



# The Dragonfly Federation

East Ruston and Stalham  
Infant and Pre-schools

A Flying Start for all



## Early Years Policy

### Introduction

Within this document the term Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is used to describe the children who are in our Pre School and Reception class.

Early Years education is a vital stage in children's development, academically, socially and emotionally. It will build upon all the learning that has already taken place in the home and enable the child to function in a group beyond the family. As outlined in the EYFS statutory framework '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.'

The policy reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole teaching staff.  
The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all staff.

### Our aim

We aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children, thereby giving them a strong foundation for future learning.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four 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
- 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

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning both inside and outside, bearing in mind the four guiding principles
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents
- 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
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out
- Structure the day and provide routines suitable to young children
- Have a key person approach in Ladybirds to develop close relationships with individual children and parents (in Hedgehogs the class teacher is the key person for all children)

## **Implementation**

Our curriculum is based on the stages of development across the seven areas of learning, enabling the children to achieve and exceed the Early Learning Goals. The areas are interconnected and are all important in the learning and development of children.

There are 3 prime areas which are particularly crucial in the early years and are the main focus. These are:

Language and Communication  
Physical Development  
Personal, Social and Emotional Development

There are 4 specific areas which are also planned for and help to strengthen and provide applications for the prime areas. These are:

Literacy  
Mathematics  
Understanding the World  
Expressive Arts and Design

When planning the curriculum attention is also given to the **Characteristics of Effective Learning** as these underpin the development of the children. These are:

Playing and Exploring – engagement  
Active Learning – motivation  
Creating and Thinking Critically – thinking

## **Observation and Assessment**

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey, which are shared with parents. In the Autumn and Spring terms, parents are invited to attend a parents evening. Reports are written at the end of the year for Ladybirds who are moving into a reception class. The report focusses on the 3 prime areas and the specific areas of development. In Hedgehogs reports include whether the child has reached each Early Learning Goal, is working towards it or has exceeded it and also a section on the characteristics of their learning. This is in line with Government Policy. Parents are then invited to discuss the report before their child moves to Year 1.

## **Inclusion**

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace. We 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.

## **Transition**

There will be home visits both on entry to Pre School and Reception class and visits to all pre-schools (where possible) by the reception teacher. There will be a programme of transition for Pre-school children where small groups spend time with the current Reception. The Reception teacher is also the Early Years Leader and spends time throughout the year in Pre-school therefore she is familiar to the children. There will also be sessions where the entire new intake is invited to spend time in the class without the current children. In Reception there may be a staggered intake in September, allowing children to settle in small groups and a chance for parents to discuss their children and any concerns early in the term.

Children in Reception will have regular visits to the Year 1 class in the Summer Term. The reception teacher and the Year 1 teacher will meet to discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring will take place in accordance with the school's monitoring policy.

**Reviewed Date: February 2018**  
**Next Review Due: February 2020**