

DRUMBEAT SCHOOL AND ASD SERVICE



Drumbeat

School & ASD Service

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

2016



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Documents used in consultation with this policy:

- **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five** (March 2014; effective September 2014)
- **EYFS Handbook** (2014)
- **Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage** (2012)
- **Inclusion Development Programme. Supporting children on the autistic spectrum: Guidance for practitioners in the Early Years Foundation Stage.** (2009)
- **Early Years Developmental Journal** (2013)

(1) Introduction and Aims:

In EYFS we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential.

We aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special.
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates - physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued.
- Fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community.
- Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways.
- Encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes.
- Developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously.
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions differ to their own.
- Understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development.
- Providing learning experiences in play which reflect children's personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn.
- Providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.

We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

At Drumbeat, we aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child .
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Work in partnership with parents and guardians and value their contributions ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability.
- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.
- Provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs, which are inclusive rather than parallel.

In Drumbeat we are looking at the EYFS curriculum, with the addition of autism and providing for both.

See **"Drumbeat Staff Handbook"** as well as the following policies: **"Safeguarding Policy"**, **"Drumbeat Safeguarding Appendix Procedure 2014"**, **"Drumbeat Equal Opportunities Policy"**, **"Drumbeat Behavioural Policy 2014"**, **"Drumbeat H&S Policy"**.

(2) EYFS Curriculum:

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- **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 and 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 and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning.
- **Positive relationships.** We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.
- **Enabling environments.** We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.
- **Learning and development.** The Foundation Unit is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The unit is set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

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

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

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, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

Achievement of these prime and specific areas of learning is by:

- **Playing and exploring.**
- **Active learning.**
- **Creating and thinking critically.**

The EYFS curriculum at Drumbeat will be adapted for the levels of development of each individual child.

(3) Learning and Development through Play

Learning for young children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the foundation stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing, exploring and communicating in whatever form this may take.

We organise the day to provide a balance between the following:

- Child initiated Activities - children make choices from within the learning environment to meet his/her outcome for learning.
- Adult Initiated Activities- practitioners provide the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning.
- Adult Directed Activities – Children engage in planned activities to meet specific learning outcomes.

Children will be assessed in their play activities through the developmental stages of play and how this play can be expanded and developed further; which activities/toys/people to add, etc.

At Drumbeat we recognise that young children learn best when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and our EYFS setting has an ethos of learning through play. We recognise the importance of children's play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts. In providing these active learning opportunities through play we understand the central position of play within the EYFS framework.

The play activities offered to the children will be adapted specifically for the children in our care and according to their individual needs and interests.

(4) Inside and Outside Provision:

The EYFS provision within Drumbeat will consist of an appropriately designed and resourced large-spaced classroom, together with a small adjoining outdoor area, which will be set up as a continuation of provision within the class. A designated outdoor area space will be used for playtimes so that parallel play can be fostered and explored; involving larger equipment to develop gross motor skills; including bikes, climbing and building with larger apparatus. Transition into the larger playground will be planned for in the summer term for those children who are able to cope with more hustle and bustle. The outdoor area will always be available for outdoor play for all EYFS children.

(5) Lunchtime Provision:

Lunchtimes will take place in the small kitchen, which will be the designated EYFS lunch hall. This will allow the children to develop skills appropriate for the larger lunch hall, into which transition will take place in the summer term. Children will have "choice" from visually communicating, pointing and verbalising as to which food they want and also helped with their feeding skills. Individual lunch time plans will be made for this area in order to support specific needs and skills needed.

(6) Planning, Observation and Assessment:

As a team, we write long term and medium term plans using the EYFS curriculum based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans are reviewed by the Head of Primary. (*Please see our plans for more details*). These plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses. Daily plans are then made in order to be reflective on the children's individual experiences during each day and where this will lead to next.

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. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further.

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 spring term, parents are invited to attend a parents evening and reports are written twice a year.

Within the final term, we provide the parent's with a report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning. The parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the teacher in preparation for Year 1.

The EYFS framework provides a long term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year.

Medium term planning is created and takes into account the individual children's learning and developmental needs.

All Areas of Learning and Development are planned for and available to access within the setting. The learning opportunities provided include a range of adult focused and child initiated activities indoors. The setting also makes use of the outdoor environment whenever possible.

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive.

Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs. All staff who work in the Foundation Stage are involved in this process.

The planning within the EYFS is based around the children's interests. These plans are used by the EYFS team as a guide for weekly planning. However, we may alter these in response to the needs of the children.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of long, short and recorded observations and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded and used to inform the Senior Leadership Team. The parents and guardians are given the opportunity to meet with the Foundation Stage Team each term and, at the end of the third term, we provide a written summary in relation to the children's early learning goals to parents and guardians.

The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' observations of children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child initiated play. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally). Practitioners make time to carry out planned observations of individuals and groups of children regularly. They also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children's learning. All practitioners are involved in observing children. Practitioners use observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children's abilities, needs, interests, play schemas and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress.

EYFS scrapbooks record children's progress over the academic year in all Areas of Learning and Development of the EYFS framework. Samples of children's work are gathered, along with photographic evidence and observations.

There is continuous monitoring and assessment of each child's development using the new Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (2012). At the end of the year it provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements. Baseline assessment is carried out during the children's first term upon entering the setting. Judgments made on children's development in the Profile are based on practitioners' evidence of children's behaviour observed independently and consistently in their

Children are also given planned adult led work through individualised Individual Education Plans (IEPs), which identify targets in specific areas of learning that are important to their particular needs.

The observation cycle will involve incidental observations, long observations, which will put into the children's individual scrapbooks. The developmental journals will be used in addition to the scrapbooks for assessments at the end of each term. Planning will involve long term (the EYFS document itself), medium term plan, outlining themes and activities for the weeks within a term and short term plans, which will consist of a weekly overview as well as daily plans, taking into account the reflective nature of EYFS provision.

As part of Drumbeat's assessment and moderation of work/practice within the early years an EYFS Portfolio will be set up and available to use, containing exemplars of work for different levels of the **Prime Area** curriculum.

At the beginning of their reception year children will also be assessed against a baseline assessment called **Early Excellence Baseline Assessment (EEXBA)**. This data will be to track a child's progress at the end of Key Stage 1. This will work alongside the baseline system that will already be established within the class.

Please see Drumbeat's **"Baseline, Tracking and Assessment in the EYFS and Key Stage 1"** Document (2014)

(7) Home and School Links

At Drumbeat we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the EYFS framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. So, practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents.

We value the role of parents as children's primary educators. We encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we aim for the schools and parents and carers to work closely in the EYFS Class. This can have a very positive impact on a child's development but relies on a two-way flow of information and knowledge. At Drumbeat we would like to work as a team; between home and school. We will develop this working relationship between the school and parents and carers as follows: We will outline the school's expectations in a **Learning Contract**. We will hold a parent consultation early in the year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment. We will send home a termly newsletter detailing the areas of learning and the overarching theme of the term or half-term. We will operate an "open door" policy that will allow parents and carers to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner. Conversely, if EYFS staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them. We will conduct workshops for parents and carers, in consultation with our Outreach Team, to enable them to be familiar with the teaching methods

used in school to make it easier to emulate them at home. We will conduct a further parent consultation late in the term to inform parents and carers formally of their child's overall progress.

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; Learning Journey, "Wow" moments, "Stay and Play" monthly sessions, home-school contact book, daily communication boards, weekend communication boards,

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.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through regular letters, reading records, home/school contact books and telephone conversations.

Initially, when a child is admitted to Drumbeat they will receive a home visit from a member of the class team, teacher and/or therapist, carried out the week before their child begins school. This will be organised with the parents at one of the earlier transition meetings.

This also gives suggestions of how parents can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been covered in the setting.

Parents are invited to attend parents' evenings during the course of the academic year. The first of these takes place during the autumn term to allow practitioners and parents to discuss how children have settled into the setting. Another parent's evening takes place during the spring term where practitioners will feedback on children's learning and development progress as well as a final meeting in the summer term.

Other opportunities for practitioners to share children's learning, development and well-being with parents include Learning Journeys sessions once a month and end of year reports where children's achievements are recognised as well as our monthly "Stay and Play" sessions.

(8) Communication:

Communication is very important in all areas of school life and happens throughout the school day and staff will endeavour to utilise every opportunity to help each child to communicate within their own comfort threshold. Children will be helped to develop their communication skills through everyday activities; child initiated, adult directed, adult led and whole class sessions. A variety of communication tools will be used to encourage these skills including objects of reference, photographs as well as line drawings, depending on a child's level of development.

(9) Intimate Care:

"Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene and it is good practise for the school to inform the school nurse of all children requiring intimate care. Every child has the

right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child.

No intimate care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or guardian of that child and all parents and guardians will be asked to provide that permission when their child joins the EYFS class at Drumbeat.

See “**Drumbeat Policy on Safeguarding**” and “**Drumbeat Policy on Health and Safety**”

(10) Accident and Incident procedure:

Children’s safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe and make choices and assess. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children’s safety. With activities taking place outside the school we carry out risk assessments as well as for certain areas within the school, such as the EYFS outside play area.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate must be on the premises in the EYFS class when children are present. There must be at least one person on outings who has a current paediatric first aid certificate. First aid training is consistent with the Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2012 and will be renewed every three years.

You must keep a signed record of all accidents that happen to children, and tell Ofsted about any serious accident, illness, injury or death of a child while they are in your care or of an adult on your premises. See the accident and incident procedure guidance document for more information.

You must tell Ofsted and Lewisham Council about any incidents as soon as is reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the incident occurring.

Within the EYFS we will follow the same procedure as set out for the whole school.

See “**Drumbeat Staff Handbook**”

(11) Transition to Drumbeat

Drumbeat provides full-time Early Years education for children in the Reception Year. This is for children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old.

Before they start in the setting, all children are offered a series of come and join in sessions (time permitting), during the summer term. The purpose of these initial visits is for the children to meet their new practitioners and start to become familiar with the setting environment. The EYFS practitioners as well as the Head of

Primary will also go to visit the children in their current pre-school settings. The aim of these visits is to support practitioners to develop their knowledge and understanding of each child in order to make the transition period to Drumbeat as smooth as possible. In the summer term parents are invited into school to meet the setting practitioners.

At this meeting information regarding the induction process and what goes on in the setting is shared. There is also time for informal chat and parents' questions. The transition meeting will also include the pre-school and Drumbeat Outreach teams.

Information packs will be distributed to parents at this meeting, detailing school routines and expectations. Induction packs for children to complete with parents will also be given out as another way to support practitioners' knowledge and understanding of each individual child. At the end of this meeting there is an opportunity to schedule a home visit from your child's practitioners, which will take place in September.

From September children attend the setting full-time, though parents can opt for their child to attend part-time should they see fit. Every effort is made to make children feel safe, secure and happy.

During the Summer Term prior to starting school the following visits are conducted:

- A member of staff will visit pre-school settings from which September's intake will be taken.
- EYFS staff will visit each child in their home environment
- Each child and their parents and carers will be invited to spend some time at Drumbeat in order to familiarise themselves with both the staff and the foundation unit environment.
- When children join the school in September the following procedures will apply in order that they can gradually adjust to their new surroundings:
- During the first week, children will not attend school. This will give time for the EYFS staff to carry out home visits for all the children scheduled to start at Drumbeat.
- During the second week, children will attend for the morning session and lunch only.
- During the third week and thereafter, children will attend for the full school day unless EYFS staff and parents feel it may be too soon for the individual child.

The EYFS Outreach team will be in consultation with the school EYFS staff regarding information gathering in respect to the children scheduled to start at Drumbeat school.

(12) Transition to Key Stage 1

Transitions 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. Children attend introductory sessions to the Key Stage 1 Class to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. They receive a small booklet containing photos to take home as their transition book, which parents will read to them on a regular basis during the holidays to prepare them for change in the following September.

In the final term in Reception Class, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

Within the EYFS we will follow the same procedure as set out for the whole school.

(13) Equal Opportunities

See **"Drumbeat policy on Equal Opportunities"**

Within the EYFS we will follow the same procedure as set out for the whole school.

(14) The EYFS Outreach Team:

The Outreach EYFS team support the families' transition into Drumbeat school as well as help to deliver training to staff within the early years. Training takes place for staff and parents on the EYFS, play, behaviour as well as communication.

To be ratified on March 10th 2016