



Ivy House School and Nursery Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential.”

Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2021

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access an aspirational and balanced curriculum that gives them the knowledge and skills needed for 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



This policy identifies how we meet the learning and development requirement of the EYFS as set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021.

Ivy House School has an Early Years Setting supporting a Nursery, Pre-Reception and Reception cohort. Nursery and Pre-Reception classes are a co-educational setting, welcoming girls and boys from aged two to four. The Nursery operates on part-time and/or full-time attendance. Children will be accepted throughout the academic year.

Intent

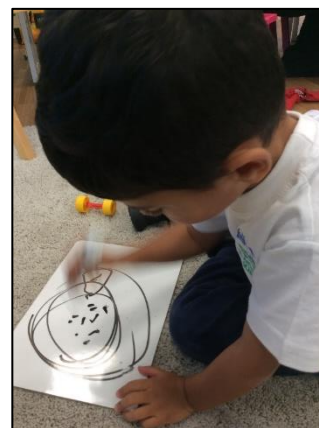
The EYFS Curriculum at Ivy House School aims to put the child at the centre of our practice and to use the child’s connections within family, communities, cultures and the natural world. We feel it is crucial to consider the whole child’s physical, social and emotional wellbeing, health, and learning. We respect the rights of the child and have the ‘child’s voice’ at the core of our practice.

Our Early Year’s Curriculum aims to lay a secure foundation, where we engage children in purposeful learning across the Prime areas of development for our youngest children and extending to the Specific Areas for our 3+ boys and girls.

We expect our children to leave us as happy, confident communicators who are equipped with the skills to adapt and respond to an ever-changing world.

Our aim within the Early Years Foundation Stage is to provide a happy, safe and stimulating environment, which allows all children to feel secure and valued and ready and eager to learn. We provide a supportive and secure environment in which every child can flourish and learn at their own pace and in their own individual way. Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable them to develop and learn effectively and define the individual intentions in their planning. Staff working with the youngest children predominantly focus on the three prime areas.

In setting effective learning intentions for their key children, staff consider the individual needs, interests and stage of development of each child and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences. As a school, our aim is to stimulate and encourage their development and enjoyment of learning with high, but also developmentally appropriate expectations. We know that the key to progress and attainment is to ensure our learning environments provide high levels of engagement and well-being and that our children are fascinated and curious about what is going on around them. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist input and interventions are required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.



Implementation

At Ivy House we aim to provide these rich learning experiences through a variety of adult - initiated learning.

We believe that quality play is a vehicle for learning and in a play-based provision there are opportunities for children to revisit, rehearse, consolidate and learn. Alongside this play-based environment we recognise the importance and valuable role of sensitive and skilful adult interactions, giving new knowledge and creating environments that give children experiences and opportunities to develop their skills. All staff recognise the importance of modelling skills, learning behaviours and high expectations.

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 their transition into Year 1.

We recognise that in order for our children to thrive, we need to nurture and develop respectful, loving and caring relationships with the children in our care and their families.

Children entering Nursery and Reception will be assigned a Key Person. The Key Person helps the child to feel known, understood, cared about, and safe. A key person approach is a way to ensure that all children and families have one or more persons within the setting with whom they have a special, nurturing relationship. The presence of a key person helps the child to feel emotionally secure when away from home and provides a reassuring point of contact for parents.

Core parts of the day like routines, set activity times and transitions are all used as learning opportunities. Our children also receive input from a range of specialist teachers that deliver music, drama, PE, rhythmic gymnastics, yoga, French, Ballet and forest school sessions.

Through our teaching strategies, we aim to provide opportunities that are enjoyable and inspire children to question and be curious.

Our ongoing assessment allows us to respond quickly to the children's learning by enhancing ideas, teaching in the moment and modelling vocabulary that is relevant to the children.

We provide a learning environment which is based on the individual children's needs and interests and builds on previous skills and knowledge. Our resources are considered carefully and are used to provide curiosity and challenge.

At Ivy House School, staff understand the importance of the prime areas of learning and how they permeate and support learning in all other areas. Furthermore, these prime areas continue to be essential throughout the whole of the EYFS. All seven areas of development are used to plan children's learning and activities.



Our Curriculum

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

"No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship." Dr James Comer

Personal, Social and Emotional Development is crucial to all other aspects of lifelong development and learning and is key to our children's wellbeing and resilience.

Our practice starts with the child and grows with a partnership that not only involves the child but also their families.

We recognise the importance of the adult-child relationship and how critical this is in helping our children progress and develop the social and communication skills and emotional health and wellbeing required to become happy and fulfilled.

Daily, planned activities will always help to promote personal, social and emotional development alongside:

- consideration and reflection around the *Ivy House Way* values
- dedicated PSED sessions using the *Jigsaw* scheme of work
- modelling behaviour and relationship expectations
- quality texts to explore feelings and help to understand and articulate 'big' emotions.
- use of Key Person approach to help settle children and their families.



Physical Development

"Each child's journey relies on whole-body physical experiences."
Birth to 5 Matters 2021

We aim to ensure that fine and gross motor control develop together in an integral way in both indoor and outdoor environments.

We do this through daily planned fine motor skills alongside:

- free flow access to outdoor balcony activities
- garden time
- weekly *Learning in Nature Programme* in Golders' Hill Park
- twice weekly PE sessions with specialist PE coach
- weekly rhythmic gymnastics and yoga sessions.



Fine motor skills are developed through daily 'Funky Fingers' activities

Communication and Language



"Communication and language lay a foundation for learning and development, guiding and supporting children's thinking while underpinning their emerging literacy."

Birth to 5 Matters 2021

Our greatest resources are adults who have a good understanding of child development. They support children's autonomy and are reflective and evaluative about their teaching and learning

environment. Adults provide sensitive and skilful adult-child interactions; they model thinking and language and focus on extending their thinking, broadening communication and introducing challenge.

We aim to deliver additional quality communication and language provision through:

- quality texts from the Power of Reading teaching sequences, that focus on developing and extending communication and language through drama and role play
- weekly drama lessons with a specialist drama teacher
- sharing of weekend books to develop oracy and questioning skills
- Chatterbags – discussing children's interests and favourite items from home
- daily snack time conversations
- puppets and story baskets
- targeted and specific interventions when a speech and language delay has been highlighted

Literacy - Reading

"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."

Dr Seuss



Early literacy skills begin with children developing the ability to interpret, create and communicate meaning through writing and reading in different media, such as picture books, logos, environmental print and digital technologies. They should experience nursery rhymes, songs, poems and a variety of quality texts, both fiction and non-fiction. A love of reading is fostered in the Early Years and stories are an integral feature throughout the day, with adults sharing and reading both familiar and unfamiliar texts.

We aim to nurture the children's love of reading through:

- a set of core reading books for each year group, that the children can revisit, rehearse and read at any time
- quality texts introduced throughout the year, reflecting the current theme and/or children's interests
- children choosing their favourite books to take home and share with their parents
- opportunities for children to make and share their own books
- daily phonic opportunities/lessons.

Literacy -Writing



"Every mark tells a story."

Through the sharing of quality texts, we show that print carries meaning, and children begin to understand how they can share their thoughts, ideas and feelings. Adults model writing to show text direction and how sounds become words. Children experience purposeful mark making activities in continuous provision, with assorted writing tools and materials.

We use the *Power of Reading* scheme alongside continuous provision activities to support our Communication and Language and Literacy areas of learning.

Mark making in the Early Years looks like:

- adults modelling writing in a variety of contexts
- daily gross/fine motor skills activities both indoors and outdoors
- sensory activities
- purposeful writing activities – messages; invitations; cards; shopping lists
- cooking
- gardening
- mud kitchen

Mathematics



"The only way to learn mathematics is to do mathematics."

Paul Hamos

Early maths involves developing children's own understanding of number, quantity, shape and space. Children are encouraged to freely explore how they represent their mathematical thinking through gesture, talk, manipulation of objects and their graphical signs and representations, supported by access to graphic tools in their pretend play. Mathematics in context.

In Reception we use the White Rose scheme and Master The Curriculum as a guide to our planning, alongside continuous provision activities, to develop a whole-class mastery approach to maths.

Effective early mathematical experiences involve:

- seeking patterns
- creating and solving mathematical problems
- engaging with stories, songs, games, practical activities and imaginative play
- creating with a variety of loose parts
- adults facilitating mathematical opportunities in children's play
- Numicon throughout the settings
- five and ten frames used as an essential tool in developing 'number sense'



Understanding the World



"An understanding of the natural world and what's in it is a source of not only a great curiosity but great fulfilment."

Davis Attenborough

We aim to help children make sense of their world and their place in it and nurture curiosity, wonder, questioning and exploratory drive. We use these experiences to learn across the curriculum. We use our weekly *Learning in Nature* programme to develop confidence, inquiry, collaboration, team building and risk taking.

Activities include:

- weekly *Learning in Nature* programme
- cooking
- gardening
- daily calendar talk
- variety of non-fiction texts
- small world sets
- real objects and 'curiosity' items
- visitors and visits



Whacky Wednesday Science!

Whacky Wednesday Science is a weekly feature in Nursery. The aim is to promote curiosity, questions, hypotheses, investigations, predictions, vocabulary and an insatiable appetite to learn more.



Expressive Arts and Design

"Creativity is intelligence having fun."

Albert Einstein

Children use a variety of ways to express and communicate, through music, movement and a wide range of materials.



Creative thinking involves original responses, not just copying or imitating existing artworks. Expressive Arts and Design fosters imagination, curiosity, creativity, cognition, critical thinking and experimentation and provides opportunities to improvise, collaborate, interact and engage in sustained shared thinking. It requires time, space and opportunities to re-visit and reflect on experiences. Appreciating diversity and multiple perspectives enriches ways of thinking, being, and understanding.

Creative experiences include:

- a variety of multisensory experiences
- exploration of famous artists
- a range of accessible, open-ended materials
- singing and dancing
- roleplaying
- weekly music and drama lessons with a specialist teacher

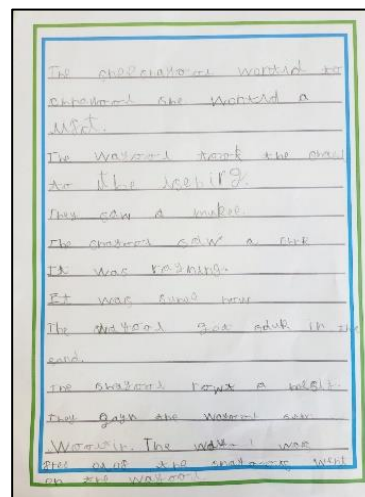
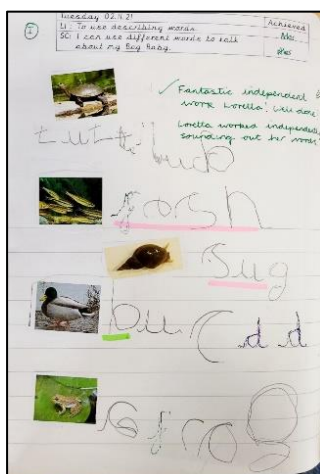


Impact

Meaningful Mark-Making	People, Culture and Communities	The girls perform excellently in their Nativity performance.	Exploring Music
Aymma completed her Energy work completely independently today. To try and extend her sentence or complete multiple sentences.	The girls gather round our prayer table and reflect on the second week of Advent. We light the candles and remember the meaning of Christmas.		Aymma sings the songs from the Nativity and says her lines with confidence.
10th January 2020	10th December 2021	9th December 2021	9th December 2021
			
The World This week, during our outdoor learning, the children loved investigating the frost and ice. They talked about freezing and melting and looked for patterns in the frost and ice.	Number Aymma and Loreta are making me a birthday cake and say they must cut it in half for the two of them. I remind them that me and Lily haven't had any cake so Aymma says she will cut it in half again. How there will be four pieces - enough for all of us!	Confidence Today, during our Learning in nature session, the children spotted a huge tree trunk on the ground and climbed on it. Aymma-Lyn managed to climb by herself, showing perseverance and confidence.	Number Aymma-Lyn is playing a maths game on the large board. She needs to identify what is 1 more or 1 less. She correctly identifies 1 more with enthusiasm to 10. When I rephrase the 1 less questions using 1 less away Aymma-Lyn was able to take one away and give the correct answer.

Children's progress is monitored closely from the moment they start, and their journey is tracked throughout the year allowing appropriate support and challenge to be put in place. Our assessments are integral to effective teaching and learning and we follow the Observation, Assessment and Planning cycle. This way children and adults construct the curriculum together.

We use *Arc Pathway* as our digital platform for both teachers and parents. The profiling system tracks progress and then provides effective, targeted, individualised next step pathways. It is an effective way to help parents feel connected and involved with their child's learning.



Our small classes and experienced practitioners ensure children make rapid progress from their starting points and are ready to start their next phase, equipped with the appropriate skills to often exceed age related expectations.

In individual cases where children do not reach the required standard, their transition into the next phase is monitored closely to ensure they receive the relevant support to help them progress.

Assessment

The Two-Year Check is completed when the children in Nursery have settled or within six weeks of starting school. Staff review all children's progress on entry at the start of the year and then once a term. The progress checks provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the three prime areas and highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support may be needed.

At the end of the school year, staff complete an annual assessment for each child. Children's progress is assessed under the 7 areas of learning, and we determine whether our children are meeting expected levels of development, not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging') or exceeding their level of development.

Learning records are moderated internally to ensure accuracy and consistency across the key stage.

Role of the Teacher

Our teachers become aware of our curriculum and values of the school through an effective induction system. They meet every week to reflect on the observation, assessment and planning circle and how this links with our themes and curriculum areas and children's interests.

Effective deployment and good teaching strategies like role modelling, interactions, routines and peer on peer observations are used to strengthen our implementation.

Reflective practice and measuring impact are at the heart of our curriculum and we meet as a team regularly to discuss the progress of the children and whether our planning and implementation strategies have been successful.

CPD is integral to the development of teachers' Early Years knowledge and staff strive constantly to update their skills, knowledge and understanding. All practitioners are encouraged to attend courses and participate in regular and varied school INSETS to propagate new initiatives, ideas and teaching methods amongst colleagues. EYFS staff attend regular EYFS forums both within the Alpha Plus Group and also within the local area to share ideas and practice or to focus on key areas.

Role of Leaders

The Head, Deputy and Early Years Lead, monitor the progress of the EYFS curriculum making sure intentions are met and that we are providing sufficient challenge for our children. They ensure the curriculum allows children to revisit themes, books and learning outcomes to consolidate knowledge and embed learning.

Ivy House School's Early Years setting is a place where our children are supported to be happy, confident fulfilled learners who display high levels of well-being and develop crucial social skills as they support each other in their learning journey.



August 2024

Review: July 2025 by EYFS Lead

Circulation: This policy has been adopted by the governors and is available to parents on request. It is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers and applies wherever they are working with children.