*

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. The school’s Senior Leadership will carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. Copies of these scrutinies will be shared with the Headteacher and Governors.

Sarah Kirk and Vici Morris

Early Years Phase Leaders

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