

Langside School



Children's Team

## EARLY YEARS POLICY

All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.

(Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for group and School-Based Providers, January 2024)

	Date	Signature
Review	Sept. 2016	JS
Review	Sept. 2017	JS
Review	Sept. 2018	JS
Review	Sept. 2019	JS
Review	Sept. 2020	JS
Review	Sept 2021	JS
Review	Sept 2022	NP
Reviewed & updated	Feb 2024	NP

# LANGSIDE SCHOOL

## EARLY YEARS POLICY

*This Policy should be read in conjunction with all associated Policies such as Safeguarding, E-Safety, Behaviour, Curriculum, Equal opportunities & Meeting Medical Needs.*

### Principles and Values

At Langside School, we believe that every child deserves support to reach their full potential. Our Early Years provision is designed to establish a strong foundation for future progress through school and life. We are committed to providing rich, stimulating and developmentally appropriate experiences that empower each child to develop their knowledge and skills to the best of their ability across all areas of learning. Recognising the potential for learning in every activity, routine, and situation, we prioritise creating a happy, safe, positive, and fun introduction to school life.

We work in close partnership with parents and carers to ensure continuity, progression, and a smooth transition from home to school. A team consisting of Teachers, Higher Level Teaching Assistant, Learning Support Assistants, Therapy Assistants, Nursing Assistants, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist and Nurse work cohesively to meet the needs of each individual child within the Early Years, providing a secure and stimulating environment in which children flourish.

Our Early Years teaching aligns with the government's statutory framework, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), effective from January 2024. The framework sets the standards for all early years providers, emphasizing learning and development, safeguarding, and promoting children's welfare.

The four overarching principles shaping our practice are:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates.

As an early year's provider, we must guide the development of children's capabilities with a view to ensuring that children in our care complete the EYFS ready to benefit fully from the opportunities ahead of them.

### **Learning and Development**

In our Early Years provision, we focus on the seven areas of learning and development, both prime and specific, as outlined in the EYFS. We individualise our approach based on the needs, interests, and stage of development of each child. Our planning considers the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically.

At Langside School we use ImpACTS (Individualised Profile Assessment Curriculum Target Setting) which puts the child at the centre of the assessment and planning process. There are 5 key Skill areas, not dissimilar to the Early Years areas of learning and development i.e. Early Communication; Cognitive Skills; Physical Skills (Gross & Fine Motor), Personal, Social & Emotional Well Being and Environmental Control Technology. Supporting tools like Birth to 5 Matters and Development Matters guide us in recognising and interpreting our pupils' abilities, so we can provide opportunities for rehearsing those skills to enrich their experience and deepen and extend their learning.

### **Assessment**

Assessments are made to inform staff of the needs, level of achievement and interests of individual pupils. This information is used to shape the teaching and learning experiences for each child. Monitoring of the children takes place through regular observations, discussion, photographs, record keeping and planned assessment. The ImpACTS assessment tool is designed specifically to monitor the progress of students who have Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD). Tailored targets are set in accordance with the Longer-Term Outcomes from pupils' EHCPs. Student responses and development of skills are recorded on our digital care and educational management system, Nourish. New children are baseline assessed by the end of their first term and then their progress is tracked termly and shared with parents. Annotated photographs of the children's achievements provide evidence alongside the observations for assessment purposes. In the final term of the year in which a child reaches age 5, the EYFS profile is completed where they are assessed against early learning goals.

### **Parental Involvement**

At Langside School we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents and we value their involvement in school. Parents are encouraged to visit the school with their child before they start, to help with familiarisation and to support transition. Home visits by the teacher and therapists allows the child to become familiar

with the staff in their own home, whilst giving parents the opportunities to talk about the needs of their child in a relaxed environment. On a day-to-day basis, parents have access to Nourish so that information is constantly shared between school and home and vice versa. Our open-door ethos fosters collaboration between parents, carers, and the multi-disciplinary team, ensuring a shared commitment to the child's progress.

**Admission and Induction**

Langside School provides full-time Early Years education for children aged from 2 years. Parents are encouraged to visit the school with their child before their child starts to help with familiarisation and to support transition. We offer a weekly pre-school "stay & play" session called 'Caterpillar Club', to which prospective parents might bring their child and any siblings. The start date and rate of attendance is decided in collaboration with parents and is taken at the pace appropriate for the child and family.

**Equal Opportunities**

Maintaining positive attitudes to diversity and difference, Langside School ensures inclusive practices for all children, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, or social circumstances.

**Moderation Links**

We have links with the Early Years practitioners at the Bournemouth, Poole, and Dorset Special Schools. We are in regular contact with the Early Years Team and Early Years Improvement Adviser at BCP Council. Termly networks and moderation sessions enhance information exchange and ensure accurate assessments.

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