



A Parent's Guide to The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage has been created by the Department for Education and Skills and forms part of the Government's 10 year plan for children – **Every Child Matters** – its aim being to ensure the following five outcomes are achieved:

- Staying safe
- Being healthy
- Making a positive contribution
- Enjoying and achieving
- Achieving economic wellbeing

Focussing on babies through to five years, the framework looks at young children's development through a range of themes (principles) and their respective commitments:

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
Child Development Babies and children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Every area of development – physical, cognitive, linguistic, spiritual, social and emotional – is equally important.	Respecting Each Other Every interaction is based on caring professional relationships and respectful acknowledgement of the feelings of children and their families.	Observation, Assessment and Planning Babies and young children are individuals first, each with a unique profile of abilities. Schedules and routines should flow with the child's needs. All planning starts with observing children in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning	Play and Exploration Children's play reflects their wide ranging and carried interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.
Inclusive Practice The diversity of individuals and communities is valued and respected. No child or family is discriminated against.	Parents as Partners Parents are children's first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning.	Supporting Every Child The environment supports every child's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable.	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.
Keeping Safe Young children are vulnerable. They develop resilience when their physical and psychological wellbeing is protected by adults.	Supporting Learning Warm, trusting relationships with knowledgeable adults support children's learning more effectively than any amount of resources.	The Learning Environment A rich and varied environment supports children's learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe, yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces.	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 understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this

			process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.
Health & Wellbeing Children's health is an integral part of their emotional, mental, social, environmental and spiritual wellbeing and is supported by attention to these aspects.	Key Person A key person has special responsibilities for working with a small number of children, giving them the reassurance to feel safe and cared for and building relationships with their parents.	The Wider Context Working in partnership with other settings, other professionals and with individuals and groups in the community supports children's development and progress towards the outcomes of Every Child Matters	Areas of Development The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is made up of six areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are connected to one another and are equally important. All areas of learning and developing are underpinned by the principles of EYFS

Through observation of the children's development by key staff, their progress will be recorded and 'next steps' planned for. Observation is divided into 6 age groups, which take into consideration the range within which young children develop:

- Birth to 11 mths
- 8 to 20 mths
- 16 to 26 mths
- 22 to 36 mths
- 30 to 50 mths
- 40 to 60 mths

Using the Early Years Foundation Stage as a guide and the six areas of learning and development and their respective aspects, key staff are able to plan play activities to offer the children experiences and challenges across the whole spectrum of their development as they head towards primary school. The aim is that by the time they reach this age they are fulfilling their potential thus making the transition to school a very positive experience.

Areas of Learning & Development	
Personal, Social & Emotional Development	Understanding of the World
Communication & Language	Physical Development
Mathematics	Expressive Arts & Design
Literacy	

I hope this brief explanation of how we plan play activities, monitor progress and reach our aims for your children, gives you a clearer insight into our nursery and its ethos – *Early Learning for a Brighter Future*