

Nishkam School Trust



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Approved by:	Trustees	Date: February 2023
Last reviewed on:	February 2023	

Our Vision

Nishkam schools are Sikh ethos multi faith schools that take a distinctive approach to many traditional faith schools. The Nishkam School Trust education model is led by virtues such as, compassion, humility, service, contentment, optimism, trust and forgiveness. Virtues are prevalent throughout our teaching and learning model and are modelled by our pupils, staff and teachers. Our pupils explore the divine context of humanity and wonder of all creation and also learn from the wisdom of all religions and in doing so explore the infinite human potential to do good unconditionally. We support all pupils and staff to develop aspects of their own religious, spiritual or human identities. In service of God, we pray for guidance in this endeavour and forgiveness for the errors we make.

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 and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

The aim of the Early Years Curriculum at Nishkam is to nurture and build upon children's natural energy, enthusiasm, curiosity and sense of humour. Children learn predominately through playing individually or co-operatively in small groups and, therefore, structured, planned play is the medium through which the Early Years Curriculum will predominantly be delivered.

We always ensure that our children experience an ambitious and inclusive curriculum that educates in knowledge, skills and understanding. It is designed to be creative, inspiring and challenging, to provide all children with opportunities to be independent aspirational learners.

We encourage all our children to believe in themselves, their abilities and capabilities, to belong to the school learning community and the wider community. Our curriculum aims to embed opportunities to develop cultural capital through well chosen texts, visits, and experiences. In addition, there are many opportunities for children to apply their learning in real life contexts and make links with the community around them as well as the wider world.

We are passionate about creating opportunities for children to communicate more easily through developing language and communication skills and specifically teaching vocabulary. Language theory research informs us that young children's language development is influenced by many factors, including having sensitive adults and older children around them who will listen and attend to their expressions and use and model appropriate language themselves.

In Reception, children receive a carefully balanced diet of exploratory play-based learning, and directed teaching in Phonics, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding of the World and Expressive Arts. To facilitate this, our staff skilfully make observations of the children in their independent play and through the modelling, demonstrating, explaining, and exploring of key ideas.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#). This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Structure of the EYFS

Implementation

In the Early Years children are developing more rapidly, intellectually and socially, than at any other subsequent stage in their lives. This growth is, however, very individual and children vary greatly in their maturity in the different areas of development and each child enters the setting with a unique range of experiences, abilities and understanding. Nishkam staff always consider these individual achievements and needs, where learning is personalised for the children.

There are four overarching themes in the EYFS which express important principles underpinning effective practice in the care, development and learning of young children. The four themes are; A Unique Child; Positive Relationships; Enabling Environments; Learning and Development. Each of the underlying principles is supported by four Commitments. Our long-term plan outlines how we put the principles and commitments of the EYFS into practice in our setting and is used alongside policies and procedures that underpin statutory welfare requirements.

A Unique Child

We believe that every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Staff understand and observe each child's development and learning, assess progress, and plan for purposeful next steps. Our staff support children to develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture. Staff identify any need for additional support to keep children safe. The safeguarding of children is of highest priority and staff are always vigilant and attentive to the health and well-being of the children. At Nishkam Schools Trust we have a highly comprehensive safeguarding policy and procedures which are supported by regularly training and updates in line with government policy. Staff value and respect all children and families equally wholeheartedly.

In our setting we support each Unique Child by recognising and respecting children's individual characteristics and temperament. We get to know each child really well through sensitive observations of their freely chosen play; by listening to them and their parents/ carers and by interacting in their play. As a result, we are able to tune into their interests, schemas, and communication and learning styles. By providing time, space and resources for child-initiated play, we enable children to explore, investigate, and demonstrate their knowledge, skills and attitudes. We ensure children feel valued, secure and confident to learn by acknowledging them as competent learners and building on what they can already do and understand.

Children's communication skills are supported through high quality adult/ child interactions where we provide good eye contact, follow the child's lead, tune into their focus of interest and have genuine conversations with children. We praise and affirm their communication, commenting on what they are doing or the focus of their attention and take opportunities to explain, repeat and expand vocabulary to deepen thinking.

By working in partnership with parents and other agencies, and by providing an accessible and welcoming environment, we aim to include all children effectively. We use a visual timetable so that all children can feel secure in the knowledge of what will be happening throughout the day and can track the sequential progress of the day's events. We provide additional support for children's developing speech and language skills by using photographs, symbols, gestures and Makaton. We provide warm, responsive care and have an effective safeguarding policy and procedures. We respect and support children's dietary and medical needs, provide a range of healthy vegetarian food and ensure fresh fruit, milk and drinking water is always available. Children get fresh air and exercise through access to our secure outdoor area.

We provide a safe, secure environment both indoors and outdoors where children can pursue their learning through a balance of physically active and restful learning opportunities. We explain and demonstrate clear, consistent boundaries and routines and help children to learn to assess risks and keep safe.

Positive Relationships

It is our philosophy at Nishkam that children should have the opportunity to learn to be strong and independent through the building of positive relationships with staff and peers. It is our belief that positive relationships are warm and loving and foster a sense of belonging. Staff are sensitive and responsive to the child's needs, feelings and interests. They are supportive of the child's own efforts and independence and are consistent in setting clear boundaries in a nurturing and caring manner.

In our setting we provide positive relationships by working as a collaborative team and in partnership with parents, to support every child in our care. We make time to form enduring relationships with children and their families, initially through individual 1-1 meetings with parents and their children and then through sensitive induction into our setting by means of 'Stay and Play' sessions. We communicate with practitioners from previous settings to help make transitions smooth and seamless for children and families. Transition meetings are to help and support parents before the start of the new term. When children first start Reception parents are welcome to join their child for a session to build a positive start to their new journey ahead.

In EYFS we send out regular newsletters which outline curriculum coverage and an insight in the day in the life of a reception child. Parents are valued contributors to their child's individual learning journey and there is a two-way flow of information about children's progress. Reception children use Home/School reading journals, to aid regular communication between home and school. Parents are helped to understand more about learning and teaching through workshops on important areas such as Phonics, early reading, maths and physical development.

All staff are dedicated to getting to know the children well, responding sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour and helping them become settled, secure and confident. We help children understand their own feelings and those of others and support them in building friendships. Stories and circle times are used to promote understanding and respect for different needs, views and cultures. By valuing their contributions, tuning into their interests and needs, encouraging and praising their achievements, we nurture children's self-esteem and give them a strong sense of belonging. Children are helped with the Transition into Year 1 by making regular visits, across the final half term, accompanied by familiar staff into the new learning environment. Children also have continuous opportunities throughout their time in Reception to interact with, learn alongside and become familiar and confident with Year 1 children and staff.

We use friendly and lively approaches to stimulate and support children, inspiring to try several ways to make something work rather than giving up and our virtue of resilience is strongly encouraged. In order to support children's development and learning effectively, we make sensitive observations of children and then respond and interact appropriately. Because we know the children well, we are able to judge when children are ready to be taught new concepts and skills, moving their learning on at appropriate stages, in line with their age and stage of development.

By joining in the children's play, we show that we respect and value the children's ideas and creativity; through exploring materials and researching alongside the children we encourage and extend curiosity, language development and thinking skills. By modelling how to be a learner, we help children reflect on their own learning.

Enabling Environments

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioner's parents and carers.

Our setting provides children with an engaging and stimulating enabling environment. We understand that when children's physical and emotional needs are met they are more ready to take advantage of the play and learning opportunities on offer. Good communication with multi-agency professionals and links with other local settings helps us to support continuity of learning and consistency of care for children, enabling them to settle in quickly. Through building positive relationships with the children, we enable them to learn. When children feel confident and secure in the environment, they are willing to try things out, knowing their effort is valued.

In order to ensure that children's experiences and our teaching matches the needs of the children, we observe children carefully and gather evidence of their interests, development and learning in a range of ways. These include: written notes, annotated photographs, samples of children's mark making; conversations with children about their learning; and dialogue with parents. Careful analysis of this information will be used to: identify and track their progress across the six areas of learning and development; highlight children's achievements or their need for further support; and most importantly to plan the next steps for children.

Whilst our planning is informed by our observations of children's interests and developmental needs, where possible we also try to involve children in planning their learning experiences. We then link the children's ideas to objectives in the six areas of learning and development in the EYFS Framework and also ensure a balance of child-initiated learning opportunities and adult-led teaching. Not only is our teaching informed and enriched by the children's ideas and interests, but the children also use taught skills independently to support, extend and deepen their learning. In this way, adult-initiated and child-initiated learning opportunities are often interdependent and mutually enhanced. Experiences are adapted for those who need extra support or challenge. Planning is flexible to enable us to capitalise on children's current fascinations or unplanned events such as a fall of snow or squirrels in the garden, which can enable powerful learning.

We provide an enriching environment both inside and outside and move learning between the two areas as much as possible. To enable children to experience the weather and the seasons first hand we have a stock of wellington boots and a canopy to protect them from the sun's rays. Being outside has a positive impact on children's sense of well-being and our outdoor environment is resourced to support all six areas of learning and development. For example, children have opportunities to explore and investigate the natural world and a range of sights, smells, sounds and textures; they can plant flowers and vegetables; build dens and shelters; make large constructions with blocks; follow maths trails; use maps for treasure hunts; control programmable toys; do large scale painting with decorators' brushes; create music and dance; co-operate in parachute games; engage in action rhymes and traditional playground games; and enjoy role play that requires extra space such as firefighting or postal delivery. We also provide quiet relaxing spaces like our seating in the shade for children to have space and time to watch, talk, reflect, draw, and enjoy stories.

Our inside environment also supports all areas of learning and development. Resources are accessible for children and are stored in such a way that they can easily find them and know where to put them away. For example, storage boxes and drawers are not only labelled with words but also with photographs of the contents.

We provide children with a range of multi-sensory experiences and open-ended resources to encourage exploration, investigation and creativity and to generally enrich their learning and development. We provide sensory trays where, early writing can be explored by mark-making in glitter, cornflour silk, shaving foam, soapy sand or finger paints. Exploring playdough and clay is not only a satisfying sensory and therapeutic experience, but it also helps develop children's manipulative skills. Water play and trays of material like sand, compost, lentils, give children opportunities to explore filling containers and investigate different sizes, shapes and capacity. Over the weeks we may add a range of other stimuli to the water tray, including: food colouring; ice cubes; small world sea creatures; sailing boats; bubbles; plastic tubing; and water wheels. In the sand or compost, children are able to dig for buried treasure, which might include objects of different texture, colours shape or size; or letters, words or numbers.

We have comfortable, attractive book corners where children can independently access and enjoy a range of picture books, stories, poems and non-fiction. These include books that: encourage interaction such as flap books and pop-up books; reflect cultural diversity and additional needs through positive images; support children who are experiencing a variety of life events e.g. new sibling, admission into hospital; have been written by the children with the practitioners; and have photos of recent events in the setting with appropriate captions. There are soft toys for children to cuddle and read stories to, Story Sacks and puppets for them to engage in retelling stories, and devices for children to listen to taped stories and rhymes.

We resource the environment to give children scope for developing their imagination and begin to create stories through: small world play (dolls house; farm set; vehicles and play mat; garage; play people; railway track; cars, dinosaurs etc.); by providing resources for extending sand play (shells; pebbles; twigs; play people; Lego bricks; diggers; cars; trucks; dinosaurs; large black tray) so children can create gardens, parks, building sites, castles, treasure islands or other imaginative scenarios. Recording apparatus are used for children to record their stories as they tell them and musical instruments for them to add sound effects.

The children help us to plan and resource our role play area and we ensure that it not only supports children's creative development but also provides rich and meaningful opportunities for other areas of learning. For example, if the children have decided they would like a Café this gives us opportunities for developing Communication Language and Literacy by providing a menu; an order pad; recipes; bills; receipts; posters; a "Specials" blackboard; signs such as "Open", "Closed" and "Pay here". There are also ideal opportunities for developing Problem Solving Reasoning and Numeracy through the number of items being ordered, the use of mathematical language such as "one more", "the biggest cake", "the round biscuit", and payment of the bill. In order to give children greater scope for creative play we also provide lengths of fabric for dressing up and other open-ended resources which the children can adapt and use imaginatively.

We have an inviting Writing area to encourage independent writing, with a range of attractive resources including paper and card of different sizes, colours and shapes; pencils, crayons, felt tips; clipboards; postcards; envelopes; scissors; sticky tape; glue sticks; paper clips; hole punch; treasury tags/string; notebooks; message pads; old diaries and address books; blank coupons and forms to fill in. We provide a range of stimuli that is selected to reflect and extend the children's current interests such as: greetings cards; postcards; party invitations; letters and addressed envelopes; leaflets; flap books; zig zag books. Each child has a box or tray with their name on to encourage the children to keep their masterpieces safe.

Our Creative area has materials for independent access and facilitating their creative flair, such as shells, leaves, pebbles, feathers, buttons and seeds. To support "designing and making", we provide empty boxes, cardboard tubes, lolly sticks, paper and card, scissors, masking tape, glue, hole punch etc. We also use a range of kits such as Duplo, Mobilo, magnetic blocks and Lego to support construction play. In addition, we display photos of buildings, bridges and vehicles to inspire children with their constructions, and provide clipboards and pencils for them to record their ideas. At the appropriate stage, children are encouraged to take photographs with the digital camera and to write captions on the computer; draw and label diagrams of their models; and even write instructions on how to build them.

Children have lots of opportunities to develop Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy in both the indoor and outdoor environment. As much as possible we use real life situations to make problem solving meaningful, for example: celebrating birthdays; preparing for snack time; writing shopping lists; cooking; planning for a party; scoring for games. The children also enjoy going on Maths trails to look for different shapes and numbers, counting the "giant strides" or "kangaroo jumps" they make as they search. Treasure hunts and obstacle courses support children with their positional language as they look under, on top of, next to, behind, and travel through, round and over.

We have some interesting collections of objects for children to sort, classify, order and count, such as: shells, pebbles, buttons, beads; keys; stacking boxes. The children help us to make number lines; perhaps by collecting a number of objects and putting them in a little transparent bag to hang on a hook, above which is the number; or by using the digital camera or iPad to photograph a number of objects. We gather and use props to support the many number rhymes that the children enjoy, such as: Five Little Speckled Frogs; Five Little Ducks; Ten Green Bottles; Ten Little Monkeys jumping on the bed.

EYFS Statutory Framework

Nishkam Schools Trust follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is mandatory for all schools and early years providers in Ofsted registered settings attended by young children i.e., from birth to the end of the academic year in which a child has their fifth birthday. There are four themes in the EYFS which express important principles underpinning effective practice in the care, development and learning of young children.

The four themes are;

- A Unique Child;
- Positive Relationships;
- Enabling Environments;
- Learning and Development.

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

Communication and Language:

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's reciprocal interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, storytelling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Children are screened in Wellcomm on entry to assess their unique level of understanding, this tool helps inform our baselines and a NELI intervention (Nuffield Early Language Intervention) is put in place to ensure gaps are closed for children who are not in line with age related expectations.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

Physical Development:

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

Literacy:

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Fully decodable reading books correspond directly to the Phonics programme used, these books are shared with skilled practitioners as well as being sent home for children to share with an adult. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing). The teaching of Phonics for reading and writing plays a vital part to EYFS Literacy and can be seen in the Phonics policy.

Mathematics:

This area consists of two elements- Number and Numerical Patterns. Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Understanding the World:

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

Expressive Arts and Design:

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

Characteristics of Effective Learning:

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The Reception teachers plan activities within their classrooms with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. (In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately EYFS 2021) The three characteristics 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.

THE ROLE OF ADULTS IN THE EARLY YEARS SETTING AT NISHKAM SCHOOL TRUST

All adults who work or interact with young children play a crucial role in their learning. Children need interested, sensitive adults to support them as they learn by promoting qualities, skills attitudes and values which enable them to think and act for themselves, to begin to understand moral issues and to accept social responsibilities.

At Nishkam Schools Trust we will ensure all the teaching staff have:

- a professional qualification and training
- an understanding of early child development and how children learn
- the ability to plan programmes of learning appropriate to the particular group of children and/individuals
- the ability to teach using a variety of strategies and approaches
- an understanding of the Early Years curriculum and the EYFS in the context of their future learning
- positive self-confidence and self-esteem
- the ability to work as a member of a team and have good interpersonal skills
- a sense of humour
- good observational skills
- the ability to work under their own initiative
- inestimable energy, enthusiasm and patience
- the ability to articulate their educational philosophy
- imagination
- intellectual curiosity and vigour
- Commitment to teaching in the Early Years.

We will ensure a successful learning environment is provided by:

- sharing a common philosophy and perceptions of children's learning
- supporting and providing a stimulating, supportive and purposeful ethos
- sharing knowledge of child development and educational experiences
- planning collaboratively for and assessing children's learning
- sharing expertise, valuing each other's strengths and skills
- providing role models for children, and reflecting this in all our relationships within the school and the wider community
- promoting equal opportunities showing respect for all
- setting agreed acceptable standards of behaviour and following the Nishkam Schools Trust Behaviour Policy
- valuing and working towards a partnership between home, setting and community
- ensuring we have an induction programme for parents/carers and encourage their participation
- identifying individual needs for personal and professional development
- Ongoing reviewing and assessing the Early Years setting and how it supports children's learning and development.

Intimate Care:

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an intimate procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's stage of development, they may need some support, for example, dressing, verbal encouragement to wipe their bottom after toileting and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases intimate care is to do with personal hygiene. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. It is our aim that all children should be independent, and we consider our role to be one of supporting and encouraging rather than doing. We encourage families to toilet train children before they begin their journey at Nishkam, and support families with this.

Families of children who have additional or medical needs, who require regular Intimate care for their child, are encouraged to provide children with a change of clothing and toiletries in case of accidents whilst children are in the setting.

In these instances, an intimate care plan is usually put in place. (Please see the intimate care policy appendix, within the SEND policy).

PARENTS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY

At Nishkam School trust we believe the starting point for developing positive links with the home is a belief in the philosophy of partnership, where parents and staff are seen to have different roles, but both have equal importance. This implies a two-way process, with information and knowledge, passing freely between the partners. This partnership at Nishkam begins with meetings between parents, carers and Foundation Stage staff before they begin their Early Years education. These processes begin to form link between the school and home. To ensure this process is then further developed we will ensure that we:

- value the child's previous and present home experiences, acknowledging that they have as much to learn from parents/carers and their special knowledge and relationships with their individual children, as parents/carers have to learn about their children's continuing education in the school environment
- aim for all parents/carers to feel confident, valued and able to contribute effectively to the education not only of their child but also other children
- foster the use of parents/carers own skills, expertise and interests which reflect the cultural, social diversity and values that exist within the setting and wider community
- provide a warm and welcoming environment which fosters a sense of belonging so that the setting is not seen as an isolated but part of the community
- ensure opportunities exist for parents/carers to clarify and discuss how they can best be involved in the learning process; allowing for carers/family/social circumstances, work/further education commitments and personal inclination
- support and encourage parents/carers in home-learning learning opportunities and within the Foundation Stage
- Show an awareness of the learning needs of the parents/carers themselves
- Maintain good links between school and other carers such as wrap-around care and child minders

The Early Years curriculum will be delivered through cross curricular topics and, in preparation for the transition into KSI, separate elements of Literacy and Numeracy teaching.

It will develop knowledge, attitudes, values, understanding and experience across subject boundaries.

It will have structure, breadth, balance, relevance, differentiation, progression and continuity.

By the end of the foundation stage, the aim is for the majority children will have achieved Early Learning Goals set out by the DFE. The aim is for a child leaving Reception to have met a Good Level of Development (GLD) across 12 areas of the EYFS profile.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Practitioners will need to plan for each child's individual learning requirements, including those children who need additional support or have special needs or disabilities. The focus should be on removing barriers and by making all reasonable adjustments necessary to prevent any difficulties from developing. Early years practitioners have a key role to play in early identification of learning needs and responding quickly to any area of difficulty or need, to develop an effective strategy to meet these needs, so that later difficulties can be avoided.

Practitioners should work together with the SENDCo and staff from other agencies, to provide the best learning opportunities for individual children. Practitioners should take specific action to help children with special educational needs to make the best possible progress by:

- providing for those who need help with communication, language and literacy skills through, for example:
 - using alternative and augmentative communication, language including signs and symbols;
 - using visual and written materials in different formats, including large print and symbol text;
 - using information and communication technology, other technological aids and taped materials.
- Planning, where necessary to develop understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences through, for example:
 - using materials and resources that children can access through sight, touch, sound and smell; - using word descriptions and other stimuli to make up for a lack of first-hand experiences;
 - using information and communication technology, visual and other materials to increase children's knowledge of the wider world.
- Planning for full participation in learning and in physical and practical activity through, for example: - providing additional support from adults when needed;
 - adapting learning opportunities or environments and providing alternative learning opportunities where appropriate;
 - using specialist aids and equipment.
- Helping children who have difficulties with behaviour to take part in learning effectively through, for example:
 - adapting learning opportunities or environments and providing alternative learning opportunities where appropriate;
 - setting reasonable expectations which have been discussed with the child;
 - establishing clear boundaries;
 - appreciating and praising children's efforts;
 - giving children every chance and encouragement to develop the skills they need to work well with child or children;
 - helping children to value and respect their own contribution and that of others.

(See SEND policy)

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

Some children in early years settings will have a home language other than English. Practitioners will value this linguistic diversity and provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning. These children may spend a long time listening before they speak English and will often be able to understand much of what they hear, particularly where communication through gesture, sign or facial expression and other visual images is encouraged. Learning opportunities should be planned to help children develop their English, and support given from staff within the setting. Nishkam offer experienced staff with a range of languages to support pupils.

ASSESSMENT AND RECORD KEEPING

Assessment and record keeping will be consistent with the whole school's policy on assessment. In the Early Years we will ensure it:

- Is manageable and an intrinsic part of everyday practice;
- Identifies children's learning and subsequent progress;
- Becomes the basis of record keeping and future planning for each child;
- Forms part of a continuous and ongoing process throughout the phases of education;
- Is focused, integral to and led by whole setting development and curriculum planning;
- Assists in the early identification of children with special educational needs including the more able;
- Provides the basis for informing parents about their child's progress;
- Is a shared process of review with adults and children working together towards agreed targets;
- Assists the school in evaluating the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process.
- Will inform the completion of the Early Years Profile by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Baseline:

Prior to children starting, staff spend time speaking to the child's parents, previous settings and read previous learning journeys to gain an understanding of the whole child and where they are at. During the first six weeks of the autumn term in Reception, all staff use ongoing assessments, observations and conversations with the child to develop a baseline assessment. This identifies each individual's starting points in all areas so we can plan experiences to ensure progress. The following baseline assessments are also carried out.

The RBA (Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment)

This assessment focuses on 'Language, Communication and Literacy,' and 'Mathematics.' The purpose of this is to show the progress children make from Reception until the end of KS2.

Ongoing Observation:

All ongoing observations are used to inform weekly planning and identify children's next steps. This formative assessment does not involve prolonged periods of time away from the children and excessive paper work. Practitioners draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgements through discussions with other practitioners, photographs and physical examples such as a child's drawing / making.

Phonic assessments are carried out using phonics trackers to quickly identify pupils that are not making expected progress. Assessments are completed half termly and the class teacher updates the progress children have made and plans next steps accordingly.

In the summer term of Reception, the EYFS Profile will be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile will reflect ongoing observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents/carers and any other adults whom the teacher, parent/carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development will be assessed against the early learning goals. Practitioners will indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development ('Expected') or are working towards the expected levels ('Emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile. Reception staff will moderate children to ensure consistency with the judgements.

Teachers will identify more able children that are working above the expected level of development and provide information to the Year 1 teachers.

CONTINUITY AND PROGRESSION

All children's development is a continuous process that does not proceed uniformly or at an even pace. Careful planning and development of learning opportunities, teaching approaches and strategies, organisation of the learning environment and the range of experiences will ensure that the children experience a continuum from an Early Years based curriculum based on Early Learning Goals to the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum.

Clear transition arrangements ensure smooth, happy transfer from one setting to another. To achieve this well ensure there is:

- Close links between staff in Year 1, Reception and Nursery classes, play groups, carers and parents
- Exchanges of work e.g. nursery children's pictures displayed in reception class prior to admission
- Older children from the school supporting Early Years children, e.g. reading stories
- Shared record of an individual child, including medical information which may affect learning and assessment
- Gradual introduction into the new setting so that children can be admitted in small groups where possible, with children they know from previous setting
- Sensitive introductions to the routines e.g. playtimes and lunchtimes; collective worship.
- Preparing for transition by introducing some routines and teaching styles from the next setting
- Induction meetings and workshops for parents and carers, sharing information and giving the opportunity for them to ask questions.
- Reception children having opportunities to meet and visit their new Year One Teacher and classroom.
- Transition booklets created for children and parents to introduce systems and routines.
- A transition meeting for parents in the Autumn term whereby Key Stage 1 staff can discuss curriculum changes as the children move from the Early Years Foundation Stage to the National Curriculum.

ADULTS WILL ENSURE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES:

With regard to race and culture by providing experiences that:

- Recognise, respect and give value to children and families from all races and cultures
- Actively seek to ensure good role models
- Do not serve to reinforce negative stereotypes

With regard to gender by providing experiences that:

- Involve all children in the full range of the curriculum
- Promote positive role models avoiding stereotypes
- Engender an equal expectation

With regard to children with special educational needs and or disability by providing:

- Appropriate resources to aid accessibility to all aspects of the life of the setting
- Opportunities that encourage independence and raise levels of confidence
- Staff development that ensures an understanding and knowledge of the needs of the individual child
- Access to positive role models

With regard to socially and economically deprived children by providing experiences that:

- Ensure that no child feels less valued than any other
- Take place within a stable and secure environment
- Encourage, support and develop the family as a whole

Impact:

The impact of our pedagogy and our curriculum is measured by how effectively it helps our children develop into well rounded individuals who embody our school values and carry with them the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will make them lifelong learners and valuable future citizens. Our children make strong progress academically, emotionally, creatively, socially and physically. Knowledge, understanding and skills are secured and embedded so that children attain highly and are fully prepared to ensure children are ready and fully equipped to begin learning the National Curriculum programme of study in Year 1. At the end of EYFS our children;

- have strong communication skills, both written and verbal. Our children also listen respectfully and with tolerance to the views of others,
- take pride in all that they do, always striving to do their best,
- demonstrate emotional resilience and the ability to persevere when they encounter challenge,
- can demonstrate resilience, determination and are able to persist when challenges occur,
- develop a sense of self-awareness and become confident in their own abilities,
- are kind, respectful and honest, demonstrate inclusive attitudes and have a sense of their role in our wider society.
- Are ready to begin their transition into Key Stage 1.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the School Leader, Executive Team and will be approved by the Trust Board annually.