



Lilleshall Primary School

Early Years Policy 2024 - 2025

At Lilleshall Primary we believe that all children have potential and learn better

- when they can encounter new, interesting experiences
- by actively involving themselves in an experience
- in an environment of warm trusting relationships
- when there are good partnerships between home and school
- when working with others as part of a group
- with knowledgeable, supportive adults who listen and respond
- when adults and children reflect on previous learning, develop ideas and plan next steps
- when children feel that their interests and ideas are valued and they are able to value the contribution of others
- in an environment rich with possibilities to develop and express ideas when they can respond creatively
- when they are motivated
- when they are supported to develop positive mental health and well-being

We aim to understand how children learn and develop and the practices through which we can enhance that process. How we teach is rooted in values and beliefs about what we want for children and supported by knowledge, theory and experience.

At Lilleshall we have developed a very carefully planned curriculum which ensures that children sequentially learn the knowledge they need to be equipped for transition to Year 1.

- the child can take ownership of their learning and through adult support this is valued and developed to move their learning on with very clear goals and aims for the knowledge they need to embed.
- The adult leads specific focused activities to develop knowledge, skills and concepts the children need.

The Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their reception year.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At Lilleshall Primary School we recognise

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

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at Lilleshall Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or any protected characteristics. All children and their families are valued within our school. In the EYFS we set realistic and 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.

Positive Relationships

At Lilleshall Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- inviting parents to EYFS and Phonics curriculum talks
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns
- there is a formal meeting for parents in the Autumn and Spring terms at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher.
- parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: open afternoons linked to a theme, sports day etc;
- using the online system, Tapestry so parents see what the children are learning and can make comments about what they are learning at home.

Transition

At Lilleshall we have worked hard to develop professional relationships with a number of feeder settings. We have termly Early Years Partnership Hub meetings with managers and practitioners who are working together to improve transition, moderate work and share good practice through networking and sharing expertise. We are committed to evaluating and developing this further and believe that this has a positive impact on our children's learning journey.

We have a meeting for parents of children who start in September during the Summer term and children are invited to visit school on various occasions following this before the end of term. In September we have a staggered start where children complete half days for a week to ensure children feel safe and settled very quickly. Parents are also invited to a school lunch with their children.

When children transition to Year 1 we have several visits over the last half term in Reception where children get to meet their new teacher and have some time in the classroom in order to familiarise themselves with their new environment.

Enabling Environments

At Lilleshall Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests and ways of working, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

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 observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in the children's 'Learning Journey' and on Tapestry - our online system.

Children's phonic and early maths knowledge is assessed regularly to ensure that children are receiving the appropriate support in order that they have the knowledge base they need before transition into Year 1.

At Lilleshall Primary School, in the summer term, children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active or be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS class has its own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At Lilleshall Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The ways in which a child engages with other people and their environment-playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically- underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner. At Lilleshall these attitudes are integrated with our whole school approach to learning called 'Making our Learning Fly.'

Playing and exploring

"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development."

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

We plan for a range of play opportunities for our children including:

- child initiated - where children plan, carry out and evaluate their play.
- adult directed - where an adult describes what a child is expected to do to ensure focused learning in a particular area.
- child led - where children chose from a group of activities but develop the play themselves.

Active Learning

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods."

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better

understanding and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions."

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

At Lilleshall we have opportunities for children to be more involved in co-constructing their learning through our themed work. As we develop a theme children work with adults to lead and develop their own lines of enquiry and have an opportunity to explore and respond to these in their own way. These sessions will allow children to develop the characteristics of effective learning

Areas of Learning and Development

The EYFS is made up of three **Prime** areas and four **Specific** areas of learning.

The **Prime** areas are fundamental, work together and move through to support development in all other areas.

The **Specific** areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

The curriculum at Lilleshall primary school has been developed using Development Matters 2022 and Birth to 5 documents and includes carefully planned experiences and learning in order to give children the knowledge and expertise they need to begin the Key Stage 1 curriculum.

The **Prime** areas are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and language
- Physical Development

The **Specific** areas are:

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

All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

In Early Years we follow the school policies for safeguarding, child protection and the use of cameras and mobile phone.

Assessment

Children are monitored for their development and to ensure appropriate next steps over the year. In the Summer term they are assessed against the ELG's. Children's observations are recorded on an online system - Tapestry and parents have access to this on a daily basis.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor is Chris Raper and she will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head teacher and subject coordinators will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

EYFS Staff

The staff in the EYFS team have been trained through monthly meetings where the curriculum, pedagogy and safeguarding needs are discussed. All staff understand the curriculum and how we teach it. We are aware that we can learn grow and develop our expertise as a team every year and are committed to creating the most effective learning environment where children thrive.

Behaviour Management

Please see the schools Behaviour Policy. We do understand that part of the children's transition will be learning how to self-regulate in a classroom with twenty-nine other pupils. This takes time for pupils and will be achieved at different rates and will require different levels of support. We aim to develop a partnership with parents to enable our pupils to successfully learn how to interact and co-operate with peers and become part of the EYFS community. The vast majority of our pupils will have achieved this by the end of the Autumn Term, some will take a little longer. However, if behaviours are not adjusted by the end of the Spring Term monitoring of behaviour will be intensified and recorded weekly on the school's record system CPOMs, so that it can be shared with additional agencies when required.

Safeguarding

At Lilleshall Primary School, we believe children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure. Children's safety and welfare is paramount to us. We create a safe, secure and welcoming environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We provide a curriculum that teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies in place to safeguard children and daily procedures are in place to encourage children to operate in safe ways and to keep them safe. 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.