

## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

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## **Our mission statement:**

**“Preparing and Inspiring today's learners to succeed in tomorrow's world”**

### **Introduction**

From September 2016, Langenhoe Pre-school have become part of Langenhoe Primary School Early Years Foundation Stage Unit.

The Foundation Stage Team is led by the Early Years Co-ordinator.

Early Years Foundation Stage is a statutory requirement and the term given nationally for the phase of education for children from birth to five years. At Langenhoe Community Primary School the Early Years Foundation Stage is an integral part of our practice. Reception and the pre-school work closely together as a cohesive unit to provide the children in our care with strong a foundation and support, at every level of learning and development, regardless of what that level might be. The sharing and of information between the pre-school and reception promotes the children's seamless transfer into reception. The children's progress within the EYFS is shared with the reception teachers. This enables the children to be scaffolded to their next level of learning based on their achievements in the Pre-School and the children's baseline assessments on joining reception. Our reception teachers visit other settings to meet the children not currently attending our pre-school to gather as much knowledge and information to support children in their transition into Langenhoe Community Primary School.

The children joining reception are from a diverse range of provisions that exist in our community but predominately from our own Pre-School. Because all children are individual and different they arrive with a variety of skills and are at different stages within the EYFS.

The Early Years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- We build on what our children already know and can do;
- We ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- We offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- We provide a rich and stimulating environment.
- We follow the child's interests
- We have an effective transition programme which enables children to make a seamless transfer between home, pre-school and reception.

Throughout this policy “parents” refers to all parents/carers

### **The Pre-School**

The Pre-School opened in September 2009 and is able to care for 20 children per session aged between 3 – 4 years of age.

A variety of sessions are offered:

9am – 3pm

9am – 12noon

12noon – 3pm

The Pre-School is open Monday to Friday, term time only for 38 weeks of the year. It mirrors the school's academic calendar.

The Pre-School has a full time Manager and Deputy Manager that work with the children as key persons. The Pre-School Manager is also responsible for all administration documentation including accounts, budgets, business plans, advertising, showing around prospective parents and completion of joining documentation. Qualifications range from Level 6 to Level 3. We adhere to the 50% qualified to unqualified staff when applicable. We offer the possibility of employing staff on Apprentice Schemes. The pre-school operates on a ratio of 1 member of staff to 8 children.

The Pre-school is registered with Essex County Council to offer the Free Early Education Entitlement of 15 hours per week for all eligible children.

## **Admissions**

### **Reception Admissions**

We have a one intake policy with a maximum of twenty two pupils per year group. This information is explained in the Admissions Policy. All children beginning their compulsory education at Langenhoe will start in Class One.

The Reception children have two Teachers that share on a part time basis the responsibility for the children's learning and development. Children are also supported by one or two full time Learning Support Assistants (dependent on numbers, the school SENCO and a Special Educational Needs Teaching Assistant (SENTA)

The published admission number for Reception children each year is twenty two. All children will be admitted to start school at the beginning of the Autumn term. Where a child is offered a place before they are of compulsory school age, parents have the option of deferring their child's entry until later in the same academic year. It is not possible to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday.

For more information, see the school's Admissions Policy.

### **Pre-School Admissions**

Children may join as soon as they reach their 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday. For further details please see the Pre-school's Admissions Policy.

## **Policies**

**Pre-School** has its own set of policies. Most of these are currently being amalgamated into school policies.

**Reception** follows the School policies.

## **Transition and 'School Readiness'**

### **Reception**

At Langenhoe we pride ourselves on making a child's transition into school as smooth as possible. In order to ensure this is the case, the following practise is in place:

- Stay and Play Sessions: In these sessions, the children come visit our EYFS setting after school hours and explore the environment with their parents. EYFS staffs are on hand to engage with the children and answer any questions parents may have.
- Each child receives a Big School Book which includes photographs of the school and staff and child friendly information about what to expect.
- Parents and children are invited to attend 4 story time sessions at the end of the school day.
- Parents and children are invited in to have lunch together in the school dinner hall.
- Children come in to school for an induction session in which they leave their children for the first time in the class base with our EYFS staff. Parents are invited to stay onsite and the Head teacher and Deputy provide tea and in the staffroom (Tea and Tears)
- All new parents are invited to a meeting with the Head teacher and Early years co-coordinator in which they are given information about Langenhoe school and its procedures.
- The children are divided into two groups based on their ages and a two week phased start is organised to gently introduce children into school life.
- There is a choice of attending mornings only for the first two weeks of starting school
- Each parent is provided with a welcome pack which is full of information to support them in their child's first few weeks at school.
- During the summer break, the children all receive a postcard from their new teachers, expressing their excitement about seeing them in September!
- Strong working links are made with local pre-schools. Teachers go and visit all children in their pre-school setting. This is allows the opportunity to share the child's attainment levels and discuss any concerns with pre-school staff. It also allows the teacher further opportunity to 'get to know' the unique child and build relationships.
- Home visits are also offered to any parents who feel their child would benefit.

### **Pre-School to Reception**

The following practises to assist with transition into school are implemented in addition to the ones mentioned in "Reception School Readiness" above.

- Pre-school staff attend the "Stay and Play" sessions in Reception to provide a familiar face and support for the children and parents.
- Children are paired with a "Buddy" from year 5 to support them with their transition into school life.
- Children that attend Pre-School on Fridays attend the Friday Award Assembly with their Buddy and receive a Golden Award Certificate.
- Pre-School staff are present at the school entrance to welcome the children into school on their first day.
- The Pre-school offers where spaces are available, the option for the phase two starters to attend the Pre-School under the Early Years Free Entitlement of 15 hours free education per week.
- In the Summer term children practise changing into P.E. kits in readiness for school.
- We encourage children to "have a go" at attending to their own personal care.

- We encourage the children to “have a go” at putting on their coats and shoes
- We use the school hall for P.E. so the children are familiar with the hall.
- We use the school playing fields and playground to familiarise children with the environment.

### **Transition from Home into Pre-School**

- Children starting in September are invited in for stay and play sessions with parents
- Those children starting at other times are invited into the pre-school play when the joining documentation is signed.
- A booklet welcoming each new starter is sent out at the beginning of the school holidays or 4 weeks before they start. This is pictorial and serves as a reminder of the staff and environment.
- We telephone parents before the start date to enquire if there are any questions they wish to ask.
- We telephone the parents on the morning the children start to reassure them that their child has settled, if this is the case.
- We are flexible with arranging a settling in sessions gradually increasing attendance.
- We can arrange for a home visit if required.
- We have a communication book that is completed each time the child attends Pre-School.
- Parents complete the “All About Me” booklet which details things such as things that worry or excite their child, special words used which is shared with the Key Person.
- Children are invited to bring in a special toy for the first few weeks of attendance.

### **Parent Partnership**

In order to have a positive impact on children’s learning in the Early Years and Foundation Stage at Langenhoe Primary School, we take the following steps to work together with parents and their children:

Most parents are involved and aware of Langenhoe School prior to their first child’s admission. Langenhoe School is central to the community and welcomes the involvement of its members in school. It is a safe, secure base in the local community which welcomes the wider community to its social events, and to share its achievements by maintaining a high profile in the local press and with other agencies that work with young families. There are also strong links between Langenhoe Pre-school and other pre-schools in the area.

### **EYFS Links with Parents**

- Inviting prospective parents to visit with their child so that they can make an informed choice about their preferred school/Pre School.
- Regular school newsletters and correspondence from ‘Friends and Family’ who are our fund raising group.
- Welcoming parent helpers within the school day or on an educational visit.
- Social events, such as the Christmas Fair.
- Staff willingness to discuss parental concerns, answer queries and offer advice at mutually convenient times.
- Parent Consultations are held during the Autumn and Spring terms, and an optional consultation evening is offered in the Summer term.

- We would support a parent with any concern about their ability to access a good home/school relationship.
- Parents are given as much notice as possible about meetings, and where needed, staff will offer an alternative appointment.
- Parents are invited to a 'meet the teacher' session at the beginning of each term, in which the class teacher explains the daily routines, EYFS curriculum and home learning arrangements.

### **EYFS links with the Community**

- We advertise in the local community magazines, parish council booklets, village hall, and notice boards.
- Links with advertising in the Hythe community centre which is predominantly for the Military.
- Connections with the Barnardos Children's Centre at Monkwick.
- Open afternoons where we invite prospective parents into look around.
- We attend the Schools Christmas fayre.
- We welcome people from the community to talk to the children ie police, lollypop lady, nurse, army.
- Educational visits to farms and nature reserves
- We visit other local schools and pre-schools part of a cluster learning group.
- Collaborate with other agencies and professionals to support children in our care.
- We invite guest speakers to relay information about the EYFS

### **EYFS Parents as Partners:**

In order to gain a rich and accurate knowledge of the unique child, we work closely with parents to support learning at home and to contribute to assessments. The following practise is in place to support this:

- Parents are invited to phonics workshops in their child's first term at school.
- Weekly home learning letters are sent home, detailing the specific learning focus of each week. The letter includes ideas for home learning and an 'ask me about' section in order to support parents open a dialogue with their learning.
- Children's next steps are shared with parents and given a copy. They are encouraged to record any observations of their child meeting targets at home. These can be sent into school and added to their child's learning journal.
- Wow slips are sent home, for parents to record any 'wow' moments at home to be sent in and celebrated at school.
- Once a term parents are invited to share learning journals in Reception class. During these sessions, parents are given the opportunity to make a written contribution in their child's journal.
- All parents of children with SEN are invited to attend and contribute to their child's My Plan and reviews and annual reviews. In these meetings, parents are invited to contribute to reviewing and setting next steps in their child's learning.
- Children in reception are sent home a weekly reading book. Teachers/LSAs read the book with the child in school and comment in their 'Special Book'. Parents are encouraged to read the book with their child at home.
- Parent's receive at least one detailed observation of their child engaging in play (called a 'learning story') every term. Parents are invited and encouraged to comment on them.
- Pre-school invite parents in to read to the children.

- Pre-school have a communication booklet which is completed each time a child attends this facilitates a 2 way communication, which is especially helpful for working parents.
- Pre-school send home “Pink” workbooks for practising letters at home. The book also includes information on letter formation, letter sounds, and games
- We invite parents to accompany us and the children on educational trips.
- Parents are invited in to discuss any behaviour issues and develop strategies with which we can work together to positively address any issues.
- We ask parents to share any information that may affect their child’s welfare and emotional wellbeing in order that we can support them both

## The Curriculum

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage describes everything the children will do, see, hear or feel, both planned and unplanned. Practitioners plan for learning in all of the seven areas using the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance.

### **EYFS Principles**

The four overarching themes of the EYFS are central to and guide the Pre-School and Reception’s practice

They are::

- ✓ **A unique child** – Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- ✓ **Positive relationships**- Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationship[s with parents and or a key person
- ✓ **Enabling environments**- The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children’s development and learning.
- ✓ **Learning and development**-Children develop and learn in different ways and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected

The pre-school and reception are required to deliver the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage(2014) by meeting the Learning and Development requirements and the Safeguarding and Welfare requirements under the Childcare Act 2006 39(1) (A) and 39 (1) (B)

The pre-school is required to be registered on the Early Years register and inspected by Ofsted.

**Learning and Development requirements are:**

1. The EYFS areas of learning and development which shapes activities.
2. The Early Learning Goals (in the academic year they turn 5)
3. Assessment and arrangements for measuring progress and reporting to parents

**E..Y.F.S. Areas of Learning:**

PRIME areas are crucial for building children’s capacity to learn.

Communication and Language.

Physical Development.

Personal Social and Emotional Development.

SPECIFIC areas are the areas of learning through which the specific areas are strengthened and applied.

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding of the World

Expressive Art and Design

**Characteristics of Effective Learning**

These are:

*The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner. (EYFS Development Matters)*

These are identified under three headings:

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

Children at Langenhoe all learn in different ways and at different speeds. Therefore, learning activities are planned to give children a variety of experiences that they can access at their own level and to achieve their individual next steps. The enabling environment includes both the indoor and outdoor spaces and children have ‘free flow’ between these spaces at all times and in all weathers.

The curriculum in school follows the International Primary Curriculum, which is adopted throughout the school. This allows children to embed their learning in a variety of situations and develop core skills in many areas of the curriculum.

For more information, see the school’s Curriculum and Planning Policy.

**Early Years Teaching and Learning**

Many of our approaches to learning and teaching correspond to those in the Foundation Stage guidance. In the early years effective learning involves:

- Children initiating their own ideas.
- Children being active and using all their senses.

- Children having time to explore ideas and interests.
- Children feeling secure which aids the development of independent learners.
- Children learning in different ways and at different rates.
- Children making links and developing concepts.
- Creative and imaginative play activities that promote language development.

### **In the early years effective teaching requires:**

- working in partnership with parents;
- promoting children's learning through planning challenging experiences and activities;
- practitioners who model a range of positive behaviours;
- practitioners who model rich, grammatically correct language and vocabulary;
- practitioners who use conversation and open-ended questions to develop vocabulary and challenge thinking;
- direct teaching of skills and knowledge;
- encouraging children to teach each other;
- Encourage children to become independent learners;
- interacting and supporting children in a way that promotes positive attitudes to learning;
- planning the outdoor environment carefully to provide a positive context for learning and teaching;
- assessing children's development and progress for planning next steps and involving parental contributions;
- identifying the next step to plan for and promotes continuity and progression;
- Using observational assessment to evaluate the quality of provision and practitioner's training needs.
- Allowing the children to discuss, choose and agree on the "Golden Rules" thereby having an input on how all the children should behave in their environment.

### **Planning**

#### **Reception and Pre-school**

Reception prepares children for the beginning of Key Stage 1 and the importance of play is vital. The Pre-School prepares the children to enter Reception and to continue to work towards attaining the development matters and, ultimately, the Early Learning Goals.

This is provided through:

A carefully planned environment

- The involvement of all practitioners in the planning process.
- Children having daily access to a wide range of resources and activities with or without practitioner involvement.
- Practitioners being aware of the unplanned learning opportunities initiated by the children themselves, or spontaneously by staff, and allow time and flexibility to capitalise on these.

#### **Reception Long Term Planning**

Foundation Stage and Key Stage One follow the same two year rolling programme of topics to avoid repetition and ensure progression in learning. Topics have been chosen using the

International Primary Curriculum as a base. Topics may vary in length from one week to seven or eight weeks. All work is suitably differentiated to the needs of the learner.

### **Reception Medium Term Planning**

In EYFS our topic takes us on a 'journey'. An outline of this journey is planned for by practitioners with scope for children to contribute and take a lead on where the journey takes us!

### **Reception Short Term Planning**

In Class One there are weekly Phonics and Mathematical Development plans in which differentiated 'adult led' groups are planned for. There is also a weekly environment plan in which opportunities for children to meet their next steps and practise their skills are carefully planned for.

### **Pre-School Long Term Planning**

This consists of mapping into the academic year the seasons and occasions that occur every year ie Christmas Diwali, Mother's Day etc.

### **Pre-School Medium Term Planning**

This consists of the long term planning and general topic areas that are identified and loosely planned for each term. Topics are generally on a two year rolling programme to avoid repetition. Topics vary in length and may last for either two or four weeks duration.

### **Pre-School Short Term Planning**

This consists of occasions that appear in the Long Term plan and those topics chosen in the Medium term plans. The short term plan is a combination of the long and medium plans and are linked to the seven areas of the EYFS and our continuous provision. This planning is fluid and can be changed and altered according to the children's interests. The topics are also linked to the Aspects of Learning in the EYFS and the children's next steps. We have daily phonics sessions which are differentiated. We have French twice a week which is taught in one group. P.E. sessions are held once a week for two terms and twice a week in the Summer Term. We have one to one work with key persons. The children are observed each time they attend for spontaneous and focussed activities both in the inside and outside environment.

### **Pre-School and Reception Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

This is a continuous process used by all practitioners. At Langenhoe, we follow this observation, assessment and planning cycle set out in EYFS Development Matters.



We observe and assess through:

- observing children working;
- specifically planned assessment activities that allow the teacher to find out if the child is developing a certain skill;
- gathering information from parents and other agencies such as pre-schools, SENCO and speech therapists;
- Involving the child in his/her assessment by sharing their next steps with them (Reception only) and giving them opportunities and strategies to meet them independently.
- Asking children to review their work and select themselves a 'next step' (Reception only).
- regular monitoring of work and discussions that have occurred;
- Using photographic evidence, ie. photographs are taken and annotated to evaluate what a child has learnt.

All of the evidence collected, at home and in school, is filed into the child's learning journal and next steps are evidenced and dated as they are met.

### **Pre-School – Assessments**

In addition to the above

- When children join the pre-school after a settling in period we assess children's knowledge through questions and observations and baseline them in the EYFS
- Each term we assess the children and provide a "Best Fit" assessment which is fed into Tracker
- Each term we access the children's individual tracker information where we can see their process overtime.
- From the information gathered we can identify any areas where the child needs support.
- Next steps are identified and those attained marked off as being met.

### **Reception Baseline**

Within the children's first six weeks in school, a Baseline Assessment is made from which progress can be measured. This will be recorded on to the school Target Tracker system and inform the children's next steps.

### **Foundation Stage Profile**

Statutory assessment arrangements for the Foundation Stage came into force from September 2002, and were updated by the requirements of the EYFS in September 2008 and again in 2012. They form part of the continuous ongoing assessment arrangements and cover all seven areas of learning. This assessment represents the standard national form used to assess children at the end of the Foundation Stage. Each child's profile is regularly updated by the Class 1 teacher and input onto Target Tracker. Summative information is then given to the Headteacher and forms part of discussions with the SLT and pupil progress meetings.

In the event that the Foundation Stage Profile was to become non-statutory, we will continue to use the Early Years Outcomes document to guide planning, set next steps and measure progress.

For more information see the school's Assessment policy.

### **Reporting (Pre-school)**

- In the Pre-School regular informal discussions are held with parents.
- Progress Meetings are held in March /April annually.
- Children's progress is discussed. If a child has particular needs these will form part of the discussion, including what steps the Pre-School is taking to give support to the child.
- Parent and the children's views are sought and added to the Learning Journeys.
- Learning Journeys are given to parents at the end of a child's time at the Pre-School, generally the Summer Term before the child moves into Reception.
- Children's progress is shared with Reception in June annually for those children that are joining Langenhoe in September.

### **Reporting (Reception)**

- Parents are made aware that continuous ongoing assessment is taking place.
- Consultation evenings take place twice a year in autumn and spring terms.
- Meetings with staff can be arranged at mutually convenient times.
- Staff have regular meetings with parents of children with Special Educational Needs, also parents receive and sign copies of all My Plans and reviews. Home/ School Books are given to all children and used by parents, teachers and support staff.
- Parents are invited into school to share learning on a termly basis.
- A written report is sent to parents during the Spring term which is followed up with the Spring term consultation evening.
- At the end of the school year, parents are given a summary of their child's attainment, progress and characteristics of learning.
- Appropriate records are forwarded to the next teacher. If children move to other schools, we send all records and make additional contact if necessary.
- Both children and parents are invited to comment on their child's written report.

### **Inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

In our school and Pre-School we believe that all our children matter. 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. Reception follows the school's Inclusion Policy and the Pre-School has its own Inclusion Policy.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage.

Some children progress beyond this point. 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.

### **Gifted and Talented/Exceeding**

At our school children that exceed the Early Learning goals appropriately challenged are planned for using the National Curriculum.

At our Pre-School we differentiate our activities to extend them to meet their learning needs.

### **Special Educational Needs**

The Early Years Foundation Stage practitioners play a crucial role as the first point of contact in the school system in supporting the children with SEN and their families, ensuring that all children have an equal opportunity to access the curriculum. Staff may be the first to identify the special educational needs of a child and will have to approach the matter in a sensitive and supportive way. It is particularly important in the case of children with SEN that all staff are aware of the targets and strategies that they will need to use to meet those needs. At Langenhoe, if we have a cause for concern the teacher, or Pre-School Manager will speak to the SENCO and explain the concern. The SENCO will come into the classroom and observe the child. If necessary, the parent will be informed about the concerns and a 'My Plan' may be written and shared with the parent. Information is shared between practitioners through each transitional stage, with involvement from the SENCO.

### **Other Agencies**

Several other agencies support the work of staff, children and families within the Early Years Foundation Stage. At Langenhoe, we value this partnership and work hard for the maximum benefit of our children and families.

- The School Nurse gives staff and parents advice and liaises with health workers, particularly health visitors.
- Advisory teachers observe and advise staff/parents.
- Links are kept with other Early Years providers in the local area through local cluster groups and the consortium.
- We liaise with playgroups and pre-schools and other specific support groups.

### **Staff Training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

All staff are involved in both training and other aspects of CPD, such as annual reviews of performance. EYFS staff all attend Professional Development interviews with either the Head or Deputy Headteacher, who ensure training needs are met and supported. Each staff member keeps a record of their CPD training on the Staff Network.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Subject leaders monitor planning and at times observe members of staff to gain a clear picture of what is happening in each subject area in order to identify improvements that can be made.
- The School Improvement Plan is a detailed plan looking at the areas for development for the whole school, how these will be achieved and who will be instrumental in this
- The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team complete the SEF which involves whole school monitoring and self evaluation of performance.
- The Early Years leader monitors progress in both pre school and class 1 on a termly basis.
- EYFS lead teachers use data to inform the EYFS action plan and budget.
- All EYFS staff meet on a weekly basis to address issues and training identified on EYFS action plan.
  - Pre-School Manager observes, monitors and evaluates the Pre-School staff's practice with the children.
  - To ensure the Pre-Schools sustainability, budgets, accounts and business plans are prepared and monitored by the Pre-School Manager.
  - The Pre-School Manager carries out probationary reviews for all new staff.
  - Questionnaires are regularly sent out to parents to gain parents views and experiences in the EYFS