

# CONISBROUGH IVANHOE PRIMARY ACADEMY

## POLICY FOR THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE



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<b>APPROVED BY GOVERNORS:</b>	<b>DATE: JULY 2015</b>
<b>SIGNED:</b>	<b>ROLE: FOUNDATION STAGE PHASE LEADER</b>
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**BASED ON THE DONCASTER LOCAL AUTHORITY APPROVED POLICY MARCH 2015**  
**Policy for the Early Years Foundation Stage**

Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is used to describe children who are in our F1 (Nursery) and F2 (reception) classes.

**Aim**

At Ivanhoe 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 independent individuals, as well as learners. We value each individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child reach their full potential.

As outlined in the EYFS 'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential'. Children develop quickly in the early years, and research shows that 'a child's experiences between birth and the age of five have a major impact on their future life chances.'

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy: Admissions Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy; Behaviour Policy;

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

- 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**
- 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**

To deliver these principles through our everyday practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as a vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and adults within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are a mixture of adult-directed and child-initiated
- Have a key person approach to develop close relationships with individual children
- Provide a secure, safe and stimulating learning environment both indoors and out

## **Foundation Stage Curriculum**

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stage of development across the areas of learning to enable children to work toward achieving the early learning goals.

There are seven areas of learning and development, and all are important and interconnected.

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

These areas are the **prime** areas:

- **Communication and Language**
- **Physical Development**
- **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:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **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 skills and physical development.

As a team, we develop long term and medium term plans using the EYFS based on a series of topics, each of which offers experiences across all seven areas of learning and development. These plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remain flexible for unplanned circumstances and/or children's responses.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in F1 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 Foundation Stage at Ivanhoe.

Children participate in whole group and small group times, which increase as they progress through the EYFS. Children take part in daily Mathematics and Literacy teaching activities, as well as daily phonics sessions using 'Letters and Sounds'.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined in the EYFS - 'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities, and those that are planned by adults. During children's play, early years practitioners intervene where appropriate, in order to stretch and challenge children further. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children enjoy and choose to learn and reflect these in our practice.

We create a stimulating environment, both indoors and out, to encourage children to free-flow between the two.

### **Observation and Assessment**

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's learning and development to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute to the assessment process, and discussions take place regularly between staff. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning logs which are shared with parents. Each term parents are invited to attend a parents evening, and reports are written three times per year.

Within the final term of the Early Years Foundation Stage, we provide parents with a report based on their child's attainment against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning. Parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with their child's teacher in preparation for Year 1.

### **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 safe and sensible choices and assess appropriate risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

### **Inclusion**

We value all our children as individuals at Ivanhoe, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that our children achieve to the best of their ability in the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give children the support that they need, and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

### **Parents as Partners and the Wider Community**

We strive to create and maintain a successful 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 various ways such as: Weekly book mornings; daily wake up work; Stay and play sessions; weekly newsletters; the school website; weekly homework and many more things besides. We also appreciate that supporting children's learning can be difficult if parents are not confident in how they can do this. Therefore, we hold phonics, reading and mathematics parent workshops throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage to support parents in engaging in their children's learning at the various stages.

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 about children 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 and inviting members of the community into our setting.

### **Transitions**

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and childminders. Children attend introductory sessions during the term before entry into F1 and/or F2 to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. Parents are assured that should their child need to, individual arrangements can and will be made for transition based upon the child's needs. Children receive a small booklet containing photographs and complete an 'All about me' sheet, whilst parents receive their own booklet which contains useful information. Meetings are held with parents at F1, F2 and Y1 transition points so that they too may be well prepared in order to support their children. Children in F1 enter at either September or January, and F2 children begin full time in September.

In the final term in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

Lisa Mills  
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