

*Training for this life...*



*And the Hereafter.*

## **EARLY YEARS POLICY**

### **Summary**

This policy sets out the school's approach to early years (Nursery and Reception) education

**Review date: October 2021**

# IQRA VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

## POLICY FOR EARLY YEARS



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## **What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?**

The Early Years Foundation Stage begins from birth. At Iqra Primary School this includes all children within the Nursery and Reception classes.

Whether the child begins their education within the Nursery or Reception class the Foundation Stage staff are aware of the variety of experiences and learning that the children bring with them. Our aim is to encompass all learners, extend their experiences, develop their skills and confidence and build on what they already know. Children are our collective future and at Iqra, we know that the foundations for that future are formed in the first years of education.

*'Early childhood is valid in itself and is part of life, not simply a preparation for work, or for the next stage of education.'*

( Early Childhood Education – Early Years Curriculum Group)

### **Philosophy**

At Iqra Primary School, each child is unique and is valued as an individual. We provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment in which a child can have fun and explore whilst developing confidence, independence and the curiosity to learn in order to develop their full potential.

We believe in a holistic approach to learning which contributes to the all-round growth and development of every child and starts from a child's prior knowledge, understanding and experiences of the world. We provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop emotionally, socially, physically and intellectually and prepares children for transition into Key Stage 1. It is consistent with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

*'Young children need a curriculum which starts with what they understand and can do already, and helps to make sense of the world by providing them with meaningful task which require their active engagement and which give them opportunities to express their understanding in a variety of media, principally through talk and imaginative play. Young children's curiosity can be stimulated to help them learn effectively by providing novel first hand experiences and opportunities to explore, investigate and solve problems.'*

Teaching and Learning in the Early Years. D Whitebread 1996

We acknowledge that parents are the child's first educators and therefore the partnership that is developed between home and school needs to be effective and based on mutual trust and respect in order to support the child's learning.

## **Principles for Early Years Education**

Effective education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements.

- Effective education requires the work of all Early Years practitioners to follow principles that are grouped into four themes:
- A Unique Child - every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured
- Positive Relationships- children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.
- Enabling Environments- the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's learning and development.
- Learning and Development- children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected

## **Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

- To ensure that the 4 principles of the EYFS are firmly embedded into practice.
- To provide a happy, safe and stimulating environment in which each child can develop his or her potential.
- To develop independence and confidence.
- To provide positive encouragement in which individual achievements are applauded.
- To provide an inclusive ethos, which provides opportunities for each child to feel valued and respected so that a strong self-image and self-esteem are promoted.
- To provide opportunities for them to work both independently and cooperatively.
- To develop positive a positive attitude to life and learning
- To develop a sense of responsibility to themselves, others, belongings, resources and the environment.
- To develop listening skills and provide opportunities for children to communicate in a wide range of situations to adults and peer group.
- To establish firm foundations upon which future learning may take place.
- To provide teaching and learning experiences to enable each child to achieve and exceed the Early Learning Goals.
- To provide opportunities for children to explore, enjoy, learn about and use a range of text and experience a rich variety of books.
- To develop awareness and respect for their own and others cultures, beliefs, races and religions.
- To develop their understanding of number, measurement, pattern, shape and space through exploration, investigation and talk.

- To provide opportunities for children to solve problems, make decisions, experiment, predict, plan and question.
- To develop fine and gross motor skills.
- To provide opportunities for creativity and imagination through the media of art, design and technology, music, movement, dance, drama and role-play activities.

## **The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum**

In October 1999 the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority introduced the Foundation Stage Curriculum. It was replaced in 2008 by the Early Years Foundation Stage framework which has been further updated and amended in 2012. The EYFS is the core reference document for the Early Years and is designed for children from birth. The teaching and learning part of the document is built around four themes. It also includes statutory information about the welfare requirements to ensure that all children are safeguarded.

The Early Years Foundation Curriculum contains seven areas of learning, 3 prime areas which are concentrated on from birth and 4 specific areas which become more prominent when the child is approximately 3 years old. The seven areas are as follows:

- **Personal Social and Emotional Development (prime)**
- **Communication and Language (prime)**
- **Physical Development (prime)**
- **Literacy (specific)**
- **Mathematics (specific)**
- **Understanding of the World (specific)**
- **Expressive Art and Design (specific)**

*‘Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the Early Years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.’*

EYFS Statutory Framework (pg. 7)

## **The Early Years Foundation Stage Objectives**

The objectives for the Foundation Stage are clearly defined within the EYFS Curriculum. They are defined as Development Matters statements from birth and the Early Learning Goals, which many children will have attained by the end of the Reception year. We appreciate that children do not necessarily work through the statements in order and it is important that children are given the opportunity to reinforce and consolidate what they have already learnt.

### **Teaching and Learning**

#### **Effective teaching requires:**

- Working in partnership with parents.
- A range of focused play activities that allow the children to explore and investigate.
- A balance of child initiated learning and adult directed teaching.
- Promoting children's learning through planned activities that are challenging but achievable.
- Modelling of positive behaviour.
- Using language that is rich and grammatically correct.
- Using conversation and carefully framed questions.
- Direct teaching of skills and knowledge.
- Children teaching each other.
- Interacting with and supporting children in a way that positively affects their attitude to learning.
- Planning the indoor and outdoor environment carefully to provide a positive context for learning and teaching.
- Skilful and well-planned observations of children, which inform future learning experiences.
- Assessing children's development and progress through observation.
- Working with parents, who should be vital partners in the assessment and planning process.
- Identifying the next step in children's learning to plan how to help children make progress.
- Using assessment to evaluate the quality of provision and practitioners training needs.

#### **Effective learning involves:**

- Children initiating activities that promote learning and enable them to learn from each other.
- Children learning through movement and all their senses.
- Children having time to explore ideas and interests in depth.
- Children feeling secure which helps them to become confident learners.
- Children learning in different ways and at different rates.
- Children making links in their learning.

- Creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of language.

*‘Children are competent learners from birth and develop and learning a wide variety of ways. All practitioners should, therefore, look carefully at the children in their care, consider their needs, their interests, and their stages of development and use all of this information to help plan a challenging and enjoyable experience across all the Areas of Learning and Development. .’*

(EYFS Statutory Framework, p11)

## **The Learning Environment**

Each classroom within the Early Years Foundation Stage will have clearly identifiable areas of learning. The environment will provide easy access to a full range of activities and materials and resources will be in good order and clearly labelled.

### **Reading area**

- The classroom will offer a language and print rich environment, making use of displays with labels for information, questioning and interaction.
- The book corner will be quiet and comfortable where a child can browse, select and enjoy a variety of books, including in multiple languages.

### **Writing Area**

- Children will have access to a wide variety of paper, pencils, crayons, pens, felt tips, tracing paper, stencils, scissors, a stapler, a hole punch, postcards and envelopes.
- The children’s names will be displayed for the children to access.
- A word wall will be displayed in each class with key words that the children can use to scaffold and support their independent writing.

### **Mathematics Area**

- Each class has a number line displayed for recognition of number and ordering.
- An interactive display on the wall or table top will be available to the children to access and will be changed fortnightly.
- A variety of counting aids will be available to the children as will number jigsaws, games, lotto, shapes, rulers, number pegs etc.

### **Understanding of the World Area**

- A “investigations” table will be available in each classroom to challenge children and encourage them to investigate a wide range of concepts.
- At different times, and according to the topic area under investigation, children may have access to such resources as binoculars, magnifying glasses, mirrors and other exploration resources.



- The children have access to a computer in each classroom and are timetabled once a week for the ICT suite. The children also have access to a range of other ICT opportunities including digital cameras, Roamer, b-bots etc
- Displays will be related to the topic and include relevant information books, artefacts and posters.
- The EYFS is currently developing its forest schools area to which the children have access.
- Children have access to a wide range of construction kits, reclaimed materials and malleable materials.

### **Expressive Art and Design**

- Each class will have a Creative area. A variety of media will be available to the children in the form of crayons, chalk, dough, paper, paints, felt tips, glue, brushes etc.
- Children will have access to a variety of musical instruments, which will be regularly changed.

### **Physical**

- The children have access to the hall on a weekly basis. Here they follow a planned programme, which includes physical activity and movement games.
- They also have access to a broad range of fine motor tools including threading, tracing, lacing, pegs, pencils, crayons, scissors, jigsaws and brushes.
- The children have access to a well resourced outdoor area

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

- In September practitioners discuss with their children the expected code of behaviour within school, class and playground. Children help to devise a set of rules for the class which are then displayed throughout the year.
- We follow the SEAL program which is interlinked throughout the whole curriculum. We also have a dedicated SEAL session once a week.

### **Sand and Water**

- The children have access to sand and water where the activities are linked in to the weekly theme

### **Role Play**

- Each classroom has a box of resources in the form of masks, dressing up clothes, props, puppets etc to develop role play and drama within their daily lessons.
- All children have role play areas indoors as well as outdoors. The theme within them is determined by the half-termly topic. It provides a structured learning environment that seeks to develop, communication, maths, language and personal and social skills.

## **Outdoor Area**

- Nursery and Reception have their own outdoor area, which is designed as an extension of the classroom and has a range of adult and child initiated activities from the 7 areas of learning. Many of the activities that are to be found within the classroom can also be found outside.
- Continuous provision includes activities that develop skills in maths, language, small world, construction, imaginative, science, music, creative, physical – gross and fine, forest schools and role play.
- Children are always supervised by an adult whilst outside and can take part in a variety of focused and child initiated activities linked in with the weekly theme.
- Each class have access to the outdoor area daily and the sessions are appropriately staffed.

## **Planning and Assessment**

The planning of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum includes:

### **Long Term Planning**

This provides the framework for the curriculum and covers the seven areas of learning as defined by the EYFS Framework.

### **Medium Term Planning**

This termly planning links the long-term activities to our topics. It specifies learning activities and learning objectives over each term. We take our assessment criteria directly from the Development Matters statements and Early Learning Goals

The half termly topics are planned, usually around our core CLPE books and will cover such themes as: All About Me, Houses and Homes, Nursery Rhymes, Growth and Growing, Transport, Under the Sea, Traditional Tales, Minibeasts.

### **Short Term Planning**

This focuses on the day-to-day details of teaching and learning and allows for revision and modification of learning activities informed by on-going assessment and observations which identify “Next Steps”.

It ensures a balance of different activities throughout the week and illustrates the deployment of available adults. It includes activities (indoor and outdoor), objectives, evaluation.

## **Assessment**

The attainment, achievements and progress of young children should be assessed and recorded in order to:

- Acknowledge and value previous experience and learning.
- Recognise the child's present stage of development.
- Identify specific learning needs.
- Inform future planning/learning.
- Provide a subsequent indication of progress made (value added).
- Inform the Reception and Year 1 teachers.
- Inform parents of progress

## **Process of Assessment**

The process of assessment and methods that we use to reach our judgements are as follows:

- Records from previous educational establishment if available.
- Observational baseline assessment which is recorded on our internal tracking system
- Discussions with previous teachers.
- Discussions with parents.
- Individual Early Years Learning Journey files within Nursery and Reception. Each child's learning and development is recorded against 7 areas of learning as well as the Characteristics of Effective Learning. We use the Development Matters statements, followed by the Early Learning Goals. We record judgments on the 2Build a profile platform and report end of year data to the LA for borough wide analysis.
- Tracking of pupil's attainment and developmental needs as well as moderation of judgements during Early Years meetings.
- Pupils attainment and individual developmental needs closely monitored by the Head Teacher through Profiles, targets and reports.
- Judgments are moderated with colleagues from other schools on a federation basis, as well as borough wide.
- Individual writing targets are communicated orally to children in Reception
- 'I can' statements are sent home every half term
- During the summer term detailed individual school reports are sent to parents. These include information about attainment in 17 areas of Learning and also the Characteristics for Effective Learning.
- Termly parents evenings where parents can discuss the progress made by their child with the class teacher. Interviews are formal and confidential.
- Ongoing assessment based on:
  - ❖ Clearly focused and planned observations taking into account children's achievements interests and learning styles. The observations focus on the 17 areas of learning as well as the

Characteristics for Effective Learning. These observations are used to plan motivating learning experiences for each child.

- ❖ Evidence
- ❖ Data analysis of the tracking system which enables children to be clearly highlighted for appropriate intervention groups.
- ❖ Dialogue with children and parents
- ❖ Dialogue with other adults in the setting

## **Admissions**

### **Nursery**

Currently the Nursery at Iqra Primary School has 40 places, 20 children coming to school at a time for either a morning or afternoon session of 3 hours.

The session times are:

8.25am - 11.25am
12.30pm - 15.30pm

### **Reception**

At present Iqra Primary School has 1 Reception class with 30 children in. All children receive full-time education.

### **Induction**

A child's first experience of school has a lasting effect and so at Iqra Primary School we aim to make the transition from home to school, be it Nursery or Reception, a happy experience for both the child and his or her parents.

To ensure this happens, parents and children are given every opportunity to become familiar with the school and its organisation.

- Parents of prospective Nursery and Reception children are invited to an open afternoon in the summer term. At these meetings the parents get a chance to look around the classrooms, meet the Early Years staff and are informed about relevant times, uniform, organisation, the curriculum and the importance of parent/school partnership.
- They also all have the opportunity to arrange home school visits with staff and these are carried out before the start of the school year.
- Parents are able to visit the classroom for short weekly open sessions (stay and play) to take part in activities with their child.

### **Entry into EYFS**

Entry is phased to ensure smooth transition.

Children come into their EYFS class for 2 weeks of ½ days at the beginning of the academic year.

Week 3 sees a further 3 x ½ days followed by 2 days of mornings plus the lunchtime.

From the beginning of week 4, the children come in for their full days, as allocated. (full time in Reception)

## **Staffing**

Effective teamwork and communication between staff is essential in providing an appropriate curriculum and environment for young children.

Two full time teachers and two teaching assistants currently staff the EYFS.

Special support assistants are also employed, as necessary, to cater for those children with special educational requirements.

Both the Nursery and Reception classes are also supplemented at various times by additional helpers.

Additional teachers also come in to teach music and Islamic Studies on a weekly basis.

## **First Aid**

All staff in Nursery and Reception have attended Paediatric First Aid Training.

## **Parental Help**

### Nursery

Parents can play an important part in the daily organisation of the Nursery and they are encouraged to help on a regular basis. Parent helpers are given clear indication of the positive role they can play in the structure of these sessions. Parents are also invited in for a stay and play session every week, could be involved in story sessions and may also attend workshops such as phonics. The Nursery staff value contributions made by parents and ensure that they feel that their views and opinions are always respected and valued.

### Reception

Parents are also encouraged to help in school on a voluntary basis, to help listen to readers or work with small groups of children.

During the Autumn term all parents receive a letter asking for volunteers and also asking for any preferences with regard to the year group they would like to support. They are then allocated to a class. In Reception parents are also invited in once a month to share a storytime session.

## **Liaison with the Community**

Each half term a newsletter is sent home to parents. Our class page will also be updated on the school's website. Reception children receive a visit from the local Community Support Police Officer, a dentist and the librarian. Homework is sent too – even for our Nursery pupils!

They are also visited by a number of other people during the year, for example during book week and attend the assemblies from the beginning of the January term where they begin to learn nasheeds and take part in acts of collective worship.

## **Additional Needs**

The EYFS Curriculum has been designed to cater for all learners regardless of their level of attainment, learning requirements, particular needs or disabilities. The focus on all Foundation teaching staff should be to remove barriers to learning which already exist and prevent learning difficulties from developing.

This can be achieved by:

- Close links with other agencies including the LA educational psychologist, Sensory support, Speech and Language etc
- Use of alternate communication through signs and symbols (eg Makaton symbols)
- Using visual and written materials in different formats – large type, big keyboards for ICT.
- Using materials that can be accessed through use of the senses.
- Providing additional support from adults when needed.
- Adapting activities or environments where appropriate.
- Having expectations and activities linked to the child's individual ECHP.
- Helping children to manage their behaviour and to value and respect their own contributions and that of others.
- A range of different intervention groups.

Any child that is identified with a particular barrier to learning is observed and monitored carefully. Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP) may be drawn up in some circumstances, as required and there is a close liaison between parents, SENCO, class teacher, LSA and where applicable external organisations such as Child Health Services, Speech and Language etc.

## **Equal Opportunities**

At Iqra Primary School we aim to meet the diverse needs of every child by setting realistic and challenging expectations that enable most children to achieve the Early Learning Goals or indeed exceed them by the end of the Reception.

All Early Years Foundation Stage staff will have an awareness and understanding of the requirements of equal opportunities that cover race, gender and disability and of the code of practice on the identification and assessment of special educational needs.

All lessons should aim to meet the needs of both boys and girls, the more able, children with disabilities and children from different ethnic groups and social, cultural and religious backgrounds.

It is our aim to provide a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued and where racial, religious, disability and gender stereotypes are challenged.

Please also refer to our intimate care policy for additional guidance on inclusivity at Iqra.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

At Iqra Primary School we monitor our EYFS provision to ensure that it is of a consistently high standard and meets the needs of our children. We continually look for ways to improve the quality of learning, development and care that we offer. The EYFS leader monitors assessment data and uses this to inform future planning and evaluate practice. Practitioners use updates of the SEF to reflect on practice and action plan for future developments. We are involved in moderation of judgment meetings with both the local authority and within our family of schools. We also consult with parents through questionnaires and informal discussions and observe and talk with children about their learning. We use this information to improve the quality of our provision.

Date: September 2016