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WELCOME TO THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

(Reception Class and Nursery)

Welcome to the Early Years Foundation Stage, (EYFS), where our 'hands on' approach to learning encourages your children to explore, investigate, problem solve and creatively investigate their surroundings.

We endeavour to provide you with the necessary information you will need to work in partnership with the School so that together we can make your child's experience a full and exciting one and establish a sound foundation on which to build their future life in education.

This section of the handbook is specifically aimed at parents of pupils in the EYFS and should be read in conjunction with the main booklet and EYFS and School Policies.

We believe every child deserves the best possible start in life and we aim to support them to fulfil their potential. Our school motto is "***A good education is a gift that lasts for ever.***"

Mrs K Fennell and Mrs G Hayward
Joint EYFS Co-ordinators

Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS)

Our Reception Class and Nursery are registered to deliver the EYFS and therefore follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. This exists to support all professionals working in the EYFS.

It sets out:

- The legal welfare requirements that everyone registered to look after children must follow to keep your child safe and promote their welfare.
- The 7 areas of learning and development which guide professionals' engagement with your child's play and activities as they learn new skills and knowledge.
- Assessments that will tell you about your child's progress through the EYFS.
- Expected levels and milestones that your child should reach at each age, called the "**Early Learning Goals (ELGs)**".

There is also guidance for staff on the planning of activities and how to observe and assess how your child is learning and developing. This is similar to a curriculum in schools but is specific for younger children. It is designed to be flexible and meet your child's unique needs and interests.

Purpose and Aims of the EYFS

The curriculum in the EYFS provides a broad and balanced range of experiences in order for your child to develop socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

These four guiding themes work together to underpin effective practice in the delivery of the EYFS curriculum.

Unique Child – Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive Relationships – Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a keyworker.

Enabling Environments – The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.

Learning and Development – Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

Curriculum

All children in our EYFS have access to a broad, rich, topic based curriculum taught both indoors and outdoors. We follow the EYFS Framework and cover the seven areas of learning as follows:

Prime Areas

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) - This area has three sub sections. These are Making Relationships, Self-confidence and Self-awareness and Managing Feelings and Behaviour. The outcomes focus on children learning how to work, play, co-operate with others and function in a group beyond the family. They cover important aspects of personal, social, moral and spiritual development including the development of personal values and an understanding of self and others.

Communication and Language (C and L) - This is broken down into three sub sections which cover Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking. These outcomes cover important aspects of language development and provide the foundations for literacy. The EYFS Framework places a strong emphasis on children developing competence in speaking and listening and understanding.

Physical Development (PD) - This covers both fine and gross motor development and keeping healthy. Physical development is implicit in all areas of the EYFS framework. Teaching concentrates on children developing physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulative skills in indoor and outdoor environments. Positive attitudes are encouraged towards a healthy and active way of life.

Specific Areas

Mathematics (M) - This is broken down into two sub sections. These are Number and Shape, Space and Measures. These outcomes cover important aspects of mathematical understanding and provide the foundation for Mathematics. They focus on achievement through practical activities and using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas.

Literacy (L) - This area of learning has two sub sections of Reading and Writing. The objectives ensure success in early reading and writing skills. Phonics are a big part in this area and the ability to blend for reading and segment for spelling are skills that are promoted daily throughout the Foundation Stage. Other areas of learning also make a vital contribution to the successful development of literacy.

Understanding the World (UW) - This area of learning is taught through a topic based approach. Topics are altered and adapted continuously depending on a child's learning and interests. We focus on children developing knowledge and understanding of their environment, other people and features of the natural and made world. It provides a foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning.

Expressive Arts and Design (EAD) - This covers creativity, art, music and drama. This area of the EYFS framework focuses on the development of children's imagination and their ability to communicate and to express ideas and feelings in creative ways.

Characteristics of effective learning - The characteristics of effective learning describe attitudes, attributes and skills which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner. They are vital elements of support for the transition process between Nursery and Reception and between Reception and Year 1. The characteristics of learning run through and underpin all seven areas of effective learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes. Information describing the child's characteristics of effective learning provides teachers with vital background and context when considering the child's next stage of development and future learning needs and helps them ensure that each child achieves their potential.

Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keep trying
- Enjoy achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

You can find information regarding the Early Years Foundation Stage which includes the early learning goals at www.foundationyears.org.uk. The foundation years website also includes a range of resources and contacts.

The range / type of activities and experiences provided for the children

Both indoor and outdoor learning environments in the EYFS are spacious and zoned to allow the children to enjoy learning through play.

Indoor Activities

- Role play areas are changed regularly in line with the topics the children are learning about. A café, farm shop, mini beast lab, jungle and vets are examples.
- A variety of dressing up clothes, props and open ended resources are available to extend the children's imagination.
- Our creative areas are filled with art and craft materials and mark making resources, different materials, locks, construction kits, modelling clay, paint, sand and water.

- Computers, IWB, programmable toys and CD players are continuously available to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of ICT.
- Children may choose to quietly look at fiction and non-fiction books in cozy reading corners, complete a jigsaw or play a game.
- Cooking and tasting foods from various different countries from around the world.

Outdoor Activities

- Studying frogspawn, caterpillars and chicks to learn about life cycles.
- Forest Days with den building in the local woodland.
- Picking apples from our own trees and blackberries from hedgerows.
- Making crumbles using flour we have ground from the wheat collected from the local farmer's field.
- We grow fruit and vegetables and use the produce to make homemade delights.
- Sand and water play, outdoor theatre area.
- Trikes, bikes, scooters.
- The Adventure Trail.
- School pet, a rabbit called 'Dixie'.

Staff

All staff working in EYFS are identified on the information boards. Key workers will introduce the children to the other members of the School staff who may be timetabled to work in these areas.

All staff are trained to a high standard in order that they can deliver the best possible experiences for your children.

They have also successfully completed Child Protection, Paediatric First Aid and Food Hygiene courses.

The Role of the Keyworker

A keyworker has a special responsibility for a particular child. The keyworker will work with the child, his/her parents or guardians to ensure the child's care and educational needs are met. We liaise with the parents informing them of their child's development and progress in the 7 areas of learning. Keyworkers are available to speak to you at the beginning and end of day to ensure your child's emotional needs are met and to give feedback, if necessary.

We plan, observe and assess your child in each area of learning allowing us to provide a variety of learning experiences that build on their interests and knowledge.

A keyworker will be allocated to your child when your child joins the Nursery. Your child's class teacher is their keyworker in the Reception Class and this will be identified at the New Parents Evening in June.

Partnership with Parents

We value parents / guardians contributing to their child's learning by sharing photos, awards and any special news from home. You may want to use the post it notes on the 'Let's Work Together Board' in Reception or to add quotes on the Nursery board dedicated to this purpose. Alternatively, you can email in photos of activities/ achievements to the EYFS email address EYFS@dixie.org.uk. We will log on to it once a week to print off any contributions to be added to your child's learning journey. Some ideas could be cooking, sports outside school, physical milestones, losing teeth or going to the dentist. The

possibilities are endless! This will also help us to plan more effectively based on their interests.

Supporting your Child's learning at Home

In the Reception Class parents should listen to and support their child's reading, encourage their child to learn the letters and sounds being taught in class. Children learn to read at different rates and teachers will provide a reading book when appropriate.

Nursery aged children are to be encouraged to look and talk about their letters and sounds from their Sound Book. Parents should support their child to relate these sounds to objects in their environment and the children are encouraged to bring in an object, relating to the sound of the week.

Parents should also encourage independence in their children, by encouraging them to use cutlery properly and to become independent as they dress and undress.

Learning Journey

A 'Learning Journal' book is produced for each child by their keyworker. A child's learning journal celebrates their experiences. Although it is mainly kept at school it belongs to parents/guardians and the child. Over time it will tell a story about your child's learning, their friends and the activities that they enjoy sharing with others. Staff will observe your child at play to help to understand and support their individual well-being and development. We get to know your child's skills, interests and share in their ideas. The more we understand about your child, the better we can support him/her in a way that is right for them.

Communication with School

We hope you will enter into a partnership with us based on shared responsibility, understanding, mutual respect and open dialogue; exchange information and discuss opportunities which will benefit your child. These conversations help your child to become more settled, happy and secure.

Parents of children in the EYFS are encouraged to regularly check the Parent Information Board situated outside the classrooms in Reception Class and in the cloakroom in Nursery, where information about current topics is displayed. Should you wish to access more information please speak to your child's Class Teacher / Key Worker or Mrs Hayward, Nursery Supervisor.

Information helps to bridge the school / home gap and helps parents / guardians share their child's learning experiences at home. Parents can discuss with their children what they have been learning at school and continue that learning at home.

All children are provided with a Home School Diary. These are vital for facilitating communication between home and school. These are checked daily by staff and we ask that you also check your child's Home School Diary daily. Please speak to a member of staff if you have anything of extra importance to communicate.

Assessments

We make formative and summative assessments of children's learning in all 7 areas and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. These assessments

are both planned and spontaneous and observations are recorded in a variety of ways, for example, photographs. We keep folders of each child's written work and parents are given termly progress reports and have termly parent's evenings. The Reception Class also have Open Classrooms once a term. A baseline assessment is done when the child starts in Nursery and this is tracked against the age bands throughout their time there. Progress summaries are completed at the end of the year and passed to the Reception Class teachers. A baseline assessment is then carried out again when they start in Reception and progress is tracked throughout the year and recorded against the Early Learning Goals.

Scores are then sent to the local authority and passed onto Year 1 teachers along with a summary of each child's characteristics of effective learning. We undertake internal moderations within our EYFS setting, attend local authority moderation meetings and welcome external moderators coming to visit us.

Rewards

In the Nursery we have a visual reward system called 'The Sunshine Tree'. Photographs of the children are placed on the tree as a reward when the child has achieved academically, displayed good behaviour or has made a pleasing effort.

In Reception children earn merits for their House for the same achievements. Golden leaves are given to children who make a special effort to follow the golden rules which focus on kindness, responsibility and effort. The children add the leaves displaying their name, to the Golden Tree. In line with the whole school, children in the Reception Class also attend Gold Book Assembly.

Behavioural Management

See Traffic Light System in JS Booklet.

Planning

Our curriculum is delivered through a completely topic focused approach with the children's interests at the heart of it.

Planning is divided into long, medium and short term. Long term plans state the topics to be covered for the year. Medium term plans illustrate the objectives being taught each term. Short term or weekly plans show specific activities planned to achieve the objectives.

All staff are included in planning activities which respond to the needs and interests of the children, which we recognise may change day to day. We plan for purposeful play with both child initiated and adult led activities.

As the academic year progresses the Reception Class children move onto more formal lessons and activities, especially in the mornings, when the children can focus for longer periods of time. This will support their transition to Year 1. Pippins children will spend time in the Reception classrooms and Reception children time in Year 1 to further aid the transition.

First Day/School Day

On arrival at School, please park and bring your son/daughter into the Reception Class or Nursery. Please arrive between 8.30am and 8.55am. A member of staff will be there to

greet you. Arrangements are in place to extend the School day from 7.45am to 5.25pm, please refer to the main booklet (Before and After School Care).

We realise the first day can often be an anxious time for both parents and children. If you wish to know how your child has settled, please ring the Office after 10.30am. The Office staff will be happy to take your call and check with us how your child has settled.

Morning Break

Children in the Reception Class should bring a healthy snack for morning break and may bring a named bottle of water to keep with them in the classroom. No juice please.

Snacks and milk are provided for Nursery children during both the morning and afternoon sessions. In the morning the children will have toast whilst in the afternoon the snack varies e.g. a piece of fruit, yoghurt, a sandwich.

Fresh water is freely available throughout the day for all children in EYFS. Milk is available in the Reception Class until your child turns 5 years old, after which there is a cost should you wish to continue.

Lunches

Lunches are served in the main School Hall and are prepared on site. The menu is displayed on the notice boards and is available to download from the School's website. A vegetarian option is available for those who require it. Please make sure we are aware of any food allergies / food intolerances.

In the Reception Class children are able to bring a packed lunch if they do not wish to have School lunches. Please inform the School Office if your child no longer requires a school lunch as a half-term's notice is required.

All children are encouraged to use a knife and fork and to display good table manners.

End of Day

Reception parents should wait in the garden area outside their classroom and Nursery parents should come into the Nursery via the cloakroom.

If a child has not been collected they will be taken to the After School Homework Club to have a snack and join in the activities while his/her parents are contacted. A charge may be incurred.

Staff are always available for a short conversation but if you would like to have a more private conversation please make the staff member aware and this will be arranged.

Daily routines in the Reception Class and Nursery

Reception / Nursery children's daily timetable is displayed on the noticeboard outside of their classrooms and is available in your child's Homework Diary.

Reception and Nursery have a shared lunchtime in the School Hall and play together afterwards.

The children are taught PE and Music by specialist teachers. They regularly visit the library and ICT suite. French is also taught throughout the school, starting in the Nursery.

In preparing Nursery children who are joining our Reception Class, we offer swimming lessons in their last term in Nursery. Reception Class children swim weekly in the Autumn Term.

Children in the Reception Class are invited to take part in many of the in-house extra-curricular activities.

General Information

Uniform

Details of the School Uniform can be found in the main booklet.

Children in EYFS will spend time outside in their garden areas as many activities involve outdoor learning. Please make sure they bring their coats, hats and gloves in the cold weather.

On PE days the Nursery children should come to school in their PE kit and bring their uniform in their PE bags. Reception children will change into their PE kits in school.

Spare Clothes

All children are hopefully toilet trained before joining the Nursery. We do appreciate however, that accidents happen and that some children may need assistance when going to the toilet. Staff are happy to support the children and deal with changing clothes, if necessary. To cover such eventualities please bring your child's PE kit to school every day.

For Reception children please include an extra change of underwear and socks in their PE kit.

First Aid

All EYFS staff are Paediatric First Aid trained. Accidents do happen from time to time but usually only minor bumps and bruises. Should an accident happen you will be informed when you collect your child at the end of the day and a note will be written in your child's Home School Diary. In the event of a serious accident, parents will be informed immediately. It is important that the School Office has up-to-date contact telephone numbers.

If your child is unwell at home before coming to school, please telephone the School Office on the first day of absence to let us know. Parents are asked not to return their child to school until he/she is completely well. Please refer to main booklet for more information on school medical procedures.

Security

When you come into School please park in the main carpark and escort your son/daughter to the Reception Class or Nursery.

If you come into School during the day, please report your presence to the School Office.

If you are not able to collect your child at the end of the day, please inform a member of staff or contact the School Office with details of who will be collecting them.

Parents dropping off or collecting their children from Reception Class and Nursery are asked to make sure that the garden gates are always closed when they leave.

Key pads are used on the front, side and rear entrances to the school at the beginning and end of the School day. Parents will be given the code which will change termly. Locks will be added throughout the day making entrance to the School via the buzzer system controlled by the School Office.

School Trips / Outings

On joining the School you will be asked to complete an Educational Visit Consent Form. This form provides us with the information the School needs to take your child out on educational visits throughout their time at the Dixie Grammar Junior and Nursery School. It is important that you keep us informed of any changes to this form e.g. if your child develops an allergy.

In the Nursery all children and parents are invited to take part in each trip. Parents accompanying their children on school trips, and leaving their cars at school during the day, should park in the main car park at the rear of the sports pavilion.

Dates for trips and special events are put on the calendar/website and information is also on the noticeboard.

It would be helpful if you could inform staff if you plan to collect your child before 3.00pm on any given day as, on occasions, we may take the children across the local farmer's fields on nature trails and to the local water park. Many of these visits are weather dependent.

Policies

Copies of the School's Policies are available on the School website www.dixie.org.uk or from the School Office.

Links with the Community, Other Agencies and Other Settings

Several events take place annually to support various charities. Examples of these are our Sponsored Bounce, Red Nose Day, Giving Tree, Harvest Festival and Christmas charities. We are also building strong links with the local diocese.

How the setting supports children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

In the EYFS all children are given the opportunity to achieve their best with staff taking into account their range of life experiences and abilities.

All children develop differently and we recognize that any significant lack in their progress, after the initial settling in period, will need careful monitoring. We also closely monitor those children making progress / working beyond their expected level. Small class sizes mean that classwork and homework can be specific to each child.

By both continual informal and formal assessments undertaken by EYFS staff and the School SENDCO we have opportunities for the identification of any special educational needs a child may display.

Children subsequently identified with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are monitored and information/observations discussed with parents and the School SENDCo*.

Advice may be sought from other agencies / SEND support services e.g. Speech and Language Therapy Service.

All children are offered equal opportunities irrespective of physical disabilities, gender, ethnicity, home language, social circumstances, religion or belief and intellectual capacity. Through differentiation, we aim to meet the needs of all pupils including the identification and support of those children with SEND including those considered gifted and talented.

*Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator, Mrs Baker

Free Early Education Entitlement

Funding continues into the Reception Class until the term of your child's fifth birthday. You will be required to complete a Parental Statement of Undertaking Form (PSOU) in order for us to claim the correct amount of Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) on your behalf. In line with FEEE guidelines, we offer a maximum of 15 hours per week. It is important you inform us if your child attends another nursery, as this affects the amount of funding we are able to claim. **It is also important that you write in your child's Home School Diary the reason for any absences, as this also may affect your government funding entitlement.**

Details of the funding are to be found on the Leicestershire County Council website www.leics.gov.uk. and is available at the back of this booklet.

Leicestershire County Council employs Monitoring Support Officers to carry out regular checks on the way providers administer FEEE. These officers may contact you to confirm that your child has been present during the term that they have audited. Please be assured that your information will not be given to any third party and will adhere to the School's Data Protection Policy which can be found on the School's website and in the back of this booklet.

Childcare Vouchers

If your employer operates a childcare voucher scheme you may be able to save national insurance and income tax by registering for the scheme at your workplace. We can accept childcare vouchers in the Nursery from many providers including Edenred, Sodexo Pass and Computershare Vouchers Scheme (formally Busy Bees). For further information or guidance on the vouchers we can accept, please contact Mr Martin Roe, the Bursar, on telephone 01455 292244.

Compliments and Concerns

The School would very much like to know when we have done something particularly well and we are grateful for comments received. We also want to know if you feel that we can improve what we are doing. Our aim is to respond quickly and deal efficiently with any problems that may occur. The School also has a formal Concerns and Complaints Policy which, as with all our policies, is available on the school website or from the School Office.