Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) POLICY

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Policy Owner	Jackie Green
Adopted by Trust Board	
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1 Aims

1.1 This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access an engaging and effective curriculum which 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

2 Legislation

2.1 This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for 2023. This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3 Structure

3.1 At Springfields we have two Reception (EYFS) classes consisting of 8 children in each class. Our school day starts at 8.30am and finishes at 2.30pm.

3.2 At Springfields we endeavour to ensure that there are consistent structures and routines in place for our autistic learners as we know and fully understand the importance of this for our pupils. However, we also understand that everyday can look slightly different through the eyes of our learners and our Early Years staff are highly skilled and aware of how to support children in a variety of situations.

3.3 A typical day:

- Morning Greeting song and Check in.
- Fine and Gross motors skills activities including ‘Funky Fingers’ and ‘Dance Movement Time’.
- Daily phonics sessions
- Animal Therapy session (On selected day once per week)
- PAS session (Physical and Sensory delivered by our PAS team)
- Daily Sensory Story session
- Learning through play Activities to deliver the curriculum.
- Singing/Music
- Daily Maths Sessions
- Lunch - this will be eaten in the classrooms.
- Attention Bucket/Sensory Bag.
- Learning through play Activities to deliver the Curriculum.

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- Story/Calm Time
- Home

4 Curriculum

4.1 Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest EYFS statutory framework.

4.2 The EYFS framework includes Seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. Three 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

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

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

4.4 In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

4.4.1 **Playing and Exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

4.4.2 **Active Learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements.

4.4.3 **Creating and Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own thinkings skills.

4.5 *Playing and Exploring* - 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 have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. We deliver learning for all of the areas through purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

4.6 *Active learning* – 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. This provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

4.7 *Creativity and Thinking Critically* - Children are given an 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

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ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

5 Planning

5.1 Our Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, Staff working with EYFS children are expected to focus strongly on the three prime areas.

5.2 Staff plan to for each child's individual needs, interests and stage of development and use this information in order to meet their specific needs as identified in their EHCP. Staff work closely with various in-school specialist teams including SENDco and Therapy when planning for individual need.

5.3 In planning and guiding children's activities, Staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

6 Teaching

6.1 Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

6.2 As children's development allows and for those who are expected to follow the Explorer Formal Curriculum Pathway, teaching and learning will be introduced through more adult-led activities and whole class learning opportunities in order to prepare them for a more formal learning approach.

6.3 For children who are expected to follow the Discovery Semi-Formal Curriculum pathway, teaching and learning will be delivered through small group and 1:1 lessons which will be planned for the individual needs, stage of development and interests.

6.4 All children will continue to have their needs met through a balance of small group and 1:1 teaching sessions.

7 Role of the Adult

7.1 Once adults are allocated their groups/activities they should ensure that they are supporting each child's learning through play. It is crucial that practitioners interact sensitively and skillfully to support and enhance the children's learning.

7.2 Through the use of the ShREC approach:

7.2.1 **Share Attention** – be at the child's level, pay close attention to what they do.

7.2.2 **Respond** - follow the child's lead. Respond to their non-verbal and verbal communication. Make a brief comment on what they can see, hear and feel.

7.2.3 **Expand** - repeat what the child says and build on it by adding more words to turn it into a sentence.

7.2.4 **Communication** - have extended back and forth interactions. Give children time to listen, process and reply.

7.3 All adults should make children feel valued, celebrate their accomplishments and ensure that they have a good knowledge of each child. Adults need to be aware of each child's interests, how they learn and their strengths and targets as this will allow them to

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support each individual in the best way possible.

7.4 Adults are aware that child-initiated activity is a powerful opportunity for learning and make the most of this. The adults within EYFS will:

7.4.1 Maintain their focus on the learning that is taking place and actively use a range of strategies to support and extend learning through engagement with the children.

7.4.2 Offer assistance and support where appropriate and where it is needed to help children to be successful in following their own ideas and the ideas of others.

7.4.3 Ensure that the learning environment offers a range of stimulating open-ended equipment and resources both outdoors and indoors, which children can use and combine in their own way to meet their own purposes. Where equipment and resources are not available, all adults will be responsible for ensuring these are sourced as soon as possible.

7.4.4 Ensure that children have sustained time to develop their activities. Where time runs out, adults will ensure other opportunities are given to that child if he or she feels like there is still learning to be done.

7.4.5 Encourage children to express their feelings, likes and dislikes about activities through verbal and non-verbal communication, visual supports and gesture. Adults should model simple language to support children's understanding for example 'You liked this game', 'You are happy/sad'.

7.4.6 Observe children's activities carefully, trying to discover what the child is thinking about and learning and the goals of the play, so they can accurately support and extend the child's learning focus either at the time, or later by changes to the environment or in planned activities.

7.4.7 Continuous observations of children to highlight opportunities they have seen which will support future planning and learning. All Staff will be part of planning discussions and will be responsible for sharing what they have seen and ideas they have on how this can be developed through provision for the following week.

8 Role of the Environment

8.1 The environment within the Early Years plays an extremely important role in supporting children's learning and development. The environment is a teaching tool used by both adults and children and it is there to promote children's independence within all that they do. When staff, visitors, parents and children enter our setting it is important that it has a positive atmosphere where all feel safe, happy and relaxed; it is at this point where the personal, social and emotional well-being of all involved will be secure, and positive relationships can be built and learning can begin to take place.

8.2 Autism and communication friendly environments have an immediate effect on the quality of children's learning and development. The learning environment needs to be set up so it is suitable for the children using it. All environments should be comfortable, attractive and interesting. They should allow children to feel happy and safe and the children should see it as a home away from home.

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8.3 The learning environment will be flexible and accommodate children's ever-changing fascinations, interests and needs. Resources and areas of provision will be of the highest quality to promote independent play and continual learning from all children in all aspects of the curriculum. The environment should be checked and restocked daily by all Staff to ensure the areas are set up and ready for the learning taking place the following day. Each week it is important that Class Teachers use what they have observed throughout the week and check each area within their classroom and ensure it is still purposeful and appropriate for what the children need.

8.4 All of our pupils have an EHCP identifying specific needs. It is therefore the role of the EYFS Staff to ensure that experiences are enhanced whilst the children are at School. Provision will be of the highest quality and will provide children with excellent firsthand experiences to enhance learning.

8.5 When setting up the Early Years environment there should be evidence of:

- Choice boards with photos and names of the resources.
- Photographs of children using the areas
- Relevant books (both fiction and non-fiction)
- Resources for mark making/writing
- Communication boards
- Visual supports
- Alphabet/Phonics sounds
- Numerals
- Shape Space and Measure Resources
- Natural resources

8.6 Not all areas need to have all the above as at times this may not be appropriate, however there needs to be clear evidence of all across many areas of each classroom. Environments will be checked on a regular basis by the Early Years Lead and the environment checklist will be used.

8.7 The outdoor environment is also an important part of children's learning and adults will put as much time, effort and resources into this area as for many children, this will be their main learning space. The outdoor environment will be available to children throughout the day where appropriate when a dynamic risk assessment allows. Children should be able to move outdoors in ways where they may be restricted inside. Providing outdoor space allows children to explore different ways their body can move and develop their gross motor skills. Children can become inquisitive and fascinated by the natural world that surrounds them, and they can use their senses to explore different aspects of this. Being outdoors allows children to play on a large scale; they can work together to construct, problem solve, take risks and be creative. The outdoor area will support active learning and when balanced with small spaces for reflection will enhance children's learning.

8.8 Resources used outdoors should be suitable for outdoor play and be larger than resources used inside; they should not be indoor resources taken outside. Resources used outside will be open-ended items such as crates, tarpaulin, plant pots and logs. The resources will support children's understanding of the world and provide opportunities for them to explore the natural environment which surrounds them.

9 Assessment

9.1 Ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles.

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These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by Parents and/or Carers.

9.2 Assessment aims to:

- Identify individual learning needs, interests and strengths.
- Monitor progress and track development.
- Inform and adapt teaching strategies to support each individual child effectively.
- Celebrate achievements and provide targeted interventions where necessary.
- Collaborate with parents, carers, and external professionals to provide holistic support.

9.3 Types of Assessment

- Formative Assessment: Ongoing assessment through observations, interactions, and conversations to inform teaching and learning.
- Summative Assessment: Periodic assessment to evaluate progress against expectations within the EYFS framework
- Diagnostic Assessment: Detailed assessment to identify specific learning needs and inform personalised learning plans in line with the child's EHCP targets and outcomes.

9.4 Assessment Procedures

- Initial Assessment: Upon entry to Springfields, children will undergo a comprehensive assessment to establish baseline levels and set individualised learning targets.
- Ongoing Assessment: Regular observations, assessments, and evaluations will be conducted to monitor progress and adjust provision accordingly.
- Annual Reviews: Yearly reviews involving parents, carers, teaching staff, and external agencies to evaluate progress, set new targets, and update EHCPs (Educational, Health and Care Plan.)

9.5 All assessment will be recorded on our Earwig Platform and will be used to inform and update the children's Personalised Learning Plan (PLP). All Early Years staff will be involved in the recording of assessment however, it will be the Class Teachers' and Early Years Leader's responsibility to ensure that assessment is used effectively, monitored regularly and informs planning and learning opportunities.

10 Working with Parents and Carers

10.1 We recognise that children learn and develop well when there's a strong partnership between Staff and Parents and/or Carers.

10.1 We encourage Parent partnership through:

- Showing respect and understanding for the role of the Parent in the child's education
- Listening to accounts of their child's development and any concerns they may have

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- Making Parents feel welcome by being friendly, approachable and having an open-door policy
- Maintaining an on-going dialogue
- Being flexible in arrangements for settling children in
- Meeting with Parents of EYFS children regularly to discuss progress
- Inviting Parents in to share their child's learning and see a range of work

10.2 Parents and/or Carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through the Earwig platform, weekly communication, Class charts, termly reports and parent/teacher consultations.

11 Transition into School

11.1 In this policy, 'transition' describes the movement that takes place from one year to the next, and in particular from one phase of education to the next within the School. This is different from 'transfer' which describes the movement from one School to the next.

11.2 It is important that children transitioning into School get as many opportunities to experience Reception before their start date. All Staff who will be working within Early Years are asked to attend a welcome meeting for Parents. During the meeting, the Early Years Lead will give a presentation talking about:

- The Daily Routine
- Uniform
- Communication – Class Charts
- Transition Booklet
- Staff
- Curriculum
- Learning Journeys - Earwig
- Attendance

11.3 Parents/Carers also have the opportunity to ask Staff any questions they may have and have a look around the Early Years classrooms.

11.4 Before starting at Springfields, where possible, a member of Staff should go and visit children within their current setting. The purpose of this is to discuss the child with their current key worker, to view their Learning Journey, to get a good idea of what strategies are in place to support their need, any Autism strategies that may be useful to continue, where they are working at academically and what their current interests are in order to support Staff in the set-up of the new environment and specific resources.

11.5 Children may have been visited in their own home and current setting, once this is done the Parents/Carers are informed of two transition days in school. The Parents/Carers (current Nursery also) are encouraged to bring their child along to at least one session where they can meet Staff and other children they will be with from September.

12 Transition into Explorer or Discovery

12.1 Once a pathway, Explorer formal Curriculum or Discovery semi-formal Curriculum, has been decided for each individual child, transition conversations can begin. Children will be supported through the school's transition process.

12.2 It is our intention that all children at our School experience a smooth educational and emotional transition from one phase to the next by:

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- Promoting the smooth transition of children
- Preventing and alleviating stress in order to promote emotional wellbeing and involvement
- Promoting continuity of teaching and learning by sharing knowledge of children's development and different curriculums, to inform practice

12.3 We expect that:

12.3.1 Children should enjoy the transition process.

12.3.2 The transition should motivate and challenge children.

12.3.3 Transitions are an essential part of growing up. Successful transition leads to a more confident and resilient child.

12.3.4 Children's emotional welfare, wellbeing and involvement should be assessed before and after transition.

12.3.5 Transition includes changes in environment, circumstances and relationships.

12.3.6 Approaches to teaching and learning should be harmonised at the point of transition.

12.3.7 Styles of teaching and learning should meet the needs of children and not preconceived notions of what is or is not appropriate for the next phase/Key Stage.

12.3.8 There should be a professional regard for the information from the previous setting/phase.

12.3.9 Staff allocation for a period prior and during transition should be made to maximise the comfort and welfare of the children.

12.3.10 Effective transition takes time and is a process rather than an event.

12.3.11 Parents and Carers need to feel well informed about and comfortable with all transitions in their child's life.

12.3.12 Transition is about the setting fitting the child, not the child fitting the setting.

12.4 Successful transition takes careful thought and thorough planning well in advance. All Staff must be aware of the systems that are currently in place. During Term 6, Transition meetings are held between the EYFS Lead and the future class Teachers to discuss the transition between the stages. These meetings allow for data, expertise and experiences of individual children to be shared and discussed.

12.5 Children are discussed in detail with individual needs covered and targets agreed for children to continue working on during the Autumn term.

13 Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

13.1 We recognise that children learn best when they are healthy safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

13.2 We make sure that the appropriate staff:child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. There should be a minimum of 3 adults per class.

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13.3 We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

13.4 We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

13.5 The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our School's child protection and safeguarding policy.

15. Monitoring Arrangements

15.1 This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Headteacher/EYFS Lead every three years.

15.2 At every review, the policy will be shared with the local governing board.

15.3 Links to other statutory policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding Policy and procedures
- Procedures for responding to illness
- Administering Medicines Policy
- Emergency Evacuation Procedure

Policy History

Date	Summary of change	Contact

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