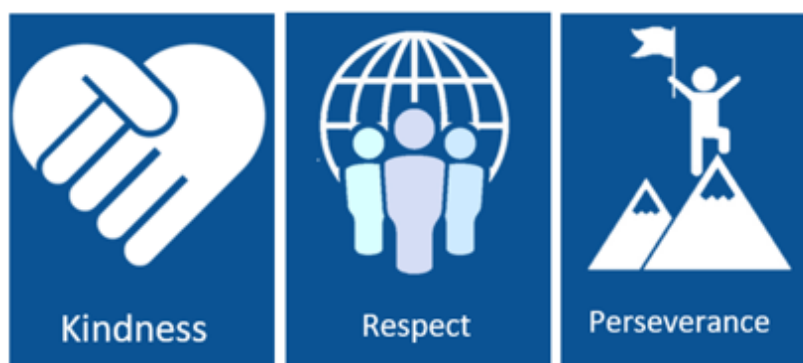


Ditchling (St. Margaret's) CE Primary and Nursery School

Early Years Foundation Stage



'Living life in all its fullness' John 10:10

Version	Reviewed by	Approved by	Date Approved	Next Review Date
1	Ditchling developed Policy	Head/FGB	Mar 24	Mar 26



Signed: Chair of Governors



Signed: _Headteacher

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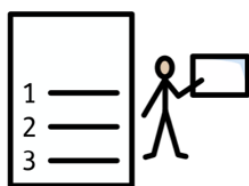
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Curriculum Statement

Our Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) is at the heart of everything we do at Ditchling. We know how important the first five years of a child's life are to their emotional, physical and academic wellbeing. We believe that the EYFS is a vitally important part of our children's development; it is a real strength of our school and provides children with the best possible foundation for their future learning. Our children's experiences over time are consistently and coherently arranged to build excellent knowledge and skills for their future learning. You will see through this document that our intent and implementation are embedded securely and consistently across our EYFS to include our Nursery. It is evident from what our adults do that they have a firm and common understanding of what it means for excellent practice. Across all parts of our provision, practitioners' interactions with children are of a high quality and contribute well to delivering the curriculum intent.

In EYFS, children learn best when they experience learning first-hand, through meaningful interactions with other children and supportive adults, through physical activity and play-based learning. The impact of the curriculum on what children know, can remember and do is highly effective. Children demonstrate this through being deeply engaged in their work and play and sustaining high levels of concentration. Children, including those children from disadvantaged backgrounds, do well. Children with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes.

Within the Early Years Curriculum there are four key themes, which underpin the seven areas of learning:

A Unique Child

Every child is a competent learner from birth, who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive Relationships:

Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of caring and secure relationships with parents and staff.

Enabling Environment:

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.

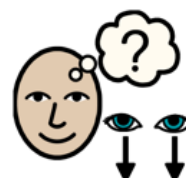
Learning and Development:

Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and interconnected.

The characteristics of effective teaching and learning describe the behaviours children use to learn. The three behaviours are:

Playing and Exploring

Having high levels of engagement and being willing to 'have a go'.



Active Learning

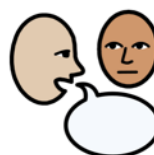
Being motivated and demonstrating resilience.

Creating and Thinking Critically

Developing own ideas, strategies and making connections.

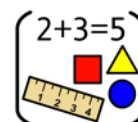
The EYFS curriculum identifies three prime areas of learning, which are the vital foundation for developing appropriate learning behaviours, forming relationships, being able to listen and respond to others and thriving. These areas underpin all development in EYFS. These three prime areas are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development



The curriculum breaks down into four further specific areas of learning. Through these areas, the prime areas are strengthened and put into practice. These four specific areas are:

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



Effective learning must be meaningful to our children so that they can use what they have learned and apply it to a range of situations. This will allow for our children to make good progress across all seven areas of learning and development. From the assessment and observations next steps are developed for each child. These next steps are then delivered through continuous provision both indoor and outdoor.



Teaching and Learning

Teaching in the EYFS at Ditchling (St Margaret's) CE Primary and Nursery School is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (December 2023). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, requirements through four themes: 'A Unique Child', 'Positive Relationships', 'Enabling Environments' and 'Learning and Development'.



Enabling Environment - Learning through Play

We recognise that young children learn best when they are active; where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and our EYFS has an ethos of learning through play. Play essential and rich part of their learning process,

supporting them in all areas of development. It is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

In the EYFS, practitioners provide both structured and unstructured activities inside and outside, many of which are play-based. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experiences which will support children to discover, explore, investigate, develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity, and help to make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. Opportunities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding.

At Ditchling, we strive for excellence enabling all of our children to be challenged no matter their starting points. Our practitioners have excellent knowledge of child development and the importance of knowing the children in their care. To encourage deep and meaningful engagement during play, we focus on both the implicit and explicit challenge by facilitating learning. Implicit challenge: Open-ended opportunities and resources. Explicit challenge: Comes from direction or request.

The Adult Role

Our adults ensure that they are supporting play as well as observing children and maintaining engagement and challenge. During time in continuous provision, the adult's role is to facilitate, listen and react. This mind-set allows our adults to provide what the children need through assessment. Our adults notice how the children are playing and enhance the play. Examples of this may be: modelling language, questioning, commenting, adjusting the provision and observing. Our children are at the heart of what we do.

Two questions our adults think about:

- What engagement can I see?
- What attainment am I observing?

3Ms

Once the children's basic needs are met, these are the three principles that we use to underpin our approach when interacting with children:

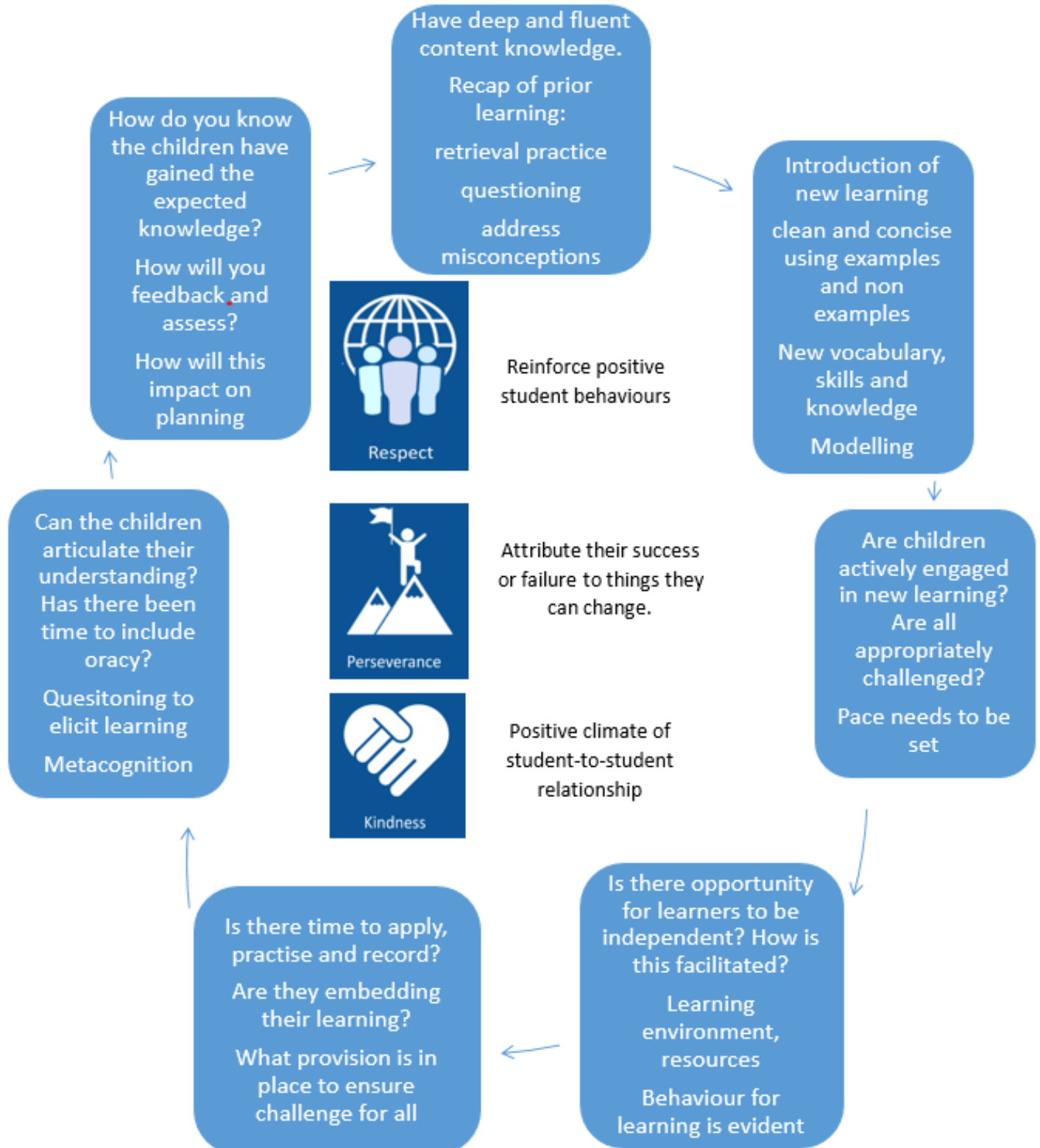
1. Making conversation
2. Mark-making
3. Mathematics

Our adults collaborate and play with the children with the 3Ms in mind enabling them to be in the moment.

Teaching and learning in the EYFS includes a balance of adult directed and adult-led learning opportunities, alongside child initiated and child led learning.

Teaching and Learning at Ditchling

Based on the Great Teaching Toolkit





Assessment

Baseline assessment is carried out using DfE approved materials during the children's first six weeks upon entering reception. This is a legal requirement.

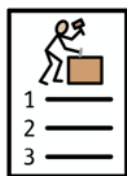
Ongoing assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of the EYFS at Ditchling (St Margaret's) CE Primary and Nursery School. Regular, planned and focused assessments are made of children's learning and individual needs. A record of each child's progress in all areas of their learning is kept.

The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' observations of children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child initiated play. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally). Practitioners make time to carry out planned observations of individuals and groups of children regularly. They also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children's learning. Observations are recorded on Tapestry.

In the classroom (inside and outside), practitioners observe children in their play to support their knowledge of individual children's abilities, needs, interests, play schemas and learning styles. Learning opportunities are planned based on these observations, creating next steps for children to ensure they make progress.

Practitioners upload at least one observation to Tapestry per child, each week. These observations celebrate the child and their interests and should be used as a point of discussion and praise at home. Contributions by parents/carers to a child's Tapestry journal are encouraged and valued. This may be a comment on an observation, an uploaded observation from home or through the completion of 'Wow' moments which are designed to record outstanding achievements outside of the setting.

There is continuous monitoring and assessment of each child's development. This is recorded formally three times per year to track individual progress. At the end of the year, it provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements. We have high expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that they achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception.



Planning and Resources

The EYFS framework provides an overview to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year. The EYFS staff decide the topics; some of these are based on the school's planning cycle in addition to following the children's immediate interests.

Medium term planning is created with all Early Years practitioners' involvement and takes into account the individual children's learning, developmental needs and interests. Planning is discussed between staff in EYFS and KS1 and is based upon key topics.

Weekly planning includes discrete phonics sessions and direct teaching of maths, reading and writing. In term 1, in reception, we plan a unit of work to support the pupils in their transition to school. The weekly plans are then generated from an overarching topic/theme and the pupils' interests or questions. The plans are reviewed as necessary to determine if there is more scope for learning through the identified theme or the pupils' interests have changed to another theme.

All areas of learning and development are planned for and available to access within the setting. The learning opportunities provided include a range of adult focused and child initiated activities indoors and outdoors. Practitioners ensure that teaching and learning activities provide a suitable level of challenge for all learners and key vocabulary for each topic is mapped and shared with the children using Widget. The EYFS also makes use of the wider outdoor environment, including Forest School, whenever possible.

Educational visits both locally and further afield are also planned to support children's learning within the classroom.

The early years long term plan outlines the key texts and planned learning opportunities across all areas of learning.



Organisation

Admission and Transition

Children can start at Ditchling (St Margaret's) CE Primary and Nursery School from the age of 2 in the nursery. They can start in Reception class from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old.

Before they start in the Nursery class, all children are offered a visit with their parent/carer. The purpose of this visit is for the family to see and experience the nursery setting, making their transition to nursery as smooth as possible. Once the child starts nursery, their first sessions will be adjusted to meet the needs of individual children. Parent/carers are welcome to stay for all or some of the first sessions (see Settling-In Policy).

Parents/carers will be invited to a 'new parents meeting' in the summer term to meet their child's new Reception teacher and learn more about the reception curriculum. At this meeting, information regarding the induction process and what goes on in the setting is shared. There is also time for informal chat and parents/carers' questions. Information will be distributed to parents/carers at this meeting, detailing school routines, school lunches, uniform and expectations, including a discussion about the Home-School agreement.

Before they start in the reception class, all children are offered a series of visits during the summer term. The purpose of these initial visits is for the children to meet their new

practitioners and start to become familiar with the setting environment, meet other children in their class and make their transition to school as smooth as possible. The class teacher may also visit the child in their current nursery setting, if this is necessary.

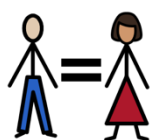
From September most children attend reception full-time, although parents/carers can opt for their child to attend part time should they see fit, as long as the child has not reached their 5th birthday in the previous term. Any part-time arrangements should be discussed and reviewed with the Reception Class teacher on a regular basis. They will be 'buddied' up with a child in Year 6 who will help support their transition into school.

Every effort is made to make children feel safe, secure and happy. Established routines, a calm atmosphere and encouraging communication are some of the strategies practitioners used to maintain children's positive feelings about school.

The Nursery and Reception class work in partnership and plan transition events/activities which support the children to develop their skills ready to enter Reception. This focuses on music, listening skills and a story. In addition, there are good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school and practitioners liaise closely with these settings.

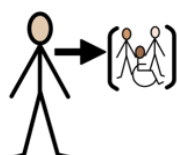
Starting in Key Stage 1 (Year 1)

Throughout the Reception year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in Key Stage and whole school collective worship as well as sharing playtimes with the Key Stage 1 and 2 children. Children have the opportunity to meet their new class teacher and spend an afternoon in their new class during the summer term.



Equal Opportunities

Ditchling School will ensure that all children are provided with the same learning opportunities regardless of social class, gender, culture, race, disability or learning difficulties. As a result, we hope to enable all children to develop positive attitudes towards others through our school values of kindness and respect. All pupils have equal access to the Early Years Foundation Stage and all staff members follow the equal opportunities policy. Resources for SEN children and children who are working above age related expectations are made available to support and challenge appropriately.



Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture or religion, and social circumstances, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme

of learning and development within the EYFS setting. Always being aware that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

Children with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

It is vital that children who have English as an additional language have English modelled accurately by all staff at school. Collaborative work with peers (where English is their first language) is essential and EAL children are provided with consistent opportunities for this verbal interaction.

Special Educational Needs

Class teachers inform the Inclusion Lead if they are concerned that a child may have underlying learning difficulties. Support for children with identified SEND includes the following, as appropriate:

- Volunteer readers
- Reading buddies
- Language groups
- Social skills groups
- Booster classes
- Toe by Toe
- Get Spelling scheme
- One-to-one RWI (see SEN policy for further details).



Keeping Safe

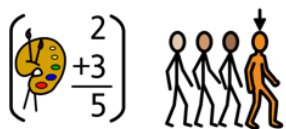
It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

Good Health

All children are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of milk. They have access to water at all times.

Intimate Care - "Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves when in our early years. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene – see Intimate Care Policy.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents/carers to give the right support to an individual child.



Role of the Subject Leader

It is the responsibility of those working in Nursery and Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher and EYFS Lead will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

Key duties that the early years lead will undertake over the course of the year include:

- Monitoring of Tapestry online journals
- Learning walks and participation in lesson observations
- Helping identify and facilitate the professional development needs of staff
- Liaising with SLT to implement school improvement priorities and report on actions, progress and impact
- Liaising with the school Inclusion Lead to best support children experiencing difficulty in the early years
- Organising, maintaining and cataloguing resources
- Keeping abreast of new initiatives in early years teaching, including attendance of conferences/workshops and dissemination of key content.
- Opportunities for, and support with, moderation of children's learning
- Ensuring statutory checks and assessments are carried out
- Completing the EYFS Profile and reporting to the local authority.



Parents/Carers

At Ditchling (St Margaret's) CE Primary and Nursery School we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents/carers, as highlighted by the EYFS framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development and practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents/carers. We value the role of parents/carers as children's primary educators. Through parent meetings and 'stay and play' sessions, practitioners encourage parents/carers to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g., characteristics, interests, experiences). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

Both Nursery and Reception have a friendly, open-door ethos and practitioners are available to talk to parents/carers at the end of the day. Parents/carers are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have. Parents/carers are also kept informed of what is happening in the setting through regular newsletters, Tapestry memos, emails, reading records and suggestions on how to support children's learning at home. There are also workshops throughout the year to support parents/carers with different aspects of learning. Other opportunities for practitioners to share children's

learning, development and well-being with parents/carers include Tapestry online learning journals, interim and end of year reports and class collective worships.

Parents/carers are invited to attend parents' consultations during the course of the academic year. For Reception children, the first of these takes place during the autumn term to allow practitioners and parents/carers to discuss how children have settled into school. There is a further parents' consultation in the spring term to discuss learning and progress. In Nursery, parents/carers are invited in during the spring and summer terms. Annual reports are distributed at the end of each academic year.

Parents/carers are also invited to get involved with school life. There are opportunities for them to help with activities such as educational visits and reading, as well as offering their particular skills (e.g. cooking, art, music) to support children's learning. Parents/carers may be invited into the setting on other occasions such as open events where children show them their work.