



## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage at Delius Special School.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to all children from birth to the end of their Reception Year. Children can join the nursery at Delius Special School when they are 2 years old. As Delius is a generic special school all the children in the EYFS have been identified as having significant special educational needs and disabilities.

### **The Aims of Early Years Foundation Stage**

In the Early Years Foundation Stage at Delius Special School we aim to provide high quality inclusive education which supports children in their learning and development. We develop the whole child through well planned provision and appropriate play based learning opportunities and experiences.

“This provides the foundations for the children’s future development and good progress through school and life.” (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2017)

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

**A unique child** – who is constantly learning and developing, resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.

**Positive relationships** – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.

**Enabling environments** – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.

**Learning and developing** – An acknowledgement that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

### **A Unique Child**

The development of each child is dependent on having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments.

Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from adults and at Delius we use a range of approaches to ensure pupils feel valued and their achievements, however small are recognised. These are celebrated through Assessment for Learning techniques, Star assemblies and rewards to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe, secure, supportive and stimulating learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and

stereotyping;

- To build on what the child already knows and develop a positive attitude and enjoyment for learning.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

### **Positive Relationships**

At Delius Special School we support the children in order for them to acquire positive attitudes towards learning; through supportive play, investigation and exploration. We recognise that children learn to be as independent as possible from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

### **Key Person**

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At Delius school, the child's teacher acts as their 'Key Person'. The Key Person helps to ensure that every child's learning is tailored to meet their individual needs and to assist parents and carers to support their child's learning at home.

### **Parents/Carers as Partners**

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents/carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- Talking to parents/carers about their child before they start school, usually through home visits.
- Inviting parents into transition sessions before starting school and to 'stay and play sessions' throughout the year
- Involving parents in the baseline assessments of their children
- Sharing and wherever possible, creating the pupils' targets with families and encouraging them to work towards the same goals at home
- Encouraging a welcoming relationship with parents/carers in order for parents to feel able to talk to their child's teacher if there are concerns
- Where face to face contact is not possible, Use daily home/school diaries which include symbols to communicate to parents/carers about what their child has done each day and for parents/carers to write back with any comments or requests as well
- By sharing their child's Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Asking parents/carers to sign permission slips for visits out of school, photographs of their child for assessment purposes and using the internet at school.
- By providing parents/carers a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.

### **Enabling Environment**

Each child is viewed as an individual with specific needs that are met within an enabling learning environment.

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment which is welcoming, well planned, stimulating and challenging; and where a child feels happy, safe and secure. The children have daily access to play based learning in discrete continuous provision areas within both the indoor and outdoor environments.

Delius Special School also has additional provision to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. These include a sensory room, rebound room, swimming pool and a soft play room. One of the classrooms also has its own sensory room for individual or small group work and is set up to meet the needs of the pupils with visual or multi-sensory impairment.

## **Learning and development**

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are “prime areas”, and four “specific areas.” within the EYFS curriculum. The areas of learning are not developed in isolation; therefore a cross curricular approach is used.

We aim to build on what our children already know and can do and support the development of their independence skills through planned play based activities and experiences. We provide a range of opportunities to learn through direct experience and active exploration, in the classroom and outdoors, using a wide variety of equipment and materials.

The three prime areas of learning are crucial for supporting a child’s capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. This is the focus of learning for children under the age of three.

The **prime areas** are

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development.

Children are supported through the four specific areas of learning, through which the prime areas of learning can be strengthened and applied.

The **specific areas** are

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts and design

### **1. Communication and language**

We believe that the development and use of communication is at the heart of young children’s learning and well-being. The majority of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage at Delius are at a very early stage of development within this area of learning. A ‘total communication approach’ is used where touch cues, objects of reference, symbols, photographs, signing and switches are used to enable and support the development of early communication skills.

Within this area of learning we aim to:

- Develop the children's listening and attention skills
- Identify and respond to the children's individual communication needs such as eye pointing, using the E-Frame, use of symbols and PEC's to support choice making; encouraging early gestures/Makaton signs to support expressive and receptive language development.
- Use their communication skills to build positive relationships with both adults and peers.
- Support the children to communicate and express feelings, needs and wants.
- Support the children to express choices/preferences and begin to comment on what they see or experience around them.
- Support the children to be conversational partners through Intensive interaction.
- Help children begin to understand the link between sounds, words and objects.

## **2. Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

This area of learning is about emotional well-being, knowing who you are and where you fit in and feeling good about yourself.

Within this area of learning we aim to

- Provide the children with experiences and support that will enable them to develop a positive sense of themselves
- Develop children's independence within the limits of their ability
- Develop children's respect for others, social competence
- Encourage a positive disposition to learning by providing challenges within a safe and secure learning environment,
- Promote fundamental British Values
- Promote good social behaviour and respect for themselves and others through encouraging turn taking and sharing resources with peers.
- Introduce the children to a variety of faiths and cultures through celebrating religious festivals, stories and attending, if appropriate, weekly assemblies and other celebrations.

## **3. Physical development**

Children are given opportunities to engage and be active, to develop their coordination, control, manipulation and movement skills; as well as helping them to be healthy and develop their self-care skills. Effective teaching in this area will help children develop these skills, gain confidence in what they can do and develop a positive sense of well-being.

Within this area of learning we aim to

- Provide opportunities for the children to develop and improve their coordination, control, manipulation and movement skills through the use of developmentally appropriate activities such as, treasure baskets, heuristic play and sensory play materials
- Provide opportunities to explore a range of materials and media, and use a

variety of tools with support.

- Take manageable risks within a safe learning environment.
- Use the child's individual physiotherapy programmes to plan activities which support their fine and gross motor development across the school day. e.g. water skills in the pool, rebound, music and movement.
- Ensure children are safely and correctly positioned so that they are able to access the learning environment and the opportunities offered.
- Follow children's moving and handling plans, and feeding plans as appropriate.

#### **4. Literacy**

In this area of learning the children will develop pre reading and writing skills

##### **Reading**

The children will be supported to develop an enjoyment of books and listening to stories and rhymes. The children will be given daily opportunities to have books read to them, and also to listen to and interact with wide range of text including audio books on the computer, noisy books, textured books and sensory stories. These experiences will help in the development of their early Literacy skills.

##### **Where developmentally appropriate, Phonics**

Phonics is taught at an appropriate level for the children using the elements of the 'Letters and sounds' and 'Jolly phonics'. The starting point for many of the pupils is the ability to attend and listen to sounds, to discriminate sounds and use their voice to make a range of sounds.

##### **Writing**

The children will be encouraged to develop their emergent mark-making skills using imaginative and purposeful play opportunities. Initially using materials this will be through the exploration of such as paint and wet sand using their hands and fingers. The children will be supported to develop their coordinate fine motor skills so that they can reach, grasp and hold tools and begin to use these to make more purposeful marks. These skills are a pre-requisite to early writing.

#### **5. Mathematics**

In this area of learning children are given opportunities to develop their early maths skills.

##### **Number**

The children are given play based activities and experiences to develop their skills. They will be supported to become aware that things exist even when out of sight; of quantity, number names and their sequence and the early mathematical language associated with number. We aim to develop these skills through stories, songs, games and exploratory play so that children enjoy using and experimenting with amounts of 1 to 5 and beyond.

##### **Shape space and measure**

The children will be given opportunities to develop an early awareness of shape, space and measure through their play and exploration of objects. They will begin to recognise big and small things in a meaningful context. They will learn and develop an understanding of time by using daily routines as learning opportunities. They will begin

to anticipate and understand familiar routines such as dinner, story, hygiene routines and home time through the use of object of reference, symbols, song and music cues.

## **6. Understanding the World**

In this area of learning children will have opportunities to develop the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that will help them to make sense of the world around them. The children will be encouraged to explore and investigate new media, experiment with different materials and begin to solve simple problems. They will learn about their immediate environment through exploration of well-resourced indoor and outdoor provision areas, and other areas around school. They will learn about the wider environment by going on visits within the local community and on trips. They will also learn about cause and effect through using technology such as switches, iPads, touch screens and interactive toys. Development in this area of learning forms the foundation for later work in science, design and technology, history, geography and information and communication technology

## **7. Expressive Arts and Design**

We aim to provide the children with a rich learning environment supported by sensitive and responsive adults who encourage the children to express and explore a variety of creative media and materials. Being creative enables children to make connections between areas of learning and provides them with the opportunity to experience a variety of activities such as painting; music and movement; supported role play through sensory stories; design and making using different artefacts and materials; incorporating ICT technology to make picture using 'painting' programmes on a computer.

Music is a strong feature within the EYFS and across school and children have many opportunities to engage with listening and making music through the use of a variety of instruments, support from peripatetic music teachers and specialist provision within the school e.g. music and drama room and the Gamelan.

### **The Characteristics of Effective Learning (COEL)**

These highlight the child's attitudes to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. These are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

(Taken from Early Years Foundation Stage Framework EYFS 2017)

At Delius, we use the COEL to support our incidental observations, particularly during child initiated play.

## **Curriculum planning**

At Delius Special school, we use “The Early Years foundation Framework” (2017) and the non-statutory guidance materials “Development Matters” (2012) to guide the planning for the Early Years Foundation Stage classes. This is taught through a multi-sensory, experiential approach and the use of carefully planned structured play activities. The Early Years Foundation Stage aims to offer children high quality educational activities which build on children’s previous experiences and achievements and are responsive to an individual’s needs and interests. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and a mix of adult-led and play based learning within provision areas.

Play is an essential part of children’s development; building their confidence as they learn to explore and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. The staff respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

The Early Years Foundation stage currently uses half termly topics to support the children’s learning. This link in with the topics covered throughout the school.

## **Assessment**

Staff working within the Early Years Foundation Stage firmly believe that:

- Assessment should be an integral part of the curriculum development process.
- Assessment should help adults focus positively on individual strengths and interests.
- Approaches to assessment should be informed by effective Early Years practices
- Children should be assessed in a range of contexts.
- Assessment must involve all who know the child including the parents/carers and other professionals

A variety assessment techniques and frameworks are used within the Early Years Foundation Stage. These based on accurate, planned and incidental, observations of the children.

## **Formative assessments**

### **1. Assessment for Learning**

Assessment for learning techniques are used for all adult lead activities with in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Progress tracker sheets are completed for these activities

## **2. Observation**

Observations of the children helps us to identify the children's current interest, skills and needs. Observations inform our planning to ensure we offer the right level of challenge and provide appropriate activities and resources to develop the children's skills.

Observations sheets and progress tracker sheets are filed in the children's learning journals. These are used to inform the planning of future learning and provision for the children

## **Summative assessments**

### **1. Baseline Assessments**

A child's baseline assessment is completed approximately six weeks after they start at the school. Parents are invited into school to contribute towards the baselines assessments. Over this period of time the staff will make detailed observations, measure their attainment against the Early Years Developmental Journal. The child is given a numerical score for the four areas of learning detailed in the journal. These are Personal Social and Emotional development, Communication, Physical Development and Thinking.

The Redway bands are also used within the EYFS to assess the children's communication

### **2. Assessment and Target Setting**

After the child's baseline assessment has been completed, each child's "flight path" is plotted of the four areas of learning in the developmental journal and an end of years target is set/predicted. In October, December, February, May and July. Each child's progress is measured against each area of learning. The children's progress is monitored and RAGGED to ensure that 100% are making expected or better than progress. See EYFS assessment rational for further information.

### **Individual Intervention Plans (IIP)**

Each child that attends Delius Special School has an IEP. IEP targets are set in October, February and May. The Annual Smart targets are set based on the child's Education and Health Care Plan, if they have one. Some children within the Early Years Foundation Stage have "Assessment Place" and are undergoing the statutory assessment process for their ECHP, IEP targets for these children area based on their baseline assessment. IEP are reviewed three times

## **Statutory Assessments**

### **1. Education and Health Care Plans**

Most children within the foundation Stage have an "Assessment Place" and are undergoing the statutory assessment process for their ECHP. The teachers within the Early Years Foundation Stage will liaise with the child's parents/carers, Deputy Head Teacher and other professionals to support this process.

## **2. Early Years Foundation Stage Profile**

This is a statutory assessment and is being used until June 2017. The attainment of each child is measured at the final term of their reception year. Their attainment is assessed using the 17 Early Learning Goals. The class teacher must indicate if children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are emerging or exceeding. The EYFSP results will be provided to the local authority as required.

The EYFS at Delius Special School will implement changes to the “statutory assessment arrangement with in the Early Years Foundation Stage if and when it is introduced.

### **Safeguarding and welfare**

“Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.” (From Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017.)

In Delius EYFS we aim to:

- Promote the welfare and safeguarding of all children.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs. All staff are trained in team teach methods and follow the procedures and recording of behaviours in line with the school’s safeguarding and behaviour policy.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences which meet their needs

### **Health and Safety**

At Delius Special School we take safe guarding of all the pupils as paramount and staff and regular visitors to school are all required to have had advanced DBS checks. The school complies with all safe guarding policies and procedures. Safe guarding information is clearly displayed throughout the EYFS classes to ensure staff can quickly respond to any concerns regarding the children (see also the schools policy on safeguarding). A number of ‘named person’s are available within school.

As a school the health and safety of the children is paramount, this includes keeping children safe in the school’s learning environment and provision or during outings and offsite visits. There are clear procedures for assessing and reducing risk. Risk

assessments are completed for using the swimming pool, hoisting of pupils, visits to our co-located primary schools and any trip out of the school ground. Many of the children also have feeding plans and care plans to ensure that their individual care needs are safely delivered. Care plans are all kept in a specified red folder which has clearly labeled sections for each pupil. Within each EYFS class there is a first aider, and across the school a number of "Key first aiders" are available, as well as school nurses for part of each day.

In addition all classes have an incident book for minor incidents or accidents to both pupils and staff

### **Welfare**

It is important that all children in are kept 'safe' and their physical and psychological well-being is well met. We aim to teach children about boundaries, how to keep safe and support them in making choices to help them develop these important life skills. Children should be allowed to take risks within a safe environment where there are supportive adults who are can teach the children how to recognize and avoid hazards.

### **Equal Opportunities**

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities policy no child in the Early Years Foundation Stage will be discriminated against or disadvantaged because of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability. All children are given equal access to and encouraged to take part in all activities.

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. Our curriculum reflects cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society, and promotes Fundamental British Values, in line with school policies

### **Inclusion**

Inclusion opportunities have been formed with our co-located Primary school. The children share outside play provision with Lapage Primary school's nursery. Pupils from the nursery and class 1 attend regular weekly sessions with an appropriate age related class.

### **Admission to The Early Years Foundation Stage**

1. The children can be offered a place with in the Early Years Foundation Stage from the age of two years.
2. They must have significant and complex SEN
3. The placement has been agreed by Bradford EYFS SEN panel.
4. If the child has an ECHP or has been offered an assessment placement so that statutory assessment for an ECHP can be undertaken. (i.e. is within range 4 of the SEN grid)
5. Some children stay in the EYFS base beyond the age of 5 years if this is appropriate to the needs of the child.

## Cohorts

“Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured” (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2017)

At Delius, we firmly believe that in order to ensure that pupils are given the best foundations for their learning, they need to have the correct provision from EYFS onwards. Due to this, some of our pupils are placed in our ‘Structured Provision’ for EYFS and others begin their school career in our Nursery. All pupils have access to the same curriculum and assessment. Yet the methods of teaching and use of specific strategies differ to suit the very individual needs of the child.

The EYFS is increasing and currently has

- 2 part-time Nursery Classes. Pupils attend for 2 full days and a half day (15 hours per week)
- A Reception Class for pupils with severe, complex and/or profound special educational needs
- A class for pupils who have severe learning difficulties with additional needs such as ASC.
- Pupils are allocation to the class that can best meet their individual and educational needs and ensure access to an appropriate peer group.

All the classes have a high ratio of adult support to meet the wide range of needs and ensure access to the all learning opportunities for children.

## Transitions

Entry to school

- Home visits will be undertaken by two members of staff (for staff safety) to complete the admission forms and get to know the child and their family and where appropriate a translator will attend
- The school nurse will make a home visit to ensure that appropriate care plans are completed if appropriate.
- Settling in visits will be arranged for the child and their parents/carers

Within school / to a new school

- There will be planned visits to support the child’s transition into a new class. These will take place when the child moves from the nursery to a reception class, or a reception class to a Key Stage 1 class, or a new school.
- Visits to the new class will take place in the half term before they leave.
- All appropriate information, assessments and records are shared with the child’s new leaders of learning and staff to ensure a smooth transition and progression for the child.