



## EARLY YEARS FOUNDATIONS STAGE POLICY (EYFS)

**MISSION STATEMENT :** ‘working together to achieve the best outcome’

### DEFINITION

The EYFS at Lexden Springs Residential Special School looks different every year depending on demand. We have a PMLD class and SLD class/es. Pupils are placed in the most appropriate setting. The classrooms all have break out spaces, covered outside areas that are available for outside learning at all times and not shared with other classes. The children also utilise other areas of the school such as swimming pool, hall, library, soft play, sensory garden, musical arena, bike track and other outside areas.

Children with current or pending Educational Health Care Plans can be admitted to the EYFS from the age of 3. To support the children’s induction to the EYFS we offer home visits, visits to see them in their nursery settings and small “taster” sessions for children and their parents within the school. This forms the start of the vital home / school partnership which will continue throughout their school life at Lexden Springs.

Staff within the EYFS at Lexden Springs comprise of Qualified Teachers, Lead Co-educators and Co-educators.

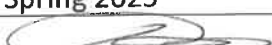
Please refer to the admissions policy for further information.

### AIM

At Lexden Springs Residential Special School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and as independent as possible. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings: -

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**

Reviewed By:	Katrina Eksen – Assistant Headteacher
Date :	February 2023
Review Date :	Spring 2025
Approved :	 SHIRLEY CROFT CHAIR GOVERNORS

- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**

## **PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE**

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early interventions for all children
- Work in partnership with parents taking on their views and reflecting this in planning
- Plan learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Have a key person approach to develop close relationships with individual children and their parents
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out

## **ENTITLEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Foundation Stage Curriculum**

We plan an exciting topic based curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed their learning goals.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships, thrive and self-regulate.

These three areas are the **prime** areas:

1. **Communication and Language**
2. **Physical Development**
3. **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

1. **Literacy**
2. **Mathematics**
3. **Understanding the World**
4. **Expressive Arts and Design**

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development

As a team, we write long term and medium term plans using the EYFS based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans then inform our short-term planning, alongside our observations and parent views where appropriate. This planning style remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in Nursery will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Children have individual, whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with times for phonics sessions using 'Bug Club Phonics', where appropriate to the pupils learning level. The EYFS adopts a multi modal approach to communication, incorporating PECS, Makaton signs, symbols and spoken word.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice, based on the three Characteristics of Effective Learning.

The sensory curriculum is an important part of the whole curriculum especially for pupils who are at an early level of development and for those with PMLD and Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI).

We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to have quality learning opportunities both inside and out.

All pupils will have IEPs set in the first term, these will highlight learning targets that are personal to them. These will also be developed using EYFS classroom principles.

### **Parents as partners and the wider context**

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways, including through homework, parents joining sessions and supporting us with assessment and planning. We also offer parenting workshops especially for EYFS parents and parenting sessions. We offer coffee mornings too. These can be face to face or virtual depending on need and safety.

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings/inviting members of the community into our setting.

## **OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT**

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their online Evidence for Learning profiles, these are shared with parents. These ongoing observations are used to inform the EYFS Profile 'Developmental Matters' bands. The child's progress is reviewed every term/half term and is regularly discussed with parents. See separate Assessment, Recording and Reporting policy.

## **MONITORING**

EYFS staff regularly monitors and evaluate their practice to ensure high quality provision. Please see separate Monitoring policy.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill/have an accident. A paediatric first aider is available in every EYFS classroom.