

# Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

**Approval Date:   October 2025**

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis and updated as necessary.

## Contents:

|                                            |    |
|--------------------------------------------|----|
| Statement of Intent.....                   | 2  |
| Vision & Ethos.....                        | 2  |
| Guiding Principles.....                    | 3  |
| Legislation.....                           | 4  |
| How we organise learning.....              | 5  |
| How learning is organised in the EYFS..... | 6  |
| Anchor Approach.....                       | 8  |
| Working with parents.....                  | 8  |
| Being 'ready' for school.....              | 9  |
| Children with Additional Needs.....        | 9  |
| Mealtimes.....                             | 9  |
| 2 year old sleep arrangements.....         | 10 |
| Transition.....                            | 10 |
| Application process.....                   | 11 |
| Monitoring and Evaluation of policy.....   | 12 |
| Appendix A - Day in the life.....          | 1  |



## Statement of Intent:

The aim of this policy is to provide a clear framework to the practice and pedagogy of the EYFS at Devonshire Hill. Developing this policy has enabled us to affirm our educational philosophy and principles which underpin our pedagogical approaches and our understanding of children's learning and development in our school. It gives us a framework to remind us of our educational intentions and to measure our own performance. It is a way of sharing with parents, governors, Local Authority personnel and other interested bodies to our approach to the EYFS here at The Devonshire Hill Nursery & Primary School.

## Vision & Ethos

### Our whole school Vision

- ★ To provide children with an exceptional educational journey throughout their time at our school that will provide the right skills and knowledge to enable them to be Successful Learners.
- ★ To teach an exciting and rich curriculum both inside and outside the classroom that allows children to develop physically, emotionally and academically, enabling individual success.
- ★ To ensure we provide a safe and secure learning environment where children thrive.

We will achieve this by:

- ★ Providing high standards in all National Curriculum subjects where children will be able to recall and apply their knowledge and their skills with increasing confidence.
- ★ Delivering a range of learning experiences that are sequential, building on children's prior learning, that are knowledge rich and allow for clear progression of skills.
- ★ Provide an excellent team of highly skilled and trained Governors and staff who are committed to a shared sense of purpose.
- ★ Build active partnerships with our parents/ carers, and the local community

**When children leave our school at the end of Year 6, they will have been on a rich learning journey and will be well prepared for secondary school.**

### Our Whole School Ethos

**Achieving | Belonging | Empowerment | Purpose**

We will work with our children, families and staff to promote a holistic approach to resilience and wellbeing.

The [Anchor Approach](#) will be adopted and applied throughout the school.



## Guiding Principles

At Devonshire Hill we use the Froebelian Principles to underpin how we do everything.

The Froebelian principles are:

### Unity and connectedness

Everything in the universe is connected. The more one is aware of this unity, the deeper the understanding of oneself, others, nature and the wider world. Children are whole beings whose thoughts, feelings and actions are interrelated. Young children learn in a holistic way and learning should never be compartmentalised, for everything links.

### Autonomous learners

Each child is unique and what children can do rather than what they cannot, is the starting point for a child's learning. Children learn best by doing things for themselves and from becoming more aware of their own learning. Froebelian educators respect children for who they are and value them for their efforts. Helping children to reflect is a key feature of a Froebelian education.

### The value of childhood in its own right

Childhood is not merely a preparation for the next stage in learning. Learning begins at birth and continues throughout life.

### Relationships matter

The relationships of every child with themselves, their parents, carers, family and wider community are valued. Relationships are of central importance in a child's life.

### Creativity and the power of symbols

Creativity is about children representing their own ideas in their own way, supported by a nurturing environment and people. As children begin to use and make symbols they express their inner thoughts and ideas and make meaning. Over time, literal reflections of everyday life, community and culture become more abstract and nuanced.

### The central importance of play

Play is part of being human and helps children to relate their inner worlds of feelings, ideas and lived experiences taking them to new levels of thinking, feeling, imagining and creating and is a resource for the future. Children have ownership of their play. Froebelian education values the contribution of adults offering 'freedom with guidance' to enrich play as a learning context.

### Engaging with nature

Experience and understanding of nature and our place in it, is an essential aspect of Froebelian practice. Through real life experiences, children learn about the interrelationship of all living things. This helps them to think about the bigger questions of the environment, sustainability and climate change.

### Knowledgeable, nurturing educators

Early childhood educators who engage in their own learning and believe in principled and reflective practice are a key aspect of a Froebelian approach. Froebelian educators facilitate



and guide, rather than instruct. They provide rich real life experiences and observe children carefully, supporting and extending their interests through 'freedom with guidance'.

**By giving our youngest children the very best start we expect them to further develop their lifelong love of learning, equipped with great confidence, independence, knowledge and skills that will enable them to become successful and responsible citizens for the future.**

## Legislation

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework September 2025 applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four overarching principles. They are:

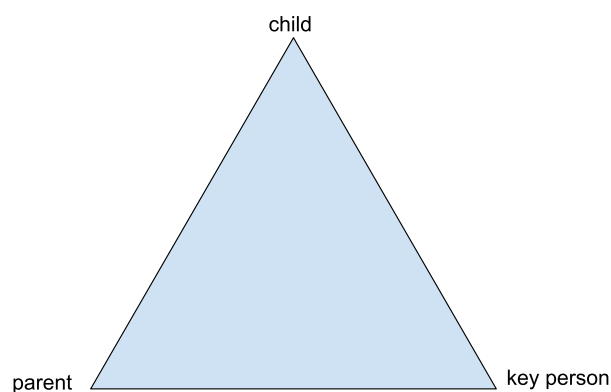
- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Learning and Development
- Enabling Environments

### A unique child

Every child deserves the best start in life and each child has the right to an education that is holistic and relevant to their experiences. At Devonshire Hill we meet children where they are at and help them learn from their own starting points.

### Positive relationships

When children have a positive relationship with the staff and children at school they are more likely to be ready to learn. At Devonshire Hill we have a key person approach which supports staff and children in having a 'key person' assigned to them to be able to focus on nurturing that relationship. The Triangle of Trust enables children to feel safe and secure at school, so we strive to build a positive relationship from the outset.



### Learning and development

Each child learns and develops at their own pace. At Devonshire Hill we observe children's play and interactions which help us to assess where the child is at. This informs how we plan further activities or experiences. We also understand that children may need guidance to learn certain concepts and skills, here we plan adult directed activities which enable them to learn and practice these concepts and skills and become more confident and independent in applying these elsewhere in their child initiated play.



## Enabling environments

The environment needs to be carefully planned to support children in their play and learning. Children are able to self-select in the areas as well as engage with adult set up activities. We try to use real objects where possible and ensure that all areas are labelled clearly. This enables children to be autonomous and care for their environment.

The Early Years Foundation Stage guidance identifies three characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:

- Playing and exploring (engagement)
  - Finding out and exploring
  - Playing with what they know
  - Being willing to 'have a go'
- Active learning (motivation)
  - Being involved and concentrating
  - Keeping trying
  - Enjoying achieving what they set out to do
- Creating and thinking critically (thinking)
  - Having their own ideas
  - Making Links
  - Choosing ways to do things

The Early Years Foundation Stage guidance identifies seven areas of learning:

### Prime Areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical 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 the world
- Expressive arts and design

## How we organise learning

### Focus children

- Each week we have focus children, every child will be a focus child once per half term
- Observations and exceptional moments of learning and experiences for focus children are recorded on Tapestry
- Focus children's interests will be planned for

### Focus activities

- Each week we will have a focus activity that links to the curriculum
- 2 year olds and Nursery children have one focus activity per week
- Once Reception children are settled they will have focuses linked to literacy and maths



- 3 maths focus activities are done through the week. Two activities are recorded in books
- 3 writing focus activities are done throughout the week, all are recorded in their books
- Phonics writing tasks are completed each day during phonics sessions

### Daily routines

Self registration, going through the visual timetable and daily calendar are important routines that are completed consistently across the EYFS

Each day all the children will have a maths meeting, early literacy/ phonics activity and story time

### Curriculum

Yearly curriculum map for [2 year olds](#), [Nursery](#) and [Reception](#) can be found on these links.

The curriculum is planned around core stories, songs and experiences which children are immersed in.

## How learning is organised in the EYFS

### Planning

When teachers assess the children in the class through observation of play, and reviewing curriculum statements. This informs the planning. Teachers have Planning, Preparation & Assessment ( PPA) each week to assess, plan and prepare for the week ahead. They utilise the curriculum, focus children observations and plan focus activities within this time

### Teaching in the classroom

There are a variety of responsibilities for the adults in each class. These are include, but are not limited to:

- Providing a safe and secure environment for children to learn in
- Being up to date and following legislation, policies and frameworks in place
- Establishing key person relationships with children and families
- Teachers directing their team appropriately to support the needs of the class, ensuring all staff are clear of the expectations and responsibilities
- Teachers within the year group collaborate on their planning to ensure a consistent approach
- Teachers share planning after PPA with their team to ensure whole team is prepared for the following week
- Planning is displayed on the class information board
- Teachers lead on 8:30am meetings to ensure that all staff are aware of what is expected and to be focussed on each day and to be made aware of any changes
- Tuesday Continual Professional Development (CPD) sessions are for all members of staff
- Thursday pedagogy sessions are for teachers only

The environment will be inviting and well-organised. When entering the classroom it should be clear what the story or topic is through the activities set up, celebration of children's work and the displays on the walls and art on the washing lines.

Each class will have:

- Labelled areas
- Labelled children's trays and boxes for resources and equipment
- Self-registration



- Visual timetables which are displayed and shared with children each day
- Shadows for appropriate places such as home corner and blocks
- Daily calendar displays which are completed each day with the children
- Communicate and print signs for children that require more visuals
- Communicate and print signs to remind children of sitting behaviours

Throughout the day, the adults will be interacting with the children, this is a vital part of children's learning. In these interactions we expect:

- Staff to use the sustained shared thinking model to support interactions
- Staff get to the children's level
- Staff use emotion coaching which aligns with the anchor approach to co-regulate with children who are dysregulated
- Children aren't called from one side of the room to another, instead staff walk over to children
- Children are encouraged to be independent with trying to put on coats, aprons and trying new things
- Staff have meaningful conversations with their key children, every day
- Staff speak with each other respectfully, modelling appropriate conversation and language to children

### **Early language development and Literacy**

A child will learn to read and write when the conditions are right, and this includes: people around them reading and writing, being read to, engaging with literature and informational print as an important part of everyday life.

At Devonshire Hill, we read stories with children everyday, use the Talk for Writing programme and teach explicit early reading skills through our phonics programme. In Nursery this is Letters and Sounds, in Reception this is part of the Read Write Inc scheme.

It is important to remember that early literacy skills are holistic skills that start at birth. This includes coordination of hands, eyes and ears and walking and talking. Play, relating and talking to others, using symbols such as mark making, drawing, painting and so on are the precursors to early language development and literacy.

### **Phonics programme**

The letters and sounds programme focus on the importance of sounds. This includes:

- tuning in and listening to sounds
- talking about sounds
- making their own sounds
- rhythm, rhyme and alliteration
- oral blending and segmenting words

The Read Write Inc scheme teaches children explicit letter sounds to support reading and writing

### **Talk for Writing**

The Talk for Writing programme progresses throughout the EYFS.

Moonstone Nursery children are immersed in songs, stories and rhymes throughout their day.



Ruby Nursery children will explore traditional tales and favourite stories, using the Talk for Writing model of immerse, imitate and innovate.

Reception children - follow the model with a detailed approach to develop story language and linking this to early writing skills.

## Maths

The EYFS use White Rose Maths to support children's number, reasoning and shape, space and measure awareness. These are additionally explored through contextual learning within the environment.

## Topic and Curriculum

The topic is based on key stories which reflect children's experiences and offer new worlds to be explored. The environment supports children in being immersed in these key stories with enhancements which link.

## Assessment

Teachers are always assessing the children, this is recorded using:

- Sonar for formative and summative assessment
- Tapestry for recording observations and parental communication about children's learning
- At the end of Reception children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs). This information is included in their end of year reports.
- At the beginning of each year staff are undertaking baseline assessments of children including the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) which is completed online

## Anchor Approach

The Anchor approach is a Haringey-wide evidence based approach to support children and families resilience and healthy attachments. At Devonshire Hill, the anchor approach is woven into the behaviour policy, and is used to support children's dispositions of learning. In the EYFS, the Anchor approach is woven into the curriculum.

## Working with parents

Parents are considered a child's first teacher, it is vital that a positive relationship is formed with staff and family members. This is called the Triangle of Trust. It enables children to feel secure at school. We work in partnership with parents and ensure that we have a consistent approach and ensure we have regular discussions about children's learning. We also have specific events through the year:

- Termly stay and plays
- Termly stay and read
- Parent consultations, assemblies and events on the school calendar
- Trips, visits and events

We use Tapestry to share children's learning. Tapestry is also a way for families to upload photos from home to share with the school. It is a two way communication tool.



## Being 'ready' for school

Every child is unique so we understand each child will have different needs and abilities. We encourage parents to support their child with their independence. Please see the links below which provide information and guidance on what to expect at different stages for your child and how to support them.

- Knowing what to expect when: <https://foundationyears.org.uk/files/2021/09/What-to-expect-in-the-EYFS-complete-FINAL-16.09-compressed.pdf>
- Getting ready for Reception: <https://startingreception.co.uk/>

## Children with Additional Needs

We are an inclusive nursery and primary school and strive to meet the learning and development differences of young children. We are committed to providing all children with access to a positive education, where they can learn and thrive alongside their peers in a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment.

Our team includes a SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator), who is dedicated to ensuring your child receives the individualised support they need. If your child has an identified support need, we will collaborate with you to integrate any existing plans and strategies, ensuring their transition to nursery and reception is as smooth and empowering as possible.

If you have anything you would like to discuss about your child's development, we encourage open and ongoing conversations. Our team will observe and support your child as they settle in, keeping close communication with you to celebrate progress and address any support needs together. If further support or referrals are needed, we'll guide you through the process with care and respect for your family's unique journey.

### What SEN Support Do We Provide?

Our ethos is rooted in celebrating each child as an individual, in line with Froebelian principles of seeing children as whole, autonomous learners. We focus on understanding where every child is in their developmental journey and meeting them with respect and curiosity. Through observation we build a picture of children's strengths, interests, and any areas where they may benefit from additional support.

Some children may communicate or engage in ways that are uniquely their own, seek different pathways for social connections, or have specific needs related to a diagnosis. When a child requires individualised support, our Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) collaborates with the child's family and key person to nurture their growth through warm, trusting relationships and carefully designed experiences. For example, this might involve creating opportunities for meaningful play, fostering communication through engaging activities, or supporting sensory and physical exploration.

## Mealtimes

All children in EYFS are provided with a fruit snack and milk in the morning and the afternoon. All children are required to bring a named water bottle.

### Nursery Lunch Provision:

Please note that the school does not provide lunches. All children attending for a full day are required to bring a healthy packed lunch from home, guidance for school lunches (for when your



child is in Reception) and the school's guidance for healthy packed lunches can be found [here](#) or on the school website at [www.devonshirehill.com](http://www.devonshirehill.com)

### **Reception Lunch Provision:**

A hot meal with salad and dessert is provided by the school catering company Olive Dining Ltd. Menus are available [here](#)

## **2 year old sleep arrangements**

For children who attend full time in the 2 year old provision, arrangements for sleep are offered. Children sleep in a quiet part of the room. They are blocked off from the rest of the class and have a qualified adult present at all times. Children are checked every 10 minutes. Children sleep on mats with fitted sheets. Each mat is sprayed and wiped after use. Sheets are washed and dried each week. How long they slept for is recorded for parents via Tapestry. Parents and staff will work together to support the length and routine of sleep that aligns with home practices.

We follow the [Lullaby Trust](#) advice on safer sleeping

## **Transition**

Please also see **Nursery admission policy**

It is a new and exciting experience starting school, but we understand that children and parents may be anxious about leaving them in a new place. We follow the child's confidence in settling, and we may need to increase the time incrementally to ensure that children are settled and feeling secure in their space. This may take time, so we request your patience with your child and with us as we navigate this time together. When children are settled in well, they are more ready to learn, so it is a very important process.

## **Home visits**

Sometimes children and families will be offered a home visit before they are due to start. Home visits are a chance for families to ask any questions about starting school, find out more about the teachers and ensure any further support requirements are in place before they begin. It's important for parents to be open and honest during the home visit as we strive to build positive relationships from the outset.

### **Why do we do home visits at Devonshire Hill?**

Home visits support:

- Home and school connection
- Eases any worries or concerns about starting school
- Enables staff to meet families and children in their home or place of comfort
- Develops a personalised approach and meaningful relationship

### **What happens after a home visit?**

Staff will discuss the child and family and find ways to ensure provision and practice will enable the child to be a successful learner at Devonshire Hill

Staff might need to speak with other professionals such as Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapists and so on to ensure they have the right support in place



Stay and plays are offered to invite the child and family to the setting and spend some time in the environment.

The settling in process after this is based on how the child settles and separates away from the family member. This can take time, so we encourage patience, support and consistency from the family

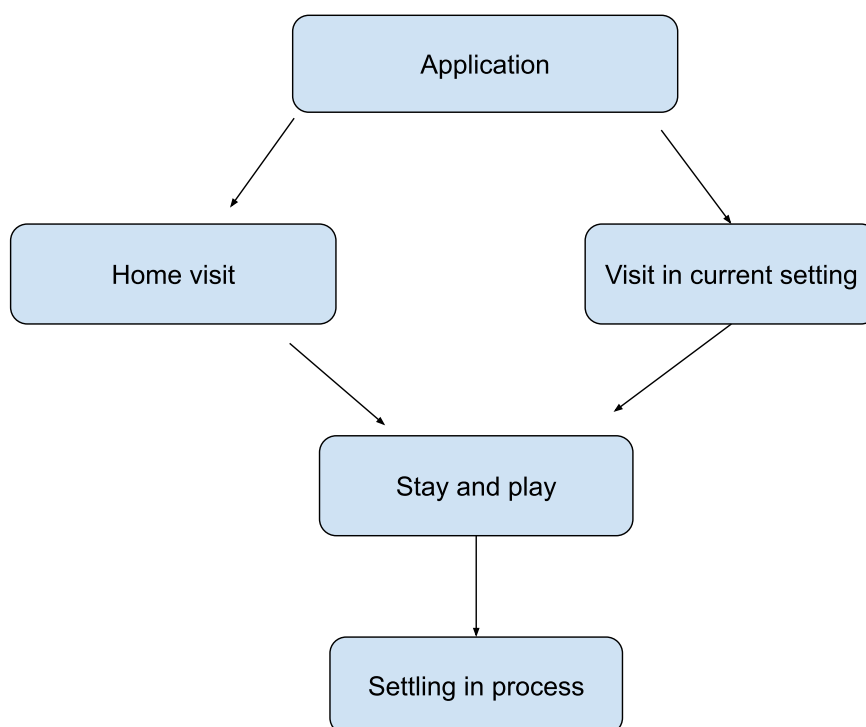
### **What if I don't want a home visit?**

We understand that families might feel reluctant to have teachers in their home, or may have issues with housing. Alternative places to meet for families could be a 'third space' such as a children's centre, park, or to attend a stay and play.

### **What if my child already attends a setting?**

In this case, the teacher will meet the child and their key person in the child's current setting

## **Application process**



### **Starting in the 2YO or Nursery**

New families to Devonshire Hill will be offered a home visit and a stay and play.

If your child begins Nursery in September their home visit will be in July.

If your child begins Nursery mid-year, their home visit will be arranged based on teacher capacity, before they begin.

### **2 year olds to Nursery**

Once your child turns 3, they will begin transitioning to the Nursery. Families will be communicated with regarding any change in entitlement. Transition will be managed between the Nursery staff, and shared with parents.

### **Nursery to Reception**

Children will be preparing for Reception throughout the last term. They will visit their new classes and meet their new teachers through dedicated transition days.

Children and families will be invited to a Reception open day. Here children and families will be able to attend their class and play in the environment. A short information presentation will be shared with parents during this time too. Professionals such as speech and language therapists, school nurse and welfare and attendance officers may also be present to support families with any questions they may have.

Children who attend a different setting will have a meeting in their current setting with a key person and their new teacher.

Children who have never attended a setting will be offered a home visit.

### **Reception to Year 1**

Reception children going to Year 1 will have transition activities throughout the last term to help them prepare for the change during dedicated transition days.

### **In year starters**

Children who start during the school year will be offered a stay and play with their family. If they have not attended any setting they will be also offered a home visit.

See Appendix A for a 'day in the life' of a child at Devonshire Hill.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation of policy**

Regular monitoring and updating of the policy is vital in ensuring that the policy is reflective of the practice in place.

## Appendix A - Day in the life

### Two year olds

"When I get to the Nursery I greet my key person, hang up my coat on my peg and put down my water bottle. I say goodbye to my grown up, sometimes I am a bit teary but my key person knows me really well, so they show me some activities I love to do and I soon settle in. We play all day, inside and outside exploring different ways to move my body, sing, tell stories and role play. We sit together on the carpet for singing and a short story everyday."

### Nursery

"When I get to Nursery I can walk in and say hello to my key person, hang up my coat all by myself, and find my picture to show that I am in school. I say goodbye to my grown up and ask my friends to come and play with me. We have a carpet time in the morning where we find out the day of the week and how many children are in nursery. We go and play, my favourite thing to do is play with water. I can remember to wear an apron now. We have to tidy up before lunchtime and then we do a phonics game. Some of my friends go home, and after lunch some new friends arrive. After lunch, I play inside and outside, then we tidy up and read a story before getting ready for bedtime!"

### Reception

"When I come to school I say goodbye to my grown up and walk into school through the side entrance. I hang up my coat on my peg and say hello to my teacher and the other adults in the room. I have an activity to do before we start our morning routine and our 'talk for writing' session. We go and play inside and outside and I do a writing activity with one of the teachers. We all tidy up and have our phonics time. After lunch, we have a maths session and then we play inside and outside. We tidy up before the end of the day and have a story altogether, before getting ready to go home!"

