Lady Joanna Thornhill (Endowed) Primary school

Learning for the Head, Heart and Hand

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Review date	**December 2024**
Date of next review	**December 2026**
Reviewed by	**Pippa Oliver, EYFS Lead & Rachael Foster, Headteacher**
Co-chairs of Governors	**Ellie Brown & James Coumbe**

(This policy will be reviewed at least every two years and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures.)

Article 28 – 'I have the right to reach the highest level of education I am capable of.'
Article29 – 'The purpose of education is to develop every child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities.'
Article 31 – 'Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities'

At Lady Joanna Thornhill Primary School, we are committed to providing a high-quality early years education and care environment for children in the EYFS. We aim to support every child's learning and development in a safe, inclusive, and stimulating environment. Our early years practice is underpinned by the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, which ensures that all children receive the best start in life, developing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they need for future success.

Aims and Objectives

- To provide a broad, balanced, and inclusive curriculum that supports all areas of children's learning and development.
- To offer a safe and nurturing environment where children feel valued, respected, and confident to explore and learn.
- To promote positive relationships with children, parents, carers, and other professionals to support children's development and wellbeing.
- To observe, assess, and plan for individual children's needs, ensuring every child is given the opportunity to reach their full potential.

EYFS Framework

Our setting follows the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, which consists of four key principles:

1. **Unique Child** – Every child is a unique individual, capable of learning and developing at their own pace. We recognize and celebrate each child's strengths, interests, and challenges.
2. **Positive Relationships** – Strong, respectful relationships with children, families, and staff are the foundation of a positive and effective learning environment.
3. **Enabling Environments** – We provide an environment that is rich in resources and opportunities for exploration, discovery, and learning. The environment encourages children to engage with others, ask questions, and explore their world.
4. **Learning and Development** – We provide a balanced and varied curriculum that promotes the development of the three prime areas (Communication and Language, Physical Development, and Personal, Social, and Emotional Development) and the four specific areas (Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, and Expressive Arts and Design).

Safeguarding and Child Protection

The welfare and safety of the children in our care are of the utmost importance. We follow the [Local Authority] safeguarding policies and procedures and adhere to the following practices:

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**: The designated person responsible for safeguarding is Mrs Rachael Foster. The DSL is trained and available for advice and guidance on safeguarding matters.
- **Staff Training**: All staff members receive regular safeguarding training and are familiar with the signs of abuse and the procedures for reporting concerns.
- **Safe Recruitment**: We ensure that all staff and volunteers are appropriately vetted through DBS checks and references before they begin working with children.
- **Prevent Duty**: We are committed to safeguarding children from extremist views and behaviors and will work with partners to prevent radicalisation.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We believe in providing a welcoming and inclusive environment where all children, regardless of their background or abilities, are supported and encouraged to reach their full potential. We will:

- Promote diversity and equality through our resources, activities, and the way we interact with children.
- Support children with additional needs or disabilities through tailored plans and, where appropriate, external specialist support.

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- Ensure that all children, families, and staff are treated with respect and dignity, valuing individual differences and promoting mutual respect.

Teaching and Learning

Our curriculum is designed to offer children a variety of experiences that are both challenging and enjoyable. We aim to:

- Use play-based learning as the foundation of all activities, allowing children to learn through exploration, interaction, and investigation.
- Ensure activities and resources are planned to support the developmental needs and interests of each child.
- Encourage active learning through hands-on experiences and offer opportunities for independent thinking and problem-solving.
- Foster positive behaviors by promoting self-regulation, cooperation, and respectful interactions between children and adults.

Observation and Assessment

We believe that regular observation and assessment are key to understanding children's progress and identifying areas for development. Our assessment practices include:

- **Ongoing Observations**: Staff will observe children in their play and learning, documenting their progress through written observations, photographs, and recordings.
- **Learning Journeys**: Each child will have a learning journey using Tapestry that documents their achievements, interests, and next steps. Parents and carers are encouraged to contribute to these.
- **Tracking Progress**: We track children's progress using [e.g. developmental milestones, individual planning] to ensure that all children are progressing at a suitable pace.
- **Parent Involvement**: We regularly share assessment information with parents and carers through meetings, reports, and informal communication, encouraging them to be actively involved in their child's learning.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We believe that a strong partnership between parents, carers, and staff is essential for the well-being and development of each child. We aim to:

- Provide regular updates and opportunities for parents to discuss their child's development with staff.
- Encourage parents to share relevant information about their child's home life, interests, and any concerns they may have.
- Foster an open-door policy, welcoming parent involvement in activities and events in the setting.
- Offer support and guidance to families to help them support their child's learning at home.

Health and Wellbeing

We are committed to promoting the health and wellbeing of all children in our care. This includes:

- Providing a healthy and balanced diet, promoting good eating habits and hydration.
- Encouraging physical activity through daily outdoor play, indoor movement activities, and games.
- Supporting emotional wellbeing by providing a secure and caring environment where children feel safe to express their emotions.
- Ensuring the children receive adequate rest and relaxation where necessary, particularly for our summer born children.

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Transition

At Lady Joanna Thornhill Primary School, we value all opportunities to share information and learn about the children from those who know them best. Therefore, we ensure a comprehensive transition period to give staff, parents, and children as many opportunities as possible to meet and exchange information.

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following opportunities are in place to ensure a successful transition:

- Parents are invited to a New Entrants meeting at school to share key information, build relationships with the staff team, and develop a shared understanding of life at Lady Joanna.
- The EYFS Lead visits all children in their nursery or pre-school setting, or, if a child does not attend a nursery or pre-school, an initial parent consultation is conducted via phone.
- Reception class teachers offer home visits to each family. Alternatively, parents may choose to come into school for a transition meeting.
- The new intake and their parents are invited to three Stay and Play sessions, where they can access both the indoor and outdoor learning environments. These sessions allow staff to engage with the children and their families, fostering learning with heart, head, and hand.
- The children's first few full days in school are organised in smaller groups to help build key relationships, establish the daily routine, and ensure that expectations are clearly communicated.

Monitoring and Review

We continually monitor and review our early years practice to ensure that we are providing the highest standard of care and education. Our monitoring processes include:

- Regular staff learning session to review practice and discuss children's progress.
- Seeking feedback from parents, carers, and children to improve our services.
- Reviewing policies and procedures annually to ensure they meet current requirements and best practices.

Conclusion

At Lady Joanna Thornhill Primary, we provide high-quality early years education and care that supports children's individual needs and interests. Therefore, ensuring that our children develop as independent and collaborative learners. We endeavor to develop a deep love of learning and a thirst for enquiry. Our curriculum enables each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically and creatively to their full potential.

Through a play-based approach, strong partnerships with families, and a commitment to safeguarding and inclusion, we aim to help every child achieve their full potential.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See Child protection and Safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See Health and Safety Policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy

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Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Health and Safety Policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Child protection and Safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See Complaints policy