



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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1. Introduction

At LIA we greatly value the important role the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development of children. All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning.

In the EYFS, opportunities are created to build upon that prior learning and experience as well as to provide children with a rich learning environment where they will learn and develop skills for their future. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, where parents and teachers work effectively together to support children's learning and development. Islamic ethos and values are at the core of learning within the EYFS. Each child is valued as an individual. The curriculum is delivered to all children catering to their individual needs.

2. Aims and Principles

This policy aims to ensure:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between staffs and with parents and/or carer
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- Developing pupil's understanding of social skills and positive behaviour expectation

The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged
- It offers 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
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers

3. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

4. Structure of the EYFS

Leicester Islamic Academy Early Years (EY) consists of two Reception classes with a capacity of 24 children in each class. In addition, the school also runs a Nursery where morning and afternoon sessions are on offer for up to 24 pupils in each session.

The Reception day runs parallel to the rest of the school, beginning at 8.25am and ending at 2.40pm. The Nursery day is split into two sessions:

- Session 1 (AM) - 8.25am until 11.30am
- Session 2 (PM) - 11.30am until 2.40pm

The Early Years follow the same term dates as applicable to the remainder school year groups. We at LIA are committed to ensuring we meet the relevant guidelines for recommended staffing levels in the Early Years department:

- The ratio for the Nursery classes is 1 adult to 8 children
- The ratio for Reception classes is 1 adult to 24 children

The Early Years has access to an outdoor learning area that is shared between the classes. All classes plan activities which allow children access to the outdoor environment frequently.

5. Inclusion

At LIA Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. 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.

At the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. We do this 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 learn effectively
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.
- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress

6. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

The Characteristics of effective learning are the ways in which children learn, engage with their environment and with others around them. These underpin learning and development in all areas and support each child to be an effective and motivated learner. The characteristics of effective learning are: Playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically.

Playing and Exploring

Children will have opportunities to explore, recreate events and represent experiences in play children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

Active Learning

Children will demonstrate resilience and gain confidence in taking risks. They will show satisfaction and pride when meeting challenges and accomplishing achievements.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

Children are encouraged and supported to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

The characteristics of effective learning and the prime and specific areas of learning and development are all interconnected.

6.1. Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children using the national schemes of work where appropriate, that enables them to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staffs working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staffs reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. Staff tailor learning to meet the diverse needs of children through differentiating activities in order to allow all learning to be accessible to every child.

In addition to adult led activities, there are continuous provisions carefully planned for and set up in the classrooms. These are child initiated to enhance various other learnings and skills, promoting independent learning.

6.2. Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staffs respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

There is great importance placed on phonics in the EYs especially within the Reception stage. Phonics and mathematics are taught daily. Other areas of the EYFS curriculum are taught during 'Focus Activity' lessons. In addition to adult led activities, there are continuous provisions carefully planned for and set up in the classrooms. These are child initiated to enhance various other learnings and skills, promoting independent learning.

The school uses the 'Jolly Phonics' scheme alongside 'Letter and Sounds'. To support children with letter formation, the Ruth Miskin flashcards are used.

Children explore learning in the Outdoor Learning Area. Here, there are adult-led activities as well as carefully planned child-initiated activities to give children the best possible learning experience and outcome.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

6.3. Teaching and Learning Styles

The school implement a variety of teaching and learning styles across other keys stages in the school which are also applicable to the EYFS. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our academy and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our academy

6.4. Assessment

In the EYs at LIA, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils regularly to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also consider observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Baseline assessments, based on observations and teacher assessments through class activities, are recorded at the end of the first six weeks in the EYFS (Nursery and Reception). Thereafter, progress is monitored regularly and recorded in the form of an online tracking system every half term (or as and when children make progress or reach the target).

Regular observations are used to inform assessment and progress of each child. These observations are recorded in the form of handwritten and photographic evidence into the children's 'Learning Journey'. This is a record of activities, work and observations completed by children

Children are observed regularly during their independent learning time and 'structured free play'. Children are also assessed at the end of each Phase in Phonics to clearly identify level of progression and any learning gaps. Their reading ability is tracked weekly through one-to-one reading.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS Profiles for each child. The EYFS Profiles are a form of summative assessments. The EYFS Profile are a summary of a child's attainment at the end of Reception. It is not a test and reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers, Local Authority and with Year 1 teachers.

The results are recorded using the following criteria:

- **Expected:** Meeting expected levels of development
- **Exceeding:** Exceeding expected levels
- **Emerging:** Not yet reaching expected levels

All children are expected to meet the 'Expected' Level to achieve a 'Good Level of Development' at the end of Reception.

The majority of children meet a 'Good Level of Development' at the end of Reception year. The children's learning and progress is documented in their learning journeys, phonics books. Progress is monitored and tracked on Classroom Monitor.

7. Working with Parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

In the Nursery, each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate. Each Reception class has a teacher for the whole group.

Parents are always welcome to share their concerns and make any suggestions to staff and they always remain approachable. We believe parents' input and partnership with teachers in their children's learning is vital. We work towards involving parents as much as we can. In order to maintain an excellent liaison with parents here are some of the things we do:

- Wow moment - we send home 'wow moments' on which parents can write to us and inform us of what their children have been doing and learning outside of school. They can even share something special their child has done.
- Staff welcome children every morning. Parents can speak to staff about any issues regarding their child or ask staff any questions they may have. They can use this opportunity to share anything about their child too.

- Stay and play - Every Wednesday and Thursday morning between 8.30-8.50am we hold a 'Stay and Play' session for parents. This is where parents can come into the classroom with their children and engage in activities. This is also an opportunity for them to take away some ideas to support their children's learning and an insight into how their children learn through play. Parents may also use this opportunity to ask any questions or make any suggestions. However, this is not a parent meeting.
- Feedback forms - feedback forms with regards to any workshops and the stay and play session to get an idea of parents' thoughts and suggestions.
- Weekly newsletters: these are sent home on a weekly basis. These explain what children will be learning during the week, inform parents about the 'show and tell' item their child is required to bring on that week and gives parents any additional information such as reminders or special events/days.
- In addition to the 'weekly newsletters', parents are kept up to date and well informed of any changes or upcoming events or any other important information via Parent-mail. All parents are encouraged to have a parent mail account. Those who do not, are given a letter to take home.
- Parents' Evening: an opportunity for parents to discuss their children's progress, strengths, weakness and concerns. Parents are also informed about their children's targets.
- Parents can make an appointment to speak to a teacher or ask to have a telephone consultation at a time that is convenient for themselves and the teacher to discuss any issues.
- Introduction to EYFS presentation: this was conducted in the first term. It was an opportunity for parents to gain an insight and an understanding of the EYFS. They also had the opportunity to ask any questions. During the presentation parents were guided through how their children will be learning and what they will be learning. They were also explained the expectations of the school from them and their children.
- The parents of new children joining the EYFS in nursery, are invited to a welcome presentation and an open day. They meet the teachers, learn about the expectations, and see the school. They can also ask the teachers and the co-ordinator any questions.

Transition day: during whole school transition days, new children and their parents are also invited to come and participate in transition day. This is so that the new children can meet their new teacher.

8. Safeguarding and Welfare

At LIA, 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 educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide

children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take 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 and will follow the school's child protection and safeguarding policy.

9. Intimate Care

Where pupils require the support of a member of the class staff team to complete personal care and intimate care routines, staff will follow procedure as set out in the Personal and Intimate Care Policy and Staff Code of Conduct in line with the whole school.

10. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher every 3 years but can be revised earlier if required. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

11. Links with Other Policies

This policy links with our:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- Personal and Intimate Care Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Literacy Curriculum Policy
- Mathematics Curriculum Policy
- Science Curriculum Policy
- Computing Curriculum Policy
- Art & DT Curriculum Policy
- PSHE Curriculum Policy
- Humanities Curriculum Policy
- RE Curriculum Policy