

Early Years Curriculum Policy



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Last reviewed on: 18th July 2021

Next review due by: 18th July 2022

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

2. Structure of the Early Years

The Early Years Curriculum is integrated through two provisions at Ingfield Manor School: Ingfield Manor School for Parents and the Ingfield Manor Early Years Provision. Clearly embedded within the practice and philosophy of Conductive Education, the Early Years Department embraces a specialist, relevant and holistic approach.

Ingfield Manor School for Parents

School for Parents is a unique service for families of babies and very young children from birth to five years. The service works in partnership with parents to educate the young child with cerebral palsy or associated motor learning difficulties and allied learning needs. Solid support and practical advice is provided to parents within a mutually sympathetic and encouraging environment so they can play a key role in the teaching partnership. This service delivers weekly group sessions or individual sessions as appropriate for each family.

Whilst School for Parents is not the child's main provider of nursery provision, the Early Years Foundation Stage is assimilated into all sessions during planning, delivery and record keeping. The trans-disciplinary team work collaboratively with the parents and learning is supported through the use of activities, games and stories, based on a topic for each term. Parents are involved with target setting and evaluation of their children's progress. They are told the aims of individual tasks and given guidance as to how to transfer the skills into the daily routine at home. The children join age-appropriate groups and the sessions involve active sitting, standing, walking, manipulation, communication, cognitive development, self-help and social skills.

The holistic nature of the sessions incorporates and integrates the seven areas of Learning and Development from the Early Years Foundation Stage. A multi-sensory approach is used with every opportunity taken to extend children's communication skills through music, singing and alternative and augmentative communication aids.

The ethos of active learning through play and partnership with parents is central to the practice of School for Parents.

The School for Parents can be complemented by Ingfield Manor Early Years Provision subject to the agreement and funding of the child's Local Authority.

Ingfield Manor Early Years Provision

The Ingfield Manor Early Years Provision is a non-maintained provision for children from age three to five + years old; pre-school, reception and year 1. The service provides a Conductive Education programme incorporating the seven

areas of Learning and Development of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum: Physical Development, Personal Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts and Design.

The curriculum guidelines are in unison with School for Parents, and the provision is delivered by a skilled trans-disciplinary team. Children are given opportunities to be challenged and learn through play by fostering active participation within a structured daily routine. They learn about developing movement skills, speech and communication, cognitive, self care and social skills within the group using the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum embedded within a Conductive Education framework with fully integrated teaching and therapy.

3. Curriculum

Our early years settings follow the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 Statutory Framework of the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

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

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

The EYFS also includes the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

The three characteristics are:

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things and events around them and 'have a go'
- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different and experiences and develop strategies for doing things

Our EYFS curriculum aims:

- To provide a holistic curriculum that is clearly embedded within the practice and philosophy of Conductive Education.
- To provide quality learning experiences for all the children. Learning is through practical and play activities, which are structured, balanced, relevant to the child and related to the real world.
- To provide a curriculum which takes account of, and responds to, the children's developmental needs and allows them to make progress related to their differing abilities. "What the child can do" will be our starting point.
- To ensure the children have positive experiences of success at their own levels in order to give them confidence and motivation for learning in the future.
- To enable the children to learn a range of essential foundation skills including functional motor skills, communication, social skills, self-care, cognitive knowledge and understanding and to develop their independence.
- To use Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC)/Information Communication Technology as a tool to provide experiences that enrich children's learning within the whole curriculum and support and reinforce individual learning and play development
- To provide an enabling environment in which children feel that they are valued as holistic, active learners and empowered with the confidence and self-esteem to make choices and develop skills throughout their school career.
- To enable children to be active participants in their learning through positive expectations and social motivation of an appropriate peer group.
- To provide a curriculum which provides equal learning and development opportunities for all the children.
- To create a partnership with parents to support and enhance the development of the children.

The curriculum is delivered through half termly topics which are planned on a 2-year cycle, so that children will experience activities within each topic as they progress through the EYFS. The Cornerstones curriculum materials are used as a resource base for informing planning and delivery.

Whole class, group and individual activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum, as appropriate. The indoor and outdoor learning environments are structured to facilitate active learning through play and offer a variety of learning experiences. The use of the sensory room provides additional opportunities for sensory based activities.

Motor Learning

The daily routine in the early years class starts with a motor learning programme which enables the students to gain independence through the completion of a series of physical tasks. The tasks increase in complexity throughout the programme and are differentiated according to the needs of the group and the individual. Within this programme, as with all sessions, the development of the whole child is at the forefront. The skills learnt during this programme are then put into practice throughout the student's day, in different contexts. Motor learning is an integral part of the entire day.

Communication

At Ingfield we use a 'total communication' approach involving the use of speech/vocalisation, signing, gesture, symbols, low- and high-tech communication aids. The development of the children's communication skills is integral to the daily teaching routine. The teacher, in liaison with the speech and language therapist plans and deliver a weekly group communication session, in addition to the SaLT working with individual children across the week. The skills learnt in these sessions are applied throughout the week.

The best ways forward with respect to communication for individual students are determined and skills taught to enable use of alternative and augmentative communication aids. Individual communication books are introduced as appropriate to the needs of the students, the content of which can be duplicated on the students' tablets.

Auditory scanning alongside Picture Communication Symbols is used for children with a high level of visual need. This supports the development of their comprehension and expression as well as their interaction with other children.

Mathematics

Maths teaching is delivered in a fun, accessible way through the creative use of a range of resources including Numicon. Children develop early number awareness through number songs, rhymes, stories and counting activities embedded throughout the day. They gain awareness of shape, space and measure through practical activities linked to the topic.

Literacy

A rich variety of stories, rhymes, songs, spoken words, symbols and signs are used to create a language rich environment.

We use Letters and Sounds (DfE) to inform our phonics teaching, alongside whole word recognition. Teaching is reinforced with cued articulation to

aid students' understanding of sound production.

A multi-sensory approach is used to support phonetics, reading and writing. Children's attempts at mark making are recognised and celebrated.

Information and Communication Technology

Children's learning experiences in ICT across the early years must support and reinforce individual learning and play development. Planning is required for coherence of learning experiences to ensure time and resources are utilised efficiently.

The emphasis of ICT is its use as a tool to provide experiences that enrich children's learning within the whole curriculum. A range of individual accessing methods are available and students receive a comprehensive assessment of the best ways forward to ensure technology supports their learning.

4. Recording and Reporting children's progress

Within the first half term of a child joining the early years provision, an initial baseline assessment is carried out and used in conjunction with the child's EHCP to inform the setting of initial termly objectives within the 7 areas of the early years foundation stage. At the student's first annual review, annual objectives are set, informed by the long term outcomes in the child's EHCP, which are set and evaluated by the trans-disciplinary team. These annual targets are broken down into challenging termly objectives. It is through the evaluation of these termly objectives that student's progress is tracked, informed by Ingfield's Holistic Assessment System (HAS). HAS gives a bespoke set of criteria which provides a shared language of achievement across the school to support the sequencing of learning and opportunities to revisit learning to embed it and build on skills and knowledge. This builds up a comprehensive picture of each learner and ensures recognition of incremental steps of progress.

Working in partnership with parents in all areas adds to the continuity of learning throughout the whole day, and the reviewing of progress will involve all adults and professionals who work with an individual child. The curriculum is differentiated and personalised according to each child's individual needs.

Achievements are evidenced through target sheet evaluations and annotations, children's individual clipboards, termly evaluation of objectives, video, photographs, learning journals, motor learning books and end of year report. At the end of the reception year, the EYFS profile is completed.

5. Partnership with Parents and Carers

A strong home-school partnership is fostered from the beginning with parents and carers welcome to spend time in the group, working with their child or observing. Daily communication via each child's home-school book ensures a consistent approach for our students and ensures we are up to date with respect to students' physical, medical and emotional needs. Conductive Education is most effective when what is learnt at school is applied at home and vice versa. Suggestions for activities during holidays are made at the end of each term and equipment can be borrowed from school as needed. Parents and Carers are kept informed of topics, current progress and objectives via letters, emails, bi-annual parents mornings and daily communication via their child's home-school book.