

# **Learning and living as children of God**

*(Ephesians 5:1)(You are God's children whom he loves. Try to be like God)*



# **EYFS Policy**

January 2022

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## Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Children are powerful learners. Every child can make progress in their learning, with the right help. Children learn and develop more from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives. When we give every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow. (Development Matters, 2020)

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Deerhurst and Apperley we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

Little Deers is split into two groups Rising Twos and Three - Four Year Olds. The final year of the EYFS is referred to as the Reception Year. At Deerhurst and Apperley we implement the guidance set out in the Development Matters (2020) and EYFS Framework (2020).

All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of the practitioners working in Reception to take on the task of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents/carers, support staff and the reception teacher/s work effectively together to support children's learning and development.

## Aims

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being. At Deerhurst and Apperley we implement our school values throughout the year.

We aim to:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individual by supporting their choice; decision-making and fostering independence.
- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment, which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs. Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Value the importance of **learning and development** of the children, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to make progress whilst acknowledging that children learn in different ways and at different rates.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**. Working in partnership with parents/carers and value their contributions.

At Deerhurst and Apperley we seek to provide:

- **quality and consistency** in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind

- **a secure foundation** through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly
- **partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- **equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

### **Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning**

The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – Playing and Exploring, Active Learning, and Creating and Thinking Critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

**The Early Years Framework 2020 states** in planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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

### **Learning and Development**

The EYFS is about how children learn, as well as what they learn. Children need opportunities to develop their own play and independent exploration. This is enjoyable and motivating. They also need adults in their lives to ‘scaffold’ their learning by giving them just enough help to achieve something they could not do independently. Helping children to think, discuss and plan ahead is important, like gathering the materials they need to make a den before they start building. These are ways of helping children to develop the characteristics of effective learning.

The Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and the Educational Programmes are set out in the ‘Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage’ document. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in Early Years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

### **Learning through play**

At Deerhurst and Apperley we do not make a distinction between work and play. We support children’s learning through planned play activities, and decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children’s learning through play, by getting involved in the play themselves.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

These are the **prime** areas:

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

Through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied support children in four specific areas.

The **specific** areas are:

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

### **Educational Programmes**

Educational programmes must involve activities and experiences for children, as set out under each of the areas of learning.

#### **Communication and Language**

- Listening, Attention and Understanding
- Speaking

#### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

- Self-Regulation
- Managing Self
- Building Relationships

#### **Physical Development**

- Gross Motor Skills
- Fine Motor Skills

#### **Literacy**

- Comprehension
- Word Reading
- Writing

#### **Mathematics**

- Number
- Numerical Patterns

#### **Understanding the World**

- Past and Present
- People, Culture and Communities
- The Natural World

#### **Expressive Arts and Design**

- Creating with Materials
- Being Imaginative and Expressive

At Deerhurst and Apperley, we believe these areas are equally important and depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development. We aim to deliver all the areas through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of teacher-led, teacher initiated and child-initiated activities.

## **Planning**

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS will be put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning. All practitioners who work in reception at Deerhurst and Apperley are involved in this process. There are three stages of planning the curriculum:

### **Long Term Planning**

We have created a framework, which gives structure and coherence to the curriculum. Specific books are planned for each of the terms and the early learning goals and educational programmes are distributed over the terms, to determine broad and balanced coverage. Some early learning goals provide a focus for certain terms, particularly those relating to Understanding of the World and Creative Development.

### **Medium Term Planning**

We address particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail for each term. We include links between areas of learning and development and opportunities for computing. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities, and activities and experiences for each area of learning and development are identified. Curriculum letters and overviews are shared with parents and children at the beginning of each term. They are used to assess prior knowledge and understanding and to enable the children to have an input into the direction of the topic.

### **Short Term Planning**

We identify specific learning objectives, activities, differentiation, deployment of adults and resources, to meet the learning needs of the children on a weekly and day-to-day basis. It allows for flexibility in response to individual children's needs and interests and for revision and modification, informed by on-going observational assessment.

## **Staffing and Organisation**

There is currently one reception class at Deerhurst and Apperley. The children have daily opportunities for structured and free-flow play and in the custom built EYFS outdoor area. This time is supported by an adult, who acts as a facilitator to the child's learning. The teacher liaises with the teaching assistants, regularly involving them in planning, preparation and assessment. We are always aiming to improve our teaching skills, knowledge and understanding and so all practitioners are encouraged to participate in local authority courses, in-service and local cluster group training. Practitioners also conduct and attend in-house training and disseminate new initiatives, ideas and teaching methods to colleagues. They also liaise with local pre-schools on a regular basis.

## **Assessment, Recording and Monitoring**

At Deerhurst and Apperley, we undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

### **Formative assessment**

This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations, baseline assessment, other focused assessments e.g.

sound/number, annotated examples of work, photographs, video and information from parents. Each child has an individual Learning Journey in which this evidence is stored. We plan for observational assessment when undertaking our medium and short term planning.

### **Summative assessment**

The development statements summarise all of the formative assessment undertaken and makes statements about the child's achievements. It summarises children's progress towards the early learning goals. Summative data is updated using the **development matters** and are updated as often as possible but is checked each term by the phase leader. The **class progress document** is updated each term (2/4/6 ) as well as the pupil progress document is updated terms 2/4/6.

Teaching and learning in Literacy and Mathematics is monitored by the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators through lesson observations, pupil interviews and whole school work sampling. Other areas of learning and development in the foundation stage are monitored in this way by the respective co-ordinators. The EYFS phase leader monitors teaching and learning across the Foundation Stage throughout the year and analyses data in conjunction with the class teachers & SLT.

### **The Learning Environment**

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence.

Activities are planned for both the inside and outside; children have the opportunities to move between the indoor and outdoor areas throughout the school day. The learning environment is divided into a variety of different areas: role play, book corner, writing area, numeracy area, listening centre, music station, computers, creative, outside, construction and small world. These areas are carefully arranged to encourage quiet areas and more active areas within the learning environment. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

### **Liaison with pre-school settings and induction**

At Deerhurst and Apperley we have close links with the local pre-school 'Little Deers'. The reception and pre-school teachers meet to discuss assessment and induction issues. We meet in the lead up to transition with the preschool providing an opportunity for future Reception children to attend school. We are continually trying to enhance the link with other preschools. Teaching staff do home visits where they get to meet the children and families in their own environment.

Parents/carers have the opportunity to meet the class teacher and to visit the reception classroom during an Induction evening. Parents/carers are given an Induction Booklet which outlines the curriculum and school routines, along with a document pack to be completed and returned to school.

During Term 6, the Class Teacher undertakes visits to the feeder nursery. All children are invited to an induction/transition morning when the current reception children visit their year 1 class. Transfer records from preschool settings inform reception practitioners about the new intake so we are able to make informed judgement. Close links with pre-school happen regularly throughout the academic year.

During the induction period in September, children spend every morning in school and have lunch and by the third week are in full time.

This allows:

- Children to feel secure in their new environment and gradually build up to full-time attendance
- The practitioners to get to know the children individually and establish good relationships
- The reception teachers to carry out important first observations and initial assessments

Admission on a full-time basis is introduced at the beginning of week 3, Term 1 unless it is mutually agreed between parents, the EYFS leader and the head teacher that the child will benefit from a continuation of the part-time arrangement. A child reaches statutory school age at the beginning of the term following his/her fifth birthday.

### **Reception to Year 1 Transition**

Reception and the year 1 teacher have worked together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible. At Deerhurst and Apperley:

- Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the reception year
- Reception practitioners plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer terms, encouraging less dependence on adult support
- Reception children meet year 1 teacher during assembly, playtime and other whole school activities during the reception year
- Individual Learning Journey folders are passed on to year 1 teachers
- An end of year class data is passed on to year 1 teachers
- Reception and year 1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July
- Reception children visit their new year 1 class in July for change over day
- There is an overlap in approach and routines, e.g. snack time, behaviour systems, timetables, etc

### **Home/School Links**

We recognise that parents/carers are the child's first and most enduring educators. When parents/carers and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise. We aim to develop this by:

- Outlining the reception curriculum to Parents/carers during the new parents' meeting in July, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and again during the first term of the child's Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child particularly in relation to reading, writing and Maths
- Curriculum letters and overviews are sent home each term to keep parents informed of their child's current curriculum and learning needs, with an outline of activities which could be undertaken at home to support this.
- Encouraging parents/carers to complete the home/school admissions booklet



- Operating an “open door” policy, whereby Parents/carers can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner and can add to Learning Journeys
- Sharing progress at school through annotated photographs and encouraging parents to comment on their child’s Learning Story observations
- Inviting parents/carers to help in the reception class or other classes in the school and to accompany children on school visits
- Encouraging parents/carers to listen to their child read each night, to make use of the phoneme books and home writing book and to comment on reading progress in a home/school reading diary
- Encouraging relevant learning activities to be continued at home e.g. library books, and ensuring that experiences at home are used to develop learning in school
- Providing an annual written report to parents/carers in July summarising the child’s progress against the Early Learning Goals
- Holding child/parent open days and workshops to enable parents to work alongside their children.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child’s teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child’s progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child’s attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: storytime sessions, celebration assemblies, school visits and activity days

### **Equal Opportunities**

At Deerhurst and Apperley we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. All practitioners are working to provide **equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

### **Inclusion**

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Additional adult support may be provided for children with special medical needs e.g. allergies, thus increasing the adult/pupil ratio.

My Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school’s Special Educational Needs Policy. The EYFS leader would discuss these targets with the child and his/her parents/carers. Progress is monitored and reviewed every term. The school’s SEN co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary. For further information see Special Educational Needs Policy.

### **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding in the EYFS is taken very seriously. In addition to the practices outlined in the ‘Safeguarding Children’ Policy we also have a Collection and Notices board to ensure all practitioners

are aware of changes to children's normal collection arrangements and other information that may be shared by parents at the beginning of the day.

### **Health and Safety**

Please refer to 'Health and Safety' Policy with specific reference being made to Risk Assessment and Medical needs (First Aid Training). Additional reference should also be made to the EYFS Risk Assessment highlighted in Weekly Planning. In addition, in line with the EYFS statutory framework 2020, at Deerhurst and Apperley we undertake:

- A whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required.

**To be presented to Full Governing Body and agreed at next meeting  
March 23rd 2022**

**Signed: Head teacher Jayne Neveu**

**Signed: Chair of Governors Chris Davis**  
**Date:**