

Lawnside Academy

Early Years Policy

“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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.
“Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage”,
Department for Education, 2021

At Lawnside Academy, we are committed to providing a high quality early years’ education, which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning. We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2021.

Staffing and Organisation

At Lawnside Academy, we have a large Early Years unit which has the use of 2 large classrooms and dedicated outdoor area. The classrooms have a carpet area and the rest of the space is organised into learning zones for the children to access. There are 2 full time teachers, supported by a level 4 teaching assistant and 2 full-time teaching assistants. Other teaching assistants may be deployed in Early Years, based on the needs of the children.

Staff are organised to support the children in a balance of adult-led and child-initiated experiences throughout the day. Most sessions include free flow access to the outdoor area. Practitioners are aware of the need to be flexible in order to respond to unplanned events that the children are interested in.

Planning

The Early Learning Goals are the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the time they reach the age of five. There are three prime areas of learning:

- **Communication and Language**
- **Physical Development**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

In addition, there are four core areas of learning:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**

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

Our planning has a sharp focus on the children's needs, their interests and their stages of development. We recognise that the seven areas of learning cannot be delivered in isolation and seek opportunities to make links between them. We aim to deliver the curriculum through planned, purposeful play and present new concepts in meaningful contexts that enable the children to build on what they already know.

Long Term Planning

Our long term planning shows our aims and values, demonstrates how our continuous provision meets the EYFS requirements and promotes learning within the areas of learning and development, tracks the learning objectives that have been covered and highlights any key events to be included.

Medium Term Planning

At Lawnside Academy, we deliver a creative curriculum, which is based around a new topic each term or half term. Medium term planning shows the key learning experiences for each area of the curriculum. Practitioners use this flexibly, choosing learning experiences to meet the needs of the children.

Short Term Planning

Short term planning shows the learning opportunities that will be available over the week, including adult-led activities and learning environment enhancements.

Effective Teaching and Learning

We encourage the children to play an active role in shaping their learning experiences. Practitioners engage in discussion with the children about what they are interested in, which skills they would like to develop further and which resources they need to support their learning. We aim to provide an attractive, challenging learning environment which offers high quality opportunities for the children to learn through play, both indoors and outdoors. There is a range of "continuous provision" available in the classroom, which is designed to offer open-ended, practical learning opportunities. Children are supported to think creatively and imaginatively and explore how resources can be adapted.

Adult-led activities are practical in nature and based on first-hand experiences wherever possible. The children are supported to develop problem-solving skills through open-ended tasks and opportunities to share their thinking with others. The number of adult-led activities which the children take part in increases throughout the year to prepare them for the Year 1 curriculum.

Observation and Assessment

At Lawnside Academy, we use a range of strategies to gather information about the children's learning and development and use this information to ensure that our planning meets the needs of all children.

During child initiated activities, practitioners make 'snapshot' observations and record on observation notes or through target tracker observations. Notes about guided activities are recorded on class record sheets. Each child has an on line 'Learning Journey' and observations are gathered here with examples of work, home activities and parental contributions.

Teachers use NFER baseline as a starting point; this allows learning opportunities to be pitched appropriately and also provides a baseline of the children's attainment. This information is closely monitored to ensure that all children are making good progress. Staff then go on to use our Target Tracker monitoring system to ensure progress.

In the summer term, practitioners consider the 17 ELGs in the EYFS Profile to decide whether each child is working at the expected level or have not yet met the ELGs. Judgements against the ELGs are based on ongoing observations; all relevant records, discussions with parents/carers, and any other adults who the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. The results of the Profile are shared with parents/carers, and there are opportunities for them to meet their child's class teacher to discuss this information.

At the end of the year, Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This helps to create a smooth transition and assist with the planning of activities in Year 1.

The EYFS Profile results are reported to the local authority, who monitor and moderate the judgements made.

Learning Environment

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage the children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. Resources are clearly labeled and organised into learning zones, enabling the children to access them with a high level of independence. Practitioners regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the learning zones and make adaptations as necessary.

Being Active

The children have access to an outdoor area, which provides a range of physical activities; including blocks, large balls, bats and balls, climbing equipment and digging equipment. They are also able to access the trim-trail on the main playground. The children take part in PE sessions weekly and Forest School sessions throughout the year.

Parent Partnerships

We value the contribution that our parents/carers make to their child's learning and take every opportunity to work in collaboration with them. We publish a regular newsletter to inform parents of what their child will be learning and how they can support them at home. In the Autumn and Spring terms we hold parents' consultation meetings and in the Summer term we send home detailed reports. We welcome contributions from home and provide 'Wow moment' slips for parents/carers to complete. The children take reading books home to share. Throughout the year, there are parent information meetings where parents can find out how their child learns in school.

Community Links and the Wider World

Over the year, we arrange visits from members of the local community to support our topic work. We also arrange trips for children in the EYFS within the local community, for example visiting

the library or local fire station. The children take part in several educational visits linked to their topic work. Film clips, non-fiction texts and artefacts are also used to introduce new concepts in real-life contexts. We aim to develop the children's awareness of other cultures by exploring different countries and celebrations.

Behaviour Management

Please refer to the school's Behaviour Policy and Statement of Behaviour Principles.

Safeguarding

Please refer to the school's Safeguarding policy'.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We have a responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference. We can support each child's needs by:

- removing or helping to overcome barriers where these already exist
- being alert to the early signs of needs that could later lead to difficulties and responding quickly and appropriately, involving other agencies as required
- stretching and challenging all children

Please refer to the school's Equality and Special Educational Needs policies.

Arrival and Collection of Children

Children can enter the playground from 8:40am. Parents must accompany the children until the bell goes at 8:50am. Each child is marked in on the day's register by the class teacher. Parents/carers wait in a designated area on the playground when collecting their child(ren) at the end of the school day. If a child needs to be collected during the school day, parents report to the school office. Under no circumstances is a child allowed to leave with anyone other than those named on the child's registration form, unless the parent has given permission. If there are queries regarding a child's collection, the class teacher will contact the child's parent/carer to discuss the situation with them. If a child is not collected and the parent/carer is uncontactable, the other names on the child's registration form will be called to collect the child. If no-one on the child's registration form is contactable, the principal will telephone Children's Services for advice/action. Arrangements will then be made for the child to be removed to an appropriate place of protection agreed by Children's Services. It remains the responsibility of Children's Services in conjunction with the Police to contact the parents and if appropriate, to inform them of their child's whereabouts.

Educational Visits

Written parental permission to take the children into the local environment is sought upon admission to the school. Further permission is obtained for any other outings. Risk assessments are completed for each type of outing.

Promoting Awareness of Dangers and How to Stay Safe

We encourage the children to take an active role in ensuring their own safety and involve them in discussions about health and safety issues. For example, the children may take on the role of a 'Danger Detective' and look for possible hazards around the classroom or use photographs of a place that they will visit on a school trip to complete their own risk assessment.

Complaints

Please refer to the school's Complaints policy.

Information for Parents and Carers

We provide a pack for new parents/carers which includes information about our daily routines, the types of activities provided, and staffing. There is a parent notice board located on the wall outside the Early Years classroom.

Transition from Pre-school to Reception

We work closely with our feeder settings to ensure that the children make a smooth transition to school. In the Summer term, we organise opportunities for the children starting school in the September to visit. School staff make additional visits to talk to pre-school staff. We hold a transition meeting for new parents in the Summer term, where we outline daily routines and expectations. Children have taster sessions in July. In September, children and parents come to a 'play and chat' session before the children start school to gather information about them and answer any questions that parents may have. The children start school on a part-time timetable to establish routines and become familiar with their new environment, before starting full-time. Routines such as assemblies and playtimes are built up gradually.

Transition from Reception to Year One

In the Summer term, we begin a programme of transition to support the children with their move to Year One. This involves visits to the Year One classroom, discussion with current Year One children, walks to look at where they will enter school and opportunities to ask any questions about the next year. The school holds a 'Move Up' morning, giving the children a taste of their new class. The Year One classrooms are organised to reflect aspects of Early Years provision. The first half term of Year One is based on the principles of the EYFS, allowing the children to feel secure in their new environment.

Illnesses and Injuries

Parents/carers are asked not to send their child to school if they are unwell and to inform the school office of their absence. Parents/carers are asked to inform staff if their child is suffering from a minor ailment so that appropriate care can be given. Children must not return to school within 48 hours of sickness and/or diarrhoea.

If a child becomes unwell whilst at school, a member of staff will:

- phone the parents/carers, explain that their child is unwell, explain the symptoms noted and ask them to collect their child

- sit with the child in a quiet place away from other children, if possible, until the parents arrive
- if the child has had sickness and/or diarrhoea, explain the policy of at least a 48 hour clearance of either symptom before the child may return.

Advice relating to notifiable diseases is displayed in the school office. In the case of an injury, appropriate first aid will be administered by a qualified first aider. A first aid kit is kept in the Early Years' classroom and its contents are in accordance with advice from the Health and Safety Executive and the Community Health Physician. First aid cover is provided at playtimes and lunchtimes. All accidents are recorded and signed by the member of staff who dealt with the incident. The staff member dealing with the incident is responsible for completing an accident slip and this is sent home with the child at the end of the day. Parents/carers may be contacted by telephone to inform them of an injury if deemed necessary. The member of staff who has been dealing with the incident/accident will contact the parent/carer.

We ask for written parental consent to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future when the children are admitted to school. In the case of a more serious accident to a child, the practitioner/school will contact the parent/carer to agree a course of action if time permits. If the parent/carer cannot be contacted the practitioner/school will seek appropriate medical attention or treatment for the child. The child should not be given anything to eat or drink. If a child or adult needs to be transported to hospital, every effort should be made to use a car with fully comprehensive insurance including business use. Two adults must accompany the child, and one adult must accompany a member of staff. Should an ambulance be required, one adult must accompany the child or adult. The child's registration form must be taken to the hospital with the child.

Medicines

Only drugs/medicines prescribed by a registered Medical Practitioner will be administered to children. Parents should complete and hand in a Medication Consent Form, along with medicine, to a member of staff. Drugs/medicines must only be administered to the child for whom they are prescribed and all drugs/medicines must be kept in the original container stating whom they are prescribed for and dosage information. Unwanted or unused medicines must be returned to the parent for disposal. A record of the drugs given should be made indicating the time, dosage and signed by the person administering the dose and a countersignature.

Training for prescribed medication that is invasive i.e. EPIPENS etc. is available via the school nurse. If an individual child requires a care plan, this will be drawn up in partnership with parents and the school nurse.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the governing body, which receives regular reports on the EYFS from the Principal and EYFS leader. The policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if necessary.

Version	Date	Author	Note on revision(s)	Date ratified by governors	Review date
1	January 2018	L. Blackford	Policy reviewed		
2	September 2021	L. Blackford	Policy reviewed in line with EYFS curriculum changes 2021	22 September 2021	September 2024

Signed: 
Principal

Chair of Governors