

Victoria and Ebor Gardens



Early Years Policy

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Ebor Gardens Primary Academy and Victoria Primary Academy are committed to providing a broad, balanced and effective education for all the children who attend our schools.

Within this document, the term Early Years (EY) is used to describe children who are in our Nursery and Reception classes.

Aims

In our schools, 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. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

We believe that 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 a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.

We adhere to the 2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- 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
- 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.
- Staff encourage and promote the characteristics of effective learning.

Structure

We offer places for 3 to 5 year olds through our Foundation Stage 1 and 2 classes. All nursery age children are entitled to 15 hours provision as a morning or afternoon session. Some children will be entitled to 30 hours of funded provision; this is dependent on meeting criteria set out by the government. Please visit <https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare> to see if you are eligible and speak to a member of staff if you would like to explore this option. The September following the child's fourth birthday, your child will begin FS2 (Reception) and attend full day sessions Monday- Friday. They are also entitled to a free school meal, a fruit snack and free milk until the term in which they turn five.

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum across the seven areas of learning, using play as the 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 within the wider context including health visitors, speech and language therapists and other professionals to meet the needs of all children.
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment;
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult;
- Have a key person approach to develop close relationships with individual children;
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out.

Early Years Curriculum We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

These three areas are the prime areas:

Communication and Language
Physical Development
Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported through the four specific areas:

Literacy
Mathematics
Understanding the World
Expressive Arts and Design

The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively. Children are provided with first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. Plans are written using the EYFS curriculum based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience.

Children have whole group and small group sessions, which increase as they progress through the EY. We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. 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.

Observation and Assessment

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey on Eazmag. Each half term, children's progress is assessed so progress can be effectively tracked. Twice a year, parents are invited to attend a parents evening where we will discuss the learning journey of the child.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Exceeding expected levels or,
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers at the end of the academic year.

Outdoor Provision

Part of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is to ensure all children have the opportunities to access outdoor play throughout the whole year. In order to do this it is important to children have the appropriate clothing/protection. We encourage children to take risks, have a go and get messy!

Spring/Summer

- Sun hats
- Clothing that covers sensitive areas i.e. neck, shoulders and backs
- Sun cream – Parents/carers will be required to send children to school with sun cream on. If they need to reapply during the day then the bottle should be labelled and the children need to apply the cream by themselves.
- Water bottles with fresh drinking water

Autumn/Winter

During the winter months we will ensure the children have the opportunity to experience a range of weather i.e. snow, wind, ice, to do this we need to ensure that children have the appropriate clothing, i.e. hats/gloves/warm coats/wellies.

Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. Please see our separate school policies and procedures on Health and Safety and Safeguarding and Child Protection for further information.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals in our schools, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies. See our separate policies on Equality of Opportunity and SEND.

Parents as Partners and the Wider context

We strive to create and maintain 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 numerous ways including half-termly stay and play sessions, family learning days and home learning challenges. 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 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 school trips and inviting members of the community into our setting.

Transitions and admissions

Admissions to Reception are made through the Leeds City Council website:

(<https://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/children-families-and-carers/schools-and-learning/school-places/admissions-primary-schools>). The important dates when applying for Reception place(s) are shown online and will guide you through the process.

An interest in Nursery application(s) can be arranged in house. Our admission policy can be discussed with the office staff who will support you with the necessary information.

Transitions into Nursery and Reception 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 child-minders. Children entering our nursery will receive a home visit before starting and are also encouraged to visit the setting. Children attend introductory sessions to Reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. They may also receive a home visit and/or a nursery visit prior to starting Reception.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EY teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head of School and the Early Years Leader will carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy: Admissions Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy; Learning Support Policy; Behaviour Policy; SEND policy, Safeguarding policy, Intimate care policy.