Queen Elizabeth II Early Years Policy

Effective from: ***September 2020***

Signed by: Helen Elphick

Reviewed: 30/09/21 **Next review date:** ***September 2022***

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their 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.'
Early Years Foundation Stage Profile – Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012

Purpose and 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 to make progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress
- 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

EYFS Curriculum
The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes:

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

The Unique Child
At QE2 School we pride ourselves in the knowledge that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates and may need support in different areas in their school life. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we install a love of learning and ensure that the children are supported to develop at their own pace, developing skills that are suited to their individual needs. All children are motivated to develop a positive attitude to learning. We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at QE2 School are treated as individuals regardless of race, gender, religion or ability. All families are valued within our school. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all individuals whatever their abilities.

Positive Relationships
At QE2 School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

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

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school.
- Arranging, where possible, visits by the teacher to all children in their home setting and their childcare provision prior to their starting school.
- Providing an admission pack to support the transition into school.
- Parents meetings to allow the child, parents/carers and teachers to meet together to discuss the child's learning and development and to share their Learning Journal.
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any day-to-day concerns.
- Inviting parents to attend informal open afternoons so that they can support their children with different areas of the curriculum.
- Sending ILP targets home termly with the child's next steps carefully outlined and an evaluation of their previous steps.
- Inviting parents to a range of activities throughout the year such as Christmas productions, sports day etc.

Enabling Environments
At QE2 School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The Nursery children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with skill based planned continuous provision.
Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff.
We plan a learning environment that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions, abilities and current skill set. 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 ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and are checked regularly.

Learning and Development
Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals.
There are seven areas of learning and development that shape educational provision in early year's settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skills across these areas of learning.
They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS. All children are supported in their learning as necessary and specific programs are followed for individual children. The Prime Areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The three Prime Areas are:

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

Staff will also support children in four **Specific Areas**, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

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

Reception children will also participate in phonics and number sessions, following guidance in the Read, Write Inc. program in line with school policy.

Characteristics of Effective Learning
We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Playing and Exploring - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and begin to understand the need for boundaries. They have the opportunity to think creatively and problem solve both individually and collaboratively. They communicate in their preferred communication method with others as they investigate and solve problems.

- Active Learning - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need 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.

- Creating and Thinking Critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Children are given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults will support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the environment freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

In-the-Moment Planning
Each week, teachers plan the continuous provision in the environment based on the children's interests and next steps. The children are taught through topic based activities which change half termly. These topics are

relevant to the children's learning and are adapted as necessary to enable all children to access learning whatever their stage of development. In Reception they will also plan discreetly for phonics, and for the whole class curriculum sessions (covering all areas of learning).

Wow moments are captured and will be form part of the child's Learning Journal. Any pieces of work, observations from home and other special achievements will also become part of this record.

Observations and Assessment

Assessment - During the first term in Nursery and Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child by ensuring they form relationships, get to know each child personally and making observations. These assessments allow us to identify individual needs and adjust the provision in the environment and the focus of the group and whole class teaching.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the child's Reception Year, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

We record each child's level of development against the 17 early Learning goals as Emerging, Expected or Exceeding. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Transition

We plan carefully to support children with the transition to Nursery, Reception and Year 1 and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

Starting in Key Stage 1 (Year 1)

Throughout the Reception year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in primary and whole school assemblies as well as sharing playtimes with the Key Stage 1 children.
Children have the opportunity to meet their new class teacher and spend an afternoon in their new class during the summer term.

Safeguarding

'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.'
(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014)

We understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Keeping Safe

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to help children learn the importance of boundaries adapting the way that they are taught to their individual needs and also ensuring that all children are aware of their peers and their abilities. We provide children with choices and the use of an appropriate communication system to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take low level risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

Keeping Healthy

All children have access to a healthy snack each day at snack time where they can choose from a variety of fruit and vegetables as well as water and milk. Children are also able to bring a snack from home depending on their health needs. They are supported by an adult as necessary Staffa re trained as necessary to feed students that require feeding in different ways.

Intimate Care

See Intimate Care policy.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The Governing Body will also be part of this process.