

# LONG MEAD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL POLICY



Policy name	EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE
Date written	FEBRUARY 2024
Date agreed by Governing Body	MARCH 2024
Date of renewal	SEPTEMBER 2025
Senior member of staff with oversight	K.HOOPER

## **1. 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 for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

## **2. Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) for 2024.

## **3. Structure of the EYFS**

Within the Long Mead Foundation Stage Unit we are able to accommodate all children from 3 to 5 years of age. Long Mead is also one of the few schools in Kent who are able to accept children into the pre-school class at the start of the term in which they become 3.

The children in the Preschool class are taught by Mrs Hooper (class teacher/Bright Stars Principal), Miss Spatchett (Bright Stars Leader), Miss Webster(class teacher) and Miss Dann. Reception pupils are taught by Mrs Hooper, Miss Webster and Mrs Whibley (Class teachers) and Mrs Moon (Learning support assistant).

## **4. Curriculum**

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest EYFS statutory framework.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. 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

### **4.1 Planning**

In the Long Mead Foundation Unit, we believe that early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. Our aim is to provide a caring and stimulating environment where every child feels empowered to develop as an independent learner.

Our practitioners will provide opportunities that build upon children's experiences and interests to enable all children to reach their potential in every aspect of their development.

We recognise that starting in the preschool and the school can be a stressful time for both the child and the parent. To support the smooth transition into the preschool and school, we plan to meet the needs of child and their family through an induction programme to enable a happy entry into the preschool, reception and beyond to ensure ongoing well-being.

In our Foundation Unit we embrace the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (Effective 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024) and Birth to 5 Matters (2021). At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage the children's learning and achievement will be recorded by completion of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:

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

In the Foundation Unit we believe children learn best through real experiences and active learning. We know Children learn at their highest level when at play; therefore, we try not to make a distinction between play and work. We provide a daily routine for the children, which provides for Teacher Directed, Teacher Initiated and Child Initiated learning opportunities. We support children's learning throughout the Child Initiated and planned play activities and in doing so we ensure children have opportunities to engage and thrive in all aspects and areas of learning.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years settings. All 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 and thrive.

Prime Areas:

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

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

Specific Areas:

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

The Characteristics of Effective Learning underpin all areas. These are:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Thinking creatively and critically

These are the ways in which a child engages with other people and their environment. They support learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

We believe that it is vitally important for adults to support children's learning through play. Learning is personalised by building on the child's interests and involving them fully in reflecting on what they have learned and how they may build on their skills. Children will be intrinsically motivated to be lifelong learners.

At appropriate opportunities the adults will:

- Question, respond to questions and engage the child in extended conversations that support sustained shared thinking.
- Extend vocabulary, knowledge and skills.
- Encourage independence.
- Add resources that stimulate, motivate and engage the learner.
- Demonstrate / model and work alongside children.
- Help children to see links in their learning.
- Support and encourage.
- Encourage children to be problem solvers, problem setters and investigators.
- Re-direct the play if necessary.
- Help children to learn how to negotiate and resolve conflict.
- Promote children's well-being.
- Observe and assess learning.
- Record judgments and plan for next steps in learning.
- Provide feedback to child/other adult/parents.
- Ensure the environment is safe and secure and that the Welfare Requirements are in place.

## **4.2 Teaching**

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

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.

In the Foundation Unit, 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, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### *Inclusion*

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children in our Foundation Unit are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In our 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. In the Foundation Stage 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.

### *Positive Relationships*

In Long Mead Foundation Unit we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We model and foster respect, empathy and caring relationships; we encourage understanding of self and a responsibility to others.

So that we can play and learn safely and happily in Long Mead Foundation Unit we will:

- Be kind and helpful
- Respect others
- Work hard
- Look after property
- Listen to people
- Be honest

### *Enabling Environments*

We will use information from parents and preschool settings to inform our knowledge and understanding of every child. In school we will observe children and will frequently note down what we observe. We will analyse and review what we see or know about each child's development and learning, and then we will make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan appropriate next steps.

We maintain books and files, which document the child's learning journey. These include observations, photos and examples of their work. Photos will be taken by

staff using school cameras or the school mobile phone. Personal mobile phones will never be used. We encourage children and parents to make contributions to their child's learning journey books and to access them. We also share the individual books with parents during parent consultations. For the children in reception, we use our knowledge of the children and evidence collected in the children's learning journey books, to inform our judgements and to support completion of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. At the end of the Foundation Stage families are welcome to keep their child's learning journey book.

The Foundation Stage classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. We aim to provide a rich and varied learning environment as we know this will evoke the children's curiosity and increase their motivation to investigate, explore and to become involved; extending their ideas and experiences. The learning environment will comprise of the inside and outside areas. Both, which are of equal importance, will be available to the children and resources will be reviewed regularly in order to make the best provision for the children's learning and development. Children will have the freedom to move from one to the other during their Child Initiated activity.

## **5. Assessment**

At Long Mead Community Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Staff review children's progress and meet with parents twice a year to discuss where their children are with their learning. At the end of the school year, a written report is given to parents to give them a formal document as to where their children are working and what their next steps are.

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. We will always aim to make this a fun one to one time that each child has with their teacher.

At the end of the reception year, staff will consider all 17 Early Learning Goals in order to complete the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile for each child. Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals to determine if the child is meeting the expected level of development, or not yet reaching the expected levels.

Ongoing assessments and information will be gathered from the children throughout their time in preschool and reception. This knowledge is used to ensure that planning meets the needs of all learners. Information is collected from:

- Focus observations, photos and notes (Learning Journey entries).

- Talking and interacting with children throughout all adult directed and child-initiated sessions.
- Discussion with parents/carers.
- Completing tracking data.
- Collecting paper evidence of mark making, child voice and parent contributions.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the [Development Matters guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

## **6. Working with parents and carers**

### *Parents as Partners*

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

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.
- Offering both parents and children the opportunity to spend time in the Foundation Stage before starting school.
- Operating an open door policy for parents and encourage them to speak to their child's teacher or key person to share any celebrations, concerns or worries.
- Sharing regularly the children's 'Learning Journey' with parents and valuing the ongoing contributions to this from parents.
- Offering two parent/teacher consultation evenings per year when 'My Unique Story' documents are completed and parents/carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development.
- Sending a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in the Foundation stage.
- Developing a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents:

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

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.

## **7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

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. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

*“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.”*

Within the Long Mead Foundation unit we:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs. See Culture, Conduct and Community Policy.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that when children have access to the internet the key principles of e- safety are applied and pupils are taught directly about the possible dangers and consequences of misuse of the internet.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff:child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

- For children aged under 2, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 3 children
- For children aged 2, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 5 children
- For children aged 3 and over:
  - Where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another approved level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children
  - Where a person with the above qualifications is not working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 8 children

For reception classes in maintained schools and academies:

- We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils

For mixed classes in maintained schools and academies:

- We determine ratios guided by all relevant ratio requirements and by the needs of the children within the group



We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's child protection and safeguarding policy.

**Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS**

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy