

LONSDALE



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Approved November 2025

Next Review November 2026

In EYFS at Lonsdale, we recognise that important foundations for learning are laid during children's time in Nursery and Reception. We work holistically to ensure that opportunities for learning in Nursery and Reception are tailored to individual needs and interests through a play and sensory based environment. We aim to support every child to maximise their potential for learning so that they will flourish during their years at Lonsdale and be as successful as they can in all that they do. Physical, academic and emotional well-being are all respected and catered for within a balanced Early Years Curriculum.

Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage at Lonsdale

1. To provide high quality learning experiences through practical, playful and sensory based activities which are structured, balanced, relevant to each child and related to the real world and their experience of it
2. To provide a curriculum which takes account of and responds to, each child's developmental needs and starting points and allows them to make progress in accordance with their differing abilities
3. To support pupils to feel and stay safe, be healthy, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being.
4. To ensure that each child has positive experiences of success at their own levels, in order to develop their confidence and motivation for future learning
5. To provide a curriculum that offers equal learning and development opportunities for all the children
6. To provide a curriculum which works towards the 'Early Learning Goals'.
7. To work in collaboration with specialist staff (physiotherapist, occupational therapist, speech therapist and nurses) to maximise physical potential and communication development of all the children
8. To implement therapies recommended throughout the school day including the use of specialist equipment, specific programmes in PE, swimming, music and movement
9. To work in partnership with parents and other professionals to support and enhance children's individual development and progress

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), effective from 1 September 2025.

Structure of the EYFS

At Lonsdale School we have one mixed EYFS class of up to 9 pupils of Nursery and Reception age. On occasion, pupils in year 1 may be part of the EYFS class if they have not had the opportunity to experience learning through play in a school environment. This is accommodated on a case by case basis.

Pupils of Nursery age attend school daily between 8:45am and 12:15pm, for a total of 15 hours per week. Pupils of Reception age and above attend for a full school day, from 8:45am to 3:30pm. Phased transitions are planned to support individual pupils as they settle into our school.

The Curriculum

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Lonsdale School we aim to provide a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum which addresses the children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, moral and cultural development within a safe, secure, stimulating environment. Our curriculum enables each child to learn and develop skills, attitudes and understanding in seven areas of learning:

The prime areas, which underpin all learning:

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)** involves supporting children in developing a strong, positive sense of themselves, and of others; form strong attachments and relationships and develop respect for others to develop their social skills and learn how to effectively manage their feelings. This area also supports the children in understanding appropriate behaviour and develops confidence in their own abilities. They also learn about personal hygiene.
- **Communication and Language (CL)** involves children being provided with the opportunity to experience a language rich environment; develop confidence in expressing their wants, needs and feelings and being able to speak and listen in a variety of contexts.
- **Physical development (PD)** involves children being encouraged to be interactive and active in their learning, and develop control, coordination and movement both in fine and gross motor skills. They are supported in understanding the importance of physical activity and how to make informed healthy choices at meal times. The specific areas which are supported by the prime areas:

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- **Mathematics (M)** encourages opportunities to develop and improve counting skills, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems and to describe shapes, space and measures.
- **Literacy (L)** encourages children to link sounds and letters and begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest. Including Phonics.
- **Understanding the World (UW)** involves supporting children in making sense of the world around them and their community by providing opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive Art and Design (EAD)** enables children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as encouraging the sharing of thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.

Planning, Recording and Assessment

Throughout EYFS we plan activities to give children learning experiences and opportunities to work towards the Early Learning Goals and prepare them for moving into the National Curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to take an active role in all of their everyday activities, participating as independently as possible during the time they are at school. Children learn in a variety of ways, and all activities are based on topics or themes, which are planned by the class teachers and developed by the whole Early Years team. The topics are linked to children's interests, always taking current levels of achievement and success into account and planning for progress and further development of skills, knowledge and understanding.

Each topic is expected to run for roughly half a term, but this will be adjusted as appropriate to best suit the learning pace of the children. The EYFS curriculum overview details the skills which will be taught within each area of learning and provides an overview of what each child will experience in a term. Adult-focused, independent and child-initiated activities are planned on weekly and daily bases. Children will participate in whole group, small group, supported and independent learning. When planning and guiding activities, practitioners will reflect upon the different ways that children learn and ensure they utilise this within their practice.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning:

Playing and Exploring supports children's engagement and investigation and to experience things through being willing to 'have a go'.

Active Learning supports children's motivation to learn by helping develop their concentration, ability and will to keep trying when challenges occur and celebration of completing a task.

Creating and Thinking Critically supports children's thinking skills through developing ideas, making links between differing ideas and create strategies for completing a task.

The EYFS emphasises that parents are a child's primary educator and therefore encourages parents to contribute to their child's learning. Learning Journals documenting and recording each child's learning path through Early Years are an important way of evidencing achievement and progress. Observations and assessment are shared with parents through Tapestry, and parents are encouraged to support and share learning at home. As we have a small EYFS cohort, the class teacher is the 'key person' for all pupils in EYFS and is responsible for guiding the class team in supporting pupil progress and involving parents/carers. B Squared and individual Horizon targets are used to support assessment of children against The Early Years Outcomes and link to their individual EHCP. These tools help practitioners to ascertain the levels at which a child is working, to identify the next steps in their learning and to plan activities and targets which will maximise opportunities for further development and progress. Reception-age pupils carry out a baseline assessment on arrival, to support and show development. Learning through play, both indoors and outdoors, is the fundamental way in which they learn. It is through play that children practice and rehearse the concepts and skills they have acquired or been taught during adult led sessions and as such it is crucial that they have time and opportunities to play in a supported and creative way. Through play, children will be developing skills across all the Prime and Specific areas of learning, working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.

In a secure and stimulating environment, with effective adult support, we aim for children to:

- Explore learning experiences that help them make sense of the world
- Practise and build up concepts, ideas and skills
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules
- Be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk to rehearse their feelings
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively

- Communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems
- Express fears to relieve anxious experiences, in controlled and safe situations

Adults in the setting will support play and learning by:

- Planning and resourcing a stimulating environment
- Identifying and understanding the children's next steps in their learning and supporting opportunities to reach those next steps.
- Supporting children's learning through planned play
- Extending and supporting children's spontaneous play
- Extending and developing children's language and communication in their play.
- Listening to all forms of children's communication and their ideas, then taking these into account when developing play and planning
- Narrating children's play.
- Asking questions about children's play.
- Scribing for children when appropriate

Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

We recognise that 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. We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff: child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

- For children aged 3 and over: We determine ratios guided by all relevant ratio requirements and by the needs of the children within the group.

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by by:

- Exploring the effects of eating too many sweet things
- Encouraging children to explore and taste a wide variety of foods
- Exploring the importance of brushing your teeth
- Encouraging pupils to move their bodies
- Working with relevant professionals and holding health checks in school.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's child protection and safeguarding policy.

Taking up a Place in Early Years at Lonsdale

Before a child takes up a place in Early Years at Lonsdale, there will be a carefully planned transition involving the child, parents, Lonsdale and external teams. During visits prior to starting, the Early Years teachers will talk to the child and the parents about ethnic, religious and cultural heritage and experiences at home. Working with the parents, we will complete an 'All about Me' booklet. Staff will use this information when planning and carrying out activities, to ensure that familiar experiences are used as starting points for learning. Working with Parents, we aim to build strong relationships and encourage them to take an active part in their children's education. We aim to keep good channels of communication with all parents, through diaries, Tapestry updates, emails and face to face contact. Tapestry also supports regular opportunities for discussion and celebration of children's progress and achievement, both at home and school.

Working with a Multidisciplinary Team

We aim to work as a multidisciplinary team with all the therapists that visit or work at Lonsdale School. Where possible, the therapy interventions are kept within the classroom to encourage the children to develop their skills in a comfortable and familiar setting. In this way they can be easily integrated into their daily routines.

School staff are also often trained to deliver therapy programmes and will meet regularly with all therapists to ensure that we everyone is working towards similar targets and reviewing and updating all programmes as appropriate.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Michelle Baker, EYFS teacher, every year. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

| Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS | Where can it be found? |
|---|--|
| Safeguarding policy and procedures | See child protection and safeguarding policy |
| Procedure for responding to illness | See Attendance policy |
| Administering medicines policy | See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy |
| Emergency evacuation procedure | See Fire Evacuation Procedures |
| Procedure for checking the identity of visitors | See child protection and safeguarding policy |
| Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children | See child protection and safeguarding policy |
| Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints | See complaints policy |