



# Dog Kennel Hill Primary School

## Early Years Foundation Stage Handbook 2024 – 2025



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# Welcome to Dog Kennel Hill Early Years!



Dog Kennel Hill is a welcoming, secure and happy environment where every child is valued. We know that children learn best through play and our environment allows children to learn and discover independently and with the support of adults.

The foundation stage provides children with their first taste of education! It is so important that families and school work closely together to ensure that your child reaches their full potential.

There are many opportunities to become involved in your child's journey- from joining us on a school trip, reading with groups of children, or sharing any skills you may have.

We hope that this booklet will give you an insight into your child's learning and what you can expect from the Early Years. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher should you have any queries.

# The EYFS Curriculum



The Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS) is the framework in which all OFSTED registered early years' settings work from.

This framework ensures that settings provide a positive and consistent foundation for children's learning and covers children from birth to the end of the Reception year.

The Foundation Stage is based on the recognition that children learn best through play and active learning and states that,

*'A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up'.*

## **There are four guiding principles that shape practice in Early Years settings**

1. Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;
3. 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; and
4. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in the EYFS provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

# Our Areas of Learning

## Characteristics of Effective Learning

### Playing and Exploring

#### ENGAGEMENT

Finding out and exploring  
 Playing with what they know  
 Being willing to 'have a go'

### Active Learning

#### MOTIVATION

Being involved and concentrating  
 Keep trying  
 Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

### Creative and Critical Thinking

#### THINKING

Having their own ideas  
 Making links  
 Working with ideas

## Areas of Learning and Development

## Birth to 5 Matters Aspects

### Prime Areas

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Making Relationships  
 Sense of Self

Understanding Feelings

Physical Development

Moving and handling  
 Health and Self-care

Communication and Language

Listening and Attention  
 Understanding

Speaking

### Specific Areas

Literacy

Reading  
 Writing

Mathematics

Mathematics

Understanding the World

People and Communities

The World

Technology

Expressive Arts and Design

Creating with Materials

Being Imaginative and Expressive

# Working at home with your child

## Communication and language

- Talk to your child about anything they are interested in
- Play word games e.g. eye spy
- Sing songs and rhymes together
- Encourage children to make up stories/ role play

## Personal, social and emotional

- Encourage your child to say please and thank you
- Encourage your child to be independent e.g. taking off and putting on their own coat
- Allow them to select some toys and activities themselves and discuss their preferences and opinions
- Encourage your child to use the toilet unaided
- Support your child in turn taking and sharing
- Encourage your child to talk about their feelings

## Mathematics

- Count out loud with your child
- Count using fingers
- Point out numbers to your child e.g. door numbers, bus numbers etc.
- Sing number songs or rhymes
- Read stories with numbers in them
- Practice counting groups of objects and ask questions such as, 'how many?'
- Explore and represent patterns

## Physical development

- Give your child the opportunity to handle both large and small equipment
- Support your child in using scissors
- Provide opportunities for your child to run, hop, skip, jump and travel and manoeuvre in a range of ways
- Play games such as follow the leader to develop coordination
- Discuss changes to their bodies after exercise; heart beating faster, feeling hot etc.

## Literacy

- Allow your child to select books for themselves; ones that interest them
- Look at and discuss picture books with repetitive language e.g. Julia Donaldson books
- Ask your child to 'read' what is happening in pictures, prompt them to share a sentence about what is happening
- Begin to form letter shapes; write them in sand, in the air, etc.
- Support your child in recognising their own name and beginning to write their name and other letters of the alphabet

## Understanding of the world

- Talk to your child about special occasions
- Encourage them to explore their surroundings, particularly the outdoors
- Talk about the lives of people around your child and their roles in society
- Allow your child to observe and speak about animals and plants

## Expressive arts and design

- Allow your child to listen to and sing songs and rhymes
- Engage in role play with your child e.g. pretending to be characters, playing house etc.
- Explore different media and tools; paint, pencils, crayons, glue, scissors etc.
- Dance to songs and make up actions to songs and rhymes e.g. the wheels on the bus
- Encourage them to feel and describe different textures e.g. rough, smooth, soft etc.

# Our School Day

Parents should drop off and collect their children **promptly** from their classrooms. Please wait outside the gate until a member of staff welcomes you into the Early Years area.

**It is important to drop off and collect your child on time.** Young children can become very distressed if they do not have a consistent routine.

If you are late at drop off, your child will be given a late ticket at the office and a member of staff will escort your child to their class.

The school uses the Studybugs app for absence reporting of your child.

**In the event of an emergency, please telephone the school so that we can reassure your child and keep the staff informed.**

**Telephone on:  
020 7274 1829**

**Please note, we are unable to allow a child to leave with an adult who is unfamiliar to us or with someone who is under the age of 16.**

## **Nursery – Part Time:**

Monday and Tuesday: 9.00-3.30pm

Wednesday: 9.00 -11.30

## **Nursery – Full Time:**

Monday to Friday: 9.00 – 3.30pm

## **Reception:**

Monday to Friday: 9.00 – 3.30pm

# School Uniform

At DKH, uniform is optional. If you wish for your child to wear school uniform, school jumpers can be purchased for £13.00 and book bags for £7.00 using Arbor pay. If you do not have an Arbor account, the school office can assist you in setting one up.

As our uniform is optional, we would like to advise all parents that children should come to school in **practical, weather appropriate** clothing, which they are able to manage independently e.g. fastenings for toileting and suitable outerwear for outdoor learning. Please ensure that during winter months clothes are warm and during summer months that shoulders are covered and protected from the sun. Clothing needs to be comfortable and cost effective as the foundation stage involves messy and physical activities, which can mean that children leave a little messier than they arrived!

It is important to ensure that **all** personal items are **clearly labelled** with the child's **name and class** to prevent items being lost.

# Messy Play Policy

## Dog Kennel Hill EYFS: Messy play policy

**When I get messy, I have been showing curiosity, determination, persistence, imagination and confidence!**

Playing outside is so important. I run and jump and get lots of fresh air. Sometimes I might get grass or mud on my clothes. When it rains I love to jump in the puddles, this is fantastic for my gross motor skills and helps me understand cause and effect!



We are so lucky to have a brilliant mud kitchen in our playground. It is so much fun playing and exploring in the mud. I use all my senses, which is important for my development. It also helps me use my imagination, recreating what I see at home, and supports my communication and language skills!

We I love playing with cornflour, shaving foam, spaghetti and all kinds of malleable resources. It is my favourite thing about coming to school! This helps me to develop my fine motor control and build up my muscles in my fingers and my hands. I will need these when I learn to write!



Sometimes I get pen and paint on my clothes! This is because I am developing creative skills and exploring lots of different ways of making amazing art. I normally wear an apron but sometimes I just get carried away creating my masterpiece. This helps me to develop my fine motor control and will later help me become a super writer.

We love playing in the water tray whatever the weather! Exploring the water tray is giving me super maths and scientific skills. I love pouring, filling and emptying. I usually wear an apron but sometimes my clothes get wet.





I am learning to be independent putting on my coat, apron for messy play and welly boots for wet weather. But this is very tricky! My teachers are helping me but I am trying my best. My family and friends can help me to be independent by supporting me at home too.

We encourage parents to provide spare clothes for their child in case they get wet while learning. We encourage children to come and tell adults if they need changing. Children are also able to leave wellies and all-in-one waterproofs at school!



# Forest School at DKH

Forest school is a holistic approach to learning which encourages children to be resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.

Sessions are managed by either **Ms Hassan** or **Ms Lewis** who are both qualified ForestSchool Leaders. Each session will follow a routine that the children will soon become familiar with, including a group discussion, activity and exploration in our woodland, warm drink and snack and a final get together for reflection time before heading back to class.



Children are able to explore the outdoor environment and ask questions. They are provided with encouragement to find answers and extend their thinking. The natural environment provides lots of opportunity for children to explore and find out more.

The children are encouraged to explore all aspects of the natural world. Their own interests and play ideas will be the basis of activities to extend their learning. Activities will include den building, bug hunting, whittling wood, making bird feeders, mud painting and much more!

## **Clothing**

- Children will be out in all weathers except in high winds.
- We will provide waterproof trousers and raincoats but in cold weather, children should come to school in warm layers, long sleeved tops, long trousers, jumpers, warm socks, hats, scarves and gloves. In wet weather, children should wear wellington boots.
- In warmer weather, children need to wear long sleeved tops and long trousers, a sun hat, sunscreen and sturdy closed toe shoes.

**Scan the QR code to find out more about our Forest School!**

**If you have any questions about forest school please contact Ms Hassan who is our Forest School Lead.**



# Tapestry – Online Learning Journal

At Dog Kennel Hill we use an online learning platform called 'Tapestry'. This provides every child in Nursery and Reception their own individual learning journal. By logging on with a secure username and password you will be able to access your child's journal. Parents are only able to view their own child's journal and all information is stored on a highly secure server, which is monitored closely.

Tapestry online learning journals allow you to view your child's observations and photographs from their time at school, almost as they happen! We will also reference your child's learning to the EYFS profile, the statutory curriculum for the Early Years. This will keep you informed of the areas of learning in which your child is achieving, also, the age band they were working in for the observed activity.

We also use Tapestry as a form of communication by posting whole class updates about important events or learning in school. Tapestry allows you, as your child's primary educator, to add photographs and videos of your own as well as share your comments. We love to hear about learning from home and you will be able to share with keyworkers activities that your child has particularly enjoyed.

We will provide you with more information about Tapestry and a 'how to guide' when you join us in September.



# Reading Homework

At DKH we love reading and aim to provide regular opportunities for reading which allow staff, parents and children to share books together. We have a 'book bag system,' which allows all children in the Foundation Stage to have access to a wide range of books. Children are invited to borrow chosen books to take home and are encouraged to share their reading with others.

**Nursery children** will be given the opportunity to borrow books on a regular basis from their classroom.

**Reception children** will be given a reading record and a reading book to read with adults both at school and at home. Books are changed once a week and the reading record will serve as a progress log and as communication between school and home. Regular communication between adults is important in order to track progress. Reception children will also be encouraged to take home a variety of '**story books**' which they will be unable to read themselves and should have read to them by an adult. These books aim to further promote and develop your child's love for reading.

# Home – School Communication

We know that children do best when parents and teachers work together! We aim to maximise communication between home and school in the following ways:

- Conversations at drop off and/or pick up
- Weekly school newsletters
- Reading café!
- Tapestry
- DKH's school website: [www.dkh.org.uk](http://www.dkh.org.uk)
- Email
- School texting service
- School calendar
- Parents evenings

# Foundation Stage Contribution

At the start of each half term we ask for a voluntary contribution of £6 (£1 per week) to support us in providing exciting experiences for all children. This contribution allows us to fund resources and activities, which will further enhance the children's learning. Examples include buying ingredients for cooking activities, items for sensory and tactile exploration, ingredients to make playdough, and much more. Previous donations have even contributed towards the purchase of incubators so children can observe the lifecycle of a chicken!



## Things to Practice

There are many skills you and your child can practise at home to help them make a smooth transition into Early Years.

- Can you put your coat on and do it up? Can you take your coat off?
- Can you put your shoes on by yourself?
- Can you use a knife and fork to eat?
- Can you drink from a cup by yourself?
- Can you go to the toilet on your own?
- Can you tell an adult what you need?
- Can you recognise your name?
- Can you share toys with others?
- Can you engage in an activity with others?
- Can you tidy up your toys and put them back in the right place?