



The Light Christian School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Our curriculum is underpinned by our core values faith, love, and excellence. Our curriculum is designed to enable our pupils to:

- develop **faith** in God, and faith in themselves as beings created to be knowledgeable, wise and creative in His image;
- develop **love** for God and mankind. They will develop knowledge and skills so that they are equipped to lead through service and play a positive role within their local and the global community;
- develop **excellence** in knowledge and skills. They will develop as critical and curious thinkers, and articulate speakers understanding of key concepts and processes

We are committed to our school being safe where learning is nurtured and encouraged in a happy, caring and fun environment and where good behaviour is expected as all children enjoy their educational journey.

The Early Years Foundation Stage, 2021 (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. It is the document used to guide practitioners to plan challenging learning experiences within a vibrant, engaging environment and to assess the development and progress of each child.

The EYFS is based upon four themes:

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and Development

And four principles:

1. Every child is a unique learner who is constantly learning, capable, confident and self-assured.
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
3. 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 carers.
4. Children develop and learn in different ways. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years' provision, including children with educational needs.

The EYFS identifies the Characteristics of Learning:

1. Playing and exploring
2. Active learning
3. Creating and thinking critically

EYFS Areas of Learning:

There are 3 Prime areas of learning;

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Physical Development
3. Communication and Literacy

And 4 Specific areas of learning;

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the world
4. Expressive arts and design

None of the areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend upon each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. Through play and practical experiences, children learn about the world and their place in it. They learn through first hand experiences, talk, books and equipment. We set realistic yet challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The school fosters and develops relationships between home and school. Children are encouraged to share, take turns and co-operate with others and are supported to have the skills to resolve conflicts peacefully. They are motivated to be independent and make choices for themselves. They are also encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of others and to respect other cultures and beliefs. Children are supported to manage their emotions, develop a positive sense of self and have confidence in their own abilities. Children learn how to look after their bodies through adult guidance and modeling, this includes making healthy food choices, understanding the need for good oral hygiene and being able to manage their own personal needs independently.

Physical Development

Physical activity is essential for a child's all round development, the children are given opportunities to develop their spatial awareness, balance, co-ordination, agility and core strength through a variety of different activities and experiences in both indoor and outdoor areas. The development of fine motor skills is supported through a range of different planned activities and access to different tools and equipment during child initiated play.

Communication and Language

This covers all aspects of language development and provides the foundation for literacy skills. Children are encouraged and supported to develop competence in speaking and listening, being able to pay careful attention to what is being said and responding appropriately. We aim to extend and enrich the children's vocabulary through story time, rhymes, role-play, group discussions and a language rich environment. Children are encouraged to share their own experiences through speaking and acting out events in imaginative play and talking about their own ideas. They are encouraged to take part in class activities such as participating in music sessions, working with puppets, saying rhymes and singing songs together.

Literacy

We have a variety of resources for the children to use to help them develop early literacy skills. Children are encouraged to use the mark-making areas indoors and outdoors independently, but they also take part in teacher-led activities. These activities include whole class shared reading, phonics sessions and small group literacy activities. To support the teaching of phonics and emergent writing, we use the Read Write Inc scheme. The pre-writing work encourages pencil control and clear letter formation. Children have the opportunity to independently develop their writing skills in accordance with their age, ability and competence. We encourage children to treat books and other resources with respect and they are given many opportunities to enjoy books by themselves and with their peers and to listen to stories read by adults. Children in reception take home reading books every week that reflect the stage of their phonic knowledge to share with parents/carers. Nursery children take home a story book each week that has props with it to help encourage and support engagement with the story at home.

Mathematics

We aim for children to achieve mathematical understanding and a firm foundation for numeracy through practical activities and using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas. Pre-number work is covered through nursery rhymes and number activities complementing learning achieved at home. Children are given the opportunity to learn about number, shape, space, position, pattern, and measurement. We use White Rose Maths in Reception, this scheme develops a deep understanding of number and mathematical concepts through a wide variety of activities that include concrete objects, abstract activities, songs, stories, and enhancements in the continuous provision.

Understanding the World

All children are given opportunities to solve problems, investigate, make decisions and experiment. They will learn about living things, their local environment, the world around them and the people who are important in their lives. The children will be given the opportunity to explore a wide variety of fiction and non-fiction text, that will enrich their vocabulary development and support an understanding of the world around them.

Expressive arts and design

We provide opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas, and feelings through a variety of art, design, technology, music, drama, movement, dance and imaginative play activities. Children are given opportunities to make paintings, drawings, collages, models and use musical instruments. Children also learn new songs and rhymes and enjoy singing them with each other.

Active Learning through Play

At The Light Christian School 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 the EYFS setting at The Light Christian School, practitioners provide both structured and unstructured play opportunities inside and outside. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experiences which will support children to discover, explore, investigate, develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity, and help to make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. Play opportunities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding.

Our Pedagogy

All our Nursery and Reception projects follow four stages: **Engage – Develop – Innovate – Express**. This structure provides a tried and tested, consistent approach to learning.

Engage

The Engage stage is built around a memorable experience and a variety of activities and enhanced provision all designed to spark children's creative thinking and curiosity. We can use these activities to find out about children's knowledge and interests, to support further planning.

Develop

The Develop stage allows children to form a deeper understanding of the theme and master new skills through adult led activities and enhanced continuous provision. There are three themed weeks, with linked stories to introduce the children to the focus for the week's learning. Every week contains activities to support learning in the Prime areas, including communication-based tasks to develop vocabulary and language skills, and activities to develop fine and gross motor skills. There are weekly phonics games, maths activities and exciting writing opportunities. Children can also enjoy a wide range of creative learning and exploration tasks.

Innovate

The Innovate stage offers children a creative opportunity to use and apply what they have learnt. They work collaboratively, discuss ideas, make decisions, and use their own judgement to solve real-life and imaginary problems. The tasks are often accompanied by a story designed to encourage the children to reflect on their learning and use their experiences to support them to solve problems. The Innovate learning journals document children's thoughts and ideas and guide their creative thinking and decision making.

Express

Finally, in the Express stage children can share, reflect on and celebrate their learning and achievements in a supportive and nurturing environment.

As previously outlined our curriculum incorporates learning through play, learning by adults modelling, by observing each other and through guided learning and direct teaching. It is also important to highlight that our plans are flexible to allow us to respond quickly to children's new interests and/or needs.

Weaving throughout the EYFS curriculum at The Light Christian School are three Characteristics of Effective Learning.

1. Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
2. Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

3. Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

These elements underpin how we reflect on each child's development and adjust our practice accordingly. Supporting children in their individual learning behaviour and observing the context of children's play is essential.

Throughout their time in the Early Years our children partake in an ambitious curriculum which is designed in a sequential way to ensure progress towards the end of reception goals. These goals are defined as Early Learning Goals (ELGs)

The curriculum is planned through a series of themes that reflect and respond to the children's interests, offering experiences in all areas of the curriculum and which carry equal importance to provide a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities for play and child- initiated activities.

Our curriculum is underpinned by our progression framework. The framework is a sequenced and interconnected set of skills and knowledge statements. Each statement contains objectives - core knowledge, hinterland and broad knowledge. This framework provides the structure for learning and the endpoints that the curriculum builds towards. The number of skills and knowledge statements in the framework is broadly proportionate to the number of programmes of study for each subject. This enables teachers to plan for and deliver each subject in line with realistic time allocations.

The Foundation Stage

Children have opportunities to work together during free flow, where they can move independently between the classroom and the outdoor area. EYFS staff plan and work together to ensure continuity and progression, providing age and stage related activities to suit all our children. Children are also taught within their own class groups in a variety of ways; in whole class groups, small group work, pairs and individually. We are dedicated to providing excellent pastoral care and education to those children in our care. Our staff's professional development is supported, and we pursue for all to have an excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and child development.

The Foundation Stage effects a smooth transition from home to school and then from EYFS into the mainstream curriculum whilst offering stability for the children. Children are provided with an environment in which they are given opportunities to express themselves using a variety of mediums and suitable material to stimulate and extend imagination and understanding. Through planned play and talking, young children learn about themselves and the world around them, they are given opportunities to socialise, make friends and therefore develop personal, social, and emotional skills and develop confidence

In the Foundation Stage, we acknowledge the potential for learning in every activity and situation that arises. Our aim is to provide a secure and stimulating environment in which children flourish and learn to make sense of the real world. We make the children feel valued and give them the confidence to become active learners. Our activities provide first hand experiences through play and discussion, and children are encouraged to interact with others, to move about and explore a wide variety of learning situations. Opportunities are provided for sustained activity and continuous provision, as well as spontaneous, self-chosen activities. It is important to us that children experience success, have fun, and enjoy themselves whilst learning.

Organisation of the classroom

The organisation of the classroom reflects the importance that is placed on children learning through play and first-hand experience, developing independence and having opportunities to initiate their own activities.

The Early Years class provides the following areas:

- Story shelves for retelling stories
- Construction
- Sand and water
- Book corner with a range of fiction and non-fiction books
- Writing table with a range of writing resources
- Small world toys
- Interactive whiteboard
- Malleable materials
- Musical instruments
- Painting and creative equipment
- Maths games and equipment

Reading support

- The first books that children take home to share with parents/carers will be picture books and then books with simple repetitive text and rhymes.
- During the year, each child will take home independent reading books that have been shared at school.

Transition into Nursery and Reception

- A parent meeting is held to provide all the information need prior to their child starting with us.

Communication with Parents/Carers

- Parent/carer consultations are held throughout the year
- We have an open door policy
- Parents/carers will receive a report at the end of each team
- Parents/guardians can arrange informal meetings with the class teacher as and when required.

Behaviour

Staff promote positive behaviour in line with the Behaviour Policy.

The underlying ethos of the policy requires adults to:

- Use positive language when interacting with all adults and children
- Refer constantly to the Core Values of **Faith, Love and Excellence**
- Consider children's ages and stages of development when identifying and implementing strategies to manage behaviour.

- Involve children fully in the decisions that affect their daily lives. This is done by considering their feelings and behaviours as well as their voices e.g. supporting children to develop golden rules for their setting.
- Plan positive and challenging learning opportunities that promote positive learning behaviour.
- Praise and celebrate considerate and positive behaviours such as kindness or willingness to share by giving public praise, sticker, praise note and sharing achievements with parents.
- Ensure children understand it is their behaviour and not the child as an individual that is unacceptable (i.e. *kicking* is unkind and not the child that is unkind for kicking).
- Work in partnership with parents and carers to identify and together resolve any underlying causes for negative behaviour.
- Recognise that in some cases a child's special educational need may affect their behaviour.
- Help children to understand the effect their behaviour has on other children and adults
- Ensure that this behaviour is modelled by all adults in the setting.
- Recognise that a consistent and planned approach is critical to effective behaviour management. Consistency among staff will ensure that children understand and respect the positive expectations set for behaviour within our setting.

When addressing behaviour concerns we will always seek information from parents/carers and discuss strategies and actions to promote positive behavior as concerns arise.

Adults do not use physical punishment, approaches intended to single out and humiliate children or shout or use raised voices in a threatening way in response to children's negative behaviour.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Ongoing assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of the EYFS settings at The Light Christian School. Regular, planned, and focused assessments are made of children's learning and individual needs. 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. The wealth of knowledge that parents and carers provide about their child is highly valued and is an integral part of building a picture of their child's learning and development. We actively encourage all parents and carers to contribute to their child's learning journey through home learning.

Observations take place daily both planned observations and spontaneous observations that capture significant moments of children's learning. Observations are recorded through the Curriculum Maestro platform. Other methods of assessing children in the EYFS setting include engaging alongside children in their play, annotation of children's written work, talking with children about their task or play.

Practitioners use observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children and to assess and monitor each child is making at least good progress. Observations are evaluated against the EYFS Development Matters statements and the Early Learning Goals (at the end of Reception), children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress.

At the end of the Reception year, teachers must complete an Early Years Foundation Stage Profile for each individual child, using the Early Learning Goals in each area of learning to assess whether children are working towards or at the expected level of development. It is important that all members of staff are familiar with the 'Early Years Foundation

Stage Profile 2021 Handbook' to seek further guidance on completing the profile and to support teachers with the moderation process. It is important to note that when assessing the Early Learning Goals for Communication and Language, and for Literacy, assessments must be made in relation to children's competency in English.

Late child collection/non collection

The welfare and safety of the children is always of paramount importance.

- Under no circumstances should any child go home with anyone else unless prior arrangements have been made e.g. the parent/guardian has informed the teacher or the school office that another person will be collecting their child and has written down their details including how they can be identified.
If a parent or guardian is unavoidably delayed, they should contact the school office as soon as possible and endeavour to get to school as quickly and safely as possible. The child(ren) will be cared for by a member of the teaching or office staff until they are collected.
- If the parent/guardian is unable to contact the school office, the child will not be allowed to leave. The class teacher or a member of the senior leadership team will try to contact the parent/guardian to make alternative arrangements. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the emergency contact(s) will be phoned
- Should a child not be collected and the parent/guardian or emergency contact(s) are not contactable, the Senior Leadership Team will be informed and social services and/or the police will be contacted.

Toileting in Nursery

In line with NHS guidelines, it is expected that by the age of 3, 90% of children are dry most days, even then, it is expected that all children will have the odd accident.

As we are expecting 90% of our Nursery pupils (not including those who have an identified need) to begin Nursery toilet trained, we will support the 10% of pupils who are working towards this. During transition in to Nursery, all parents are provided with supportive guidance to support them in toilet training their child. Parents have the opportunity to meet with the Nursery lead to discuss concerns if needed. The school supports any training programme requested by a child's GP or health visitor.

Parents of pupils who are in nappies/pull ups are expected to provide the school with a supply of nappies/pull ups/wet wipes/nappy sacks and spare clothing. All parents will need to complete an Intimate/Personal Care Plan upon starting Nursery.

Toileting in Reception

In line with NHS guidelines, it is expected that by the age of 4, most children are reliably dry during the day.

As we are expecting 100% of our Reception pupils (not including those who have an identified need) to begin Reception toilet trained, it is essential that parents support their child in achieving this milestone before they start at our school.

If a child has not achieved this milestone and is wearing nappies/pull ups pupils (not including those who have an identified impairment) parents/carers will be required to support with the intimate and personal care of their child. Parents/carers will be required to complete an Intimate/Personal Care Plan detailing the expectations whereby parents:

- will be phoned if their child soils themselves and will be expected to come in to school to change them (please note, the adult changing does not have to be the parent/carer but should be a named adult on the Intimate/Personal Care Plan.

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according the EYFS statutory framework.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy