

# Dovecote Early Years Policy 2024-25

**“To rise above the ordinary and give our pupils wings”**

## **Intent in the EYFS**

At Dovecote our intention is to provide the best start to the children's education. They are at the centre of everything we do and we want the best possible outcomes for each individual child so that:

- The children are safe, happy, feel valued and special. Each child, their individuality and what makes them unique is celebrated by all adults and children to build respect, relationships and understanding.
- The children develop resilience, confidence, independence, resourcefulness, self-motivation and an ability to problem solve, so that they can interact with the world around them and are prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The children are excited to come to school, their learning is enjoyable, builds upon curiosity and their interests.
- Children are confident, have a good sense of self, build strong friendships and are kind.

## **We strive:**

- To support and challenge the children during their learning, through high quality interactions, questioning, modelling and encouraging the children to produce work they are proud of.
- To be innovative and teach in ways which stimulate and engage the children through well thought out, independent play activities as well as structured, taught sessions.
- Provide a learning environment that is inviting, well resourced, accessible to all, promotes exploration and independence.
- To put high value on the Prime areas of learning to equip the children with transferrable life skills and learning strategies to apply into Year 1 and beyond.
- To encourage children to consider their own choices and responsibilities in all that they do, building empathy, self-regulation and forethought into their actions and behaviour.
- To set aspirational targets for our children to achieve by the end of Reception, building on their nursery experience and promoting a smooth transition into Year 1.

**Implementation in the EYFS:** In order to achieve our intentions we provide:

- High quality indoor and outdoor learning experiences that are well resourced. Learning in different ways, through play, in small groups, from each other, from adults in the wider community, gaining an expanse of experiences, new vocabulary, opening up their world.
- Provide opportunities for revisiting and talking about their learning, to embed knowledge and skills and promote metacognition.
- Apply their vocabulary to play, to interact with friends, build relationships, apply to their writing and increase their ability to read for pleasure.
- A fun, broad and exciting curriculum, that challenges and develops skills, imagination and stimulates children to become life-long learners.
- Opportunities to observe, explore, question, enquire, reflect, adapt, build vocabulary and transferable learning skills.
- A story rich environment that develops oracy and extends the children's vocabulary, to grow an understanding of the world they live in, enable their deeper thinking and confidence to question, share thinking and explore.
- A strong partnership with families to offer the best start to their learning at home and at school.

## **Impact in the EYFS**

- Children who are internally motivated and excited to learn, take ownership of their learning, have enquiring minds and a thirst for knowledge.
- Independent learners who are resilient, reflective, independent and resourceful.
- For all children to make good progress and feel a sense of achievement regardless of individual starting points.
- Children who have a good emotional awareness, can self-regulate, play cooperatively, are kind and considerate to others and have good emotional wellbeing.
- Children who can express themselves using a broad vocabulary, use their imagination in their play and their writing, tell stories and hold conversations.
- Children who play in a purposeful way, enjoy to be challenged, are willing to take risks, try new things, persevere and reflect on their learning.
- Children who understand how to care for themselves, can take care of their own belongings, the environment and can make informed choices about their health and wellbeing.
- Children who develop passions and have aspirations for their future.

## **OBSERVATION & ASSESSMENT**

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning. We assess children's age-related knowledge in a variety of ways including:

- A file of their adult-led work
- Practitioner knowledge and knowledge sharing
- Direct speech, photos and their child-led work, evidenced in floor books.
- Maths Jottings (Reception)
- Phonics books and termly assessments
- One to one reading
- Information that you share with us about their learning at home

We are supported by 'Development Matters' and use the information we gather to help us to:

- To inform our planning and teaching
- Assess if the children are working at an expected level in the different areas of learning
- To check that the children are making progress at the expected pace
- To target individual children or groups of children with extra support to meet their learning needs

At the end of Reception the children are assessed against the 'Early Learning Goals' to determine if they are working at their age related expectation for Reception. The information is shared with parents and with their next teachers ready for starting in Year 1.

## **WORKING WITH PARENTS**

At Dovecote we are all well aware that as a parent, you are the child's initial educator. We hope to build on that by extending the range of learning experiences beyond those which can be provided in the home. We want to build a partnership and we are always happy to talk to you about your child's development.

We will provide a half-termly newsletter to inform families about the books that we will be covering and topic links that we will focus on. It will include activities that you can do with your child at home to enhance and consolidate learning, but most of all to have fun learning with your child.

- We will send messages home to inform, share and remind.
- We will be available via the Dojo app and request that you share home learning with us.
- We will respond to questions; however, if it is urgent parents should contact the office.
- We will provide information on the website about the curriculum, about our learning in school, exciting things we have been doing and about the staff who work in that year group.
- We will be available before or after school for a quick conversation, or can arrange a phone call or a meeting where required

## **TOILETING**

It is age related for children to be independently using the toilet around the age of three, ready to start nursery. However, when this is not the case we will:

- Provide staff to perform the care role to help children to manage their personal needs
- Protect ourselves and the child by using suitable PPE
- Support each child individually to achieve independence with their self-care and hygiene
- Work with you at home to deliver a consistent approach to achieve independent toileting success

## **TRANSITIONS**

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings.

Before your child starts Nursery we will hold an individual 'parent meeting' with you and your child. The aim of this is for you to share information with us about your child such as: medical information, position in the family, likes and dislikes, what they enjoy most and any areas of concern. We can also meet your child and show them the nursery so that they are prepared for starting with us.

Transition from Nursery to Reception is made smoother, due to having a shared environment in our Foundation unit. The children will already be familiar with the staff team and have had the opportunity to explore the whole environment while learning through play.

We will ensure a smooth transition from Nursery into Reception and Reception to Year 1 by:

- Holding transition days where they will mix with their new class meet their teacher(s) to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners.
- The new teacher may visit them in their current class to read a story, familiarising the children and themselves with each other.
- Providing a booklet containing lots of photos for those that may find the change difficult.
- Ensuring the current teacher has a meeting with the new teacher to share key information about your child and their development in order to plan initial learning activities and make provision for any other needs, including medical information.
- Providing an opportunity for you to meet the new teacher and other staff, share important information where relevant and to see the learning environment.
- Presentation from Early Years Leader/teacher to share information and provide opportunity for questions from families ready to enter Reception.

**Please see our separate Admissions policy, which outlines when and how we admit children into our nursery.**