



DOHA ENGLISH SPEAKING SCHOOL

Learning Together • High Expectations • Celebrating Success

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage is used to describe children who are in our Foundation Stage 1 and 2 classes. The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy: Admissions Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy; Learning Support Policy and Behaviour Policies.

Aim

At Doha English Speaking School (DESS) we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

As outlined in the EYFS statutory framework *(see footnote 1)* 'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential'. A child's experience in the Early Years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

Foundation Stage Curriculum

At DESS we adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within the Early Years settings:

- 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**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment. All children complete a baseline on entry assessment.

- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out

The Individual Child

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas as of learning as stated in the EYFS Curriculum *(see footnote)* to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected, however three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas are the **prime** areas:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

Literacy Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Hands on Learning

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

As a team, we plan using the EYFS Curriculum based on children's interests using 'In The Moment Planning (ITMP) which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans are reviewed by the Phase Leader and Senior Leadership Team on a regular basis to ensure coverage of the curriculum is provided. Our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, remain flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in Foundation Stage 1 will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years at DESS and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Directed Teaching Time and Play based Activities

Children have whole group and small group directed teaching times which increase as they progress through the Early Years with times. These lessons are timetabled for Mathematics and Literacy (which includes reading and writing) and also a daily phonics session using 'Read Write Inc' (see footnote 2).

Within the Early Years we plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between the inside and outside areas of learnings.

During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further. With this planning and guiding of children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and mirror these in our practice.

Observation and Assessment

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. Each week we select two focus children for detailed observations and record our observations in a variety of ways. Both staff and parents are encouraged to contribute to the planning and discussions regularly take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journal, which is shared with parents after their child's focus week has been completed.

In the final term of Foundation Stage 2, we provide the parent's with a report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning. Parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgments with the Foundation Stage 2 teacher in preparation for Year 1.

Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and necessary documents in place to ensure children's safety.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the promotion of nutritious food and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Please see our separate policies and procedures on Health and Safety, Child Protection, Food and Drink; Illness and Injury.

Parents as Partners and the wider context

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways – see our separate Parents as Partners policy.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting.

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, including other schools or nurseries. Children attend introductory sessions to Foundation Stage 1 and 2 to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. Children moving into Foundation Stage 2 participate in transfer activities and meet their new teacher (where possible.) They receive a small booklet containing photos and complete an 'All About Me' activity.

In the final term in Foundation Stage 2, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

Toileting

Our expectation is that Early Years children are toilet trained before starting school. This includes them:

- Knowing when they have to go to the toilet and use the words to describe what they need to do and to get help.
- Having a routine of pulling down their underwear, using the toilet, wiping, flushing the toilet and washing their hands. We realise that accidents can happen. In Foundation Stage 1 children are requested to keep a spare set of clothing in their cubbies to be used in such eventualities.

Toileting for Early Years children is more about learning hygiene and socially appropriate behaviour. Our Teachers and Teaching Assistants are aware of the children's need, about their 'hanging on' signals such as leg crossing, fiddling and restlessness. Often a reminder about the toilet is all that is required. We encourage the children to wash their hands after using the toilet and incorporate this in their Personal Social and Emotional Development education.

If they do have an occasional accident we will not make a fuss but will be discreet and help them clean up and put on dry/clean clothes. In Foundation Stage 1 where there are toilet facilities inside each classroom, the children can visit whenever they need. In Foundation Stage 2 we give opportunities throughout the day for the children to visit the toilet in groups. Children are able to leave the classroom when they need to use the toilet however, they must inform a member of staff where they are going.

Whilst staff will help with children who have occasional 'accidents, it is a requirement for admission that children are toilet trained as a condition of entry to the school.

Food and drink

Children are requested to bring a balanced diet for their snack and lunch from home. Snack and meal times are treated as a social event to develop healthy practices whilst maintaining good food hygiene. We discuss healthy eating; helping children to understand why some foods are healthy and others are not.

At snack times, Foundation Stage 1 and 2 children sit with an Early Years practitioner to encourage a positive eating experience. The children bring a choice of food and drink and practitioners encourage children to make their own choices and talk to them about

their decisions. Children are informed to eat their food in their snack boxes. As a class prior to our first snack we discuss sensitively that the foods in our snack boxes may be different and that for us all to be safe we must not swap foods.

We are aware that some children may not want to eat what is provided. If children's food intake/diet is cause for concern, or limited, we will liaise with the parents to cater for the child's preferences and gradually expose them to more foods.

Drinking Water

We encourage and support children to drink throughout the day. As part of the curriculum we discuss healthy practices, including the need to drink water after physical exercise, after playtimes and during snack times.

Children have access to drinking water at all times throughout the day. Children are encouraged to bring a named water bottle which they can independently re-fill by themselves. Water coolers are provided in each classroom.

Policy approved: **June 2018**

Policy update due: **June 2020**

Footnotes:

- 1) EYFS Statutory Framework / Curriculum

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

- 2) Read, Write Inc (RWI)

<http://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/read-write-inc-programmes/phonics/>