



Inspire Education Trust  
Together we achieve, individually we grow

# Early Years Policy



## Early Years Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In partnership with parents and carers we enable our children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

We endeavour to ensure that our children are given "the best possible start in life to enable them to fulfil their potential" (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2017).

### **The EYFS is based upon four principles:**

1. A unique child: developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
2. Positive relationships: supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
3. Enabling environments: where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
4. Learning and developing: an acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates

### **A Unique Child**

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### **Positive Relationships**

At Inspire Education Academy Foundation Stage, we recognise that children learn to be strong independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. We believe that parental partnerships are vital to children's success in the EYFS and pride ourselves in our ability to engage with parents, carers and the wider community. We encourage parents and carers to contribute to children's online learning journals;

submitting their own observations of learning in the home environment. Parents and carers have access to their child's learning journal at all times.

### **Enabling Environments**

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up with planned continuous and enhanced provision, alongside both adult directed, adult supported and child-led activities.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning; following children's interests. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual online learning journals.

Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

### **Learning and Development**

Teachers and teaching assistants follow the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017) in both Reception and Nursery. There are seven areas of learning and development, of which three are prime areas, and four are specific areas.

#### **The prime areas are:**

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development.

#### **The specific areas are:**

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world and
- Expressive arts and design.

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings (such as child minders), children's developmental levels are assessed. Through the use of our online learning journals we ensure that our children experience a broad and balanced curriculum. We acknowledge that a strong focus on the prime areas of learning provides a basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. However, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will

discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the Inclusion manager in order to access Special Educational Needs support.

### **At Inspire Education Academy Foundation Stage:**

"Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development." (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2017)

At Inspire we support children in using the three characteristics of effective learning.

These are:

- **Playing and exploring:** children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- **Active learning:** children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- **Creating and thinking critically:** children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

### **Adults will support children's development by:**

- Careful and regular observation to assess each child's progress and needs
- Embedding new learning in what is known or familiar
- Using a variety of different teaching strategies and organisation
- Providing materials, artefacts and information at appropriate times to enhance understanding
- Providing a wide choice of tools and materials to encourage children's planning and decision making skills and their sense of autonomy
- Ensuring a balance between adult directed, adult supported and child initiated activities
- Maximising opportunities for experiential learning
- Maximising opportunities for both knowledge based and imaginative play
- Encouraging positive dispositions towards learning
- Using assessments based on observation in order to inform planning and the provision of work differentiated to individual need.

Date of approval:

Signature: Head Teacher

Signature: Chair of Local Governing Body

Renewal Date: