EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY
September 2026

Responsibility: Lucy Richens

Approved by Governors: 6.10.2026

Review Date: September 2027

Rationale

At Dovers Green School, we believe that play in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the key to successful early learning. It underpins the whole range of active, rewarding and enjoyable learning activities that children will experience during their time at the school. We believe that the EYFS is crucial in supporting and promoting children's:

- personal, social and emotional wellbeing
- language, communication and listening skills
- physical development
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning
- social skills
- attention skills and persistence
- reading and writing
- mathematical understanding
- understanding of the world
- creative development

Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- that children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- quality and consistency in teaching and learning, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- a close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.
- every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

We aim to:

- support the transition to and between settings
- promote the development of early language and communication skills
- provide opportunities for each child to become a valued member of the school community
- promote children's positive self-image and self-esteem
- foster enthusiasm for learning
- develop children's confidence in their ability to be successful learners
- provide opportunities that enable children to co-operate and negotiate
- develop children's ability to concentrate on their own play or group tasks
- support the development of early mathematical concepts
- foster children's ability to make decisions, ask questions and solve problems
- support the development of children's fine and gross motor skills
- promote a growing understanding of how to keep healthy and safe
- foster creativity

We will do this by:

- delivering a carefully planned induction programme for children and parents
- working with parents to enhance children's learning
- attending a local event with other schools to meet staff from feeder settings
- praising success and valuing the unique contribution of each individual
- caring for each individual irrespective of religion, race, background, gender, social group or disability
- agreeing classroom rules to keep everyone safe
- providing time for children to become engrossed, work in depth and complete activities
- providing opportunities to try things out and make mistakes, to share and take turns
- creating an environment in which children's thoughts, ideas and feelings are handled with sensitivity and respect
- starting learning activities from what children already know and can do, teaching appropriate skills
- giving opportunities for children to practise, develop and refine their skills
- giving children the opportunity to work collaboratively, explore, communicate, listen and develop ideas through weekly Forest School sessions.

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021.

Structure of the EYFS

At Dovers Green, we have three classes which have a capacity for 30 children. The classes work together and we operate a free flow system, which incorporates the three classrooms, as well as the outside terrace area. The top playground is used by each class separately and a rota is in place so that the children will access this area three times a week. Each class has a teacher (or part time teachers) and a teaching assistant. We also have further teaching assistants who either support 1:1, or across the whole year group.

Curriculum

Our Early Years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2026. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through four specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Planning

The curriculum at Dovers Green is flexible and takes into account the interests and needs of the children who are in our setting. It is designed to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Surrey Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

The EYFS teachers plan activities for children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. The class teams regularly discuss the children's learning, and use the information gathered to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences. Classes are timetabled to take responsibility for setting up and planning the activities in the outside areas. In the autumn term, there is a focus on the Prime Areas, and particularly on communication and language development. Topics are carefully planned to allow for flexibility and for the children's learning to be developed based on their interests. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

EYFS staff use their knowledge of the children gathered through high quality interactions and ongoing assessments to plan for:

- appropriate play-based activities across all seven areas of learning
- activities which promote progression towards the Early Learning Goals
- effective, stimulating activities, both indoors and outside, with equal emphasis given to both in terms of learning opportunities
- a balance between adult led and child-initiated activities
- opportunities for appropriate intervention by adults to help children make progress in their learning
- activities which take account of children's different needs, skills, abilities, interests and learning styles
- activities which enable children to consolidate, build on and extend their learning.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, both inside and out, and through a mixture of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interactions. We place high importance on language development and all staff focus on developing the children's language through their interactions with them. Children are taught a discrete PE lesson once a week, and they also take part in a Forest School session once a week. Phonics is taught using the Read, Write, Inc programme and they are taught phonics as soon as the Baseline Assessments have finished. As the children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for year one.

Assessment and Record Keeping

At Dovers Green, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff observe and interact with the children to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. Our knowledge of the children is then used to shape future planning. In order that we have a picture of the 'whole' child, parents are asked to upload videos or photos of any WOW moments which happen at home to Seesaw, so that they can be shared and celebrated in the classroom.

Within the first six weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). We also carry out our own baseline assessment of the 17 areas of learning through observation and interactions with the children. Children are reported to be either working 'at or 'below' at this point in the year. Teachers will monitor the children's progress termly and will use checkpoints at the end of the autumn term and spring term, to ensure that all children are making expected levels of progress and are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goal at the end of the year.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and carers and the results are shared with parents and carers for their child. The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. The profile data is submitted to the local authority. Each child's attainment is discussed with the appropriate year one teacher to assist in future planning.

Working with parents

Starting school can be an exciting and sometimes worrying time for both children and parents. Dovers Green School has a planned programme of induction that offers the children and parents/carers opportunities to visit the school from the July before they start with us. This allows them to be slowly introduced to our school and in a calm and structured way. In addition, we aim to build effective relationships with parents and carers so that information, knowledge and expertise can be freely communicated.

EYFS children will start attending school slightly later in September than the rest of the school, so that staff can make home visits. All children who are four years old by 31 August are entitled to have a full time school place in the Autumn Term. However, so that children have the very best start to their school life, we plan and implement a staggered start, before they attend school full time.

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and carers. Parents and carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through parents evenings twice a year, and a written report at the end of the year. The termly progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. We hold a meeting for parents early in the autumn term to inform them about the EYFS curriculum. We also have an open door policy and regularly communicate with parents and carers at the end of the day.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the Early Years by:

- promoting good hygiene and hand washing techniques – we teach the children about how quickly germs can spread and we give regular reminders about washing hands after going to the toilet.
- We have an extensive outside area, where the children have many opportunities to engage with physical activity.
- We teach weekly PE lessons, where we regularly talk about the effects of exercise on our bodies and why exercise is important to keep us healthy.

- As part of our curriculum, we teach the children about different foods, and discuss what is healthy and what is unhealthy.
- During our year we have role play areas are linked to how we keep healthy, for example, a doctor's surgery or a dentist's office. Also, we endeavour to invite visitors into school, to teach the children more about keeping healthy, hand washing techniques, medicines, and the importance of brushing our teeth.
- At lunchtimes, children are provided with a balanced meal and are encouraged to try a range of different foods.
- The children are provided with one piece of fruit or vegetable every day, which they are actively encouraged to eat.
- All children under 5 are provided with a carton of milk every day, which they are actively encouraged to drink. Once the children are five, parents have the option to pay for milk, which the children drink at school.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

Monitoring arrangements
This policy will be reviewed by Lucy Richens (EYFS Leader) and approved by Katie Keyte (Head teacher) every year. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Equal Opportunities
Provision for equal opportunities in the EYFS will be in line with the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Special Needs
Provision for special needs in the EYFS will be in line with the SEND Policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our:

Admissions Policy	Equal Opportunities Policy	Learning and Teaching Policy
Assessment Policy	Health and Safety Policy	SEND Policy
Behaviour Policy	Inclusion Policy	