

Parents' Guide to Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Kingsmead has a reputation for high standards of education and care of the individual child. The school is proud to offer this standard of care to its youngest members. Early years are a crucial stage in which character, ability and attitudes are being formed.

INTRODUCTION

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he Early Years Foundation Stage at Kingsmead is intended to be a happy introduction to the joy and experience of education and schooling. This guide is to help you, as a parent, understand how Early Years Foundation Stage works, what your child is going to be doing during their time in Early Years Foundation Stage and what you can do to help reassure your child and encourage development.

It also indicates what you should do in the unlikely event of a problem. The staff in Early Years Foundation Stage are all very experienced and fully qualified in dealing with children of this age. They are only too happy to answer any questions you may have. A full copy of all the policies relating to Early Years Foundation Stage is available from the Head of EYFS.

AIMS AND PHILOSOPHY

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t Kingsmead we believe that each child is unique and special and that they bring a range of learning experiences, likes and dislikes when they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage. We aim to provide a curriculum that gives each child the following:

- freedom and responsibility for their own choices and enjoyment
- active child-focused learning
- spontaneity
- play-based activities
- imaginative experiences
- opportunities for social and emotional development
- confidence-building experiences

We believe that the following principles are important to Early Years education:

- The whole child needs to be considered as important
- The starting point for a child's education is where they are
- The adults and children with whom the child interacts are of central importance.
- The children are encouraged to develop self-discipline.

In order to give young children the best start to their school-based education we aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum based on play which is carefully planned and assessed in order to help each child to develop socially, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually.

Kingsmead School was founded to provide a Biblical Christian education for all pupils. This will be communicated in assemblies, stories and videos.

The Early Years Foundation Stage children will receive teaching and educational experiences in line with the early learning curriculum as laid down by the Government.

Children develop at different rates and have different needs. The Early Years Foundation Stage staff will work with your child, providing a variety of activities to stimulate development of skills and enjoyment. When your child is ready, appropriate writing, reading and number tasks will be introduced. Staff will monitor the progress of each child. Parents will be informed of progress informally on a day-to-day basis, and more formally through Parents' Evenings and reports.

EDUCATION: CURRICULUM AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

The seven key areas of learning and development within the Early Years Foundation Stage are:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

We aim to help children:

- to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and show respect for people of other cultures.
- to respond to relevant cultural and religious events and show a range of feelings.
- to express their feelings and behave in appropriate ways, developing an understanding of what is right and wrong and why.
- to develop independence and confidence as they play alone, in small and large groups with appropriate adult support.
- to learn to co-operate, take turns and share as part of a group.
- to treat living things, property and their environment with care and respect.
- to become independent in their personal hygiene and dressing skills.

2. Physical Development

We aim to develop children's gross and fine physical skills and to develop their spatial awareness, using a range of small and large equipment:

- Access is available to a safe contained outdoor play area.
- A variety of suitable equipment is available for outdoor play.
- We aim to use the outdoor area daily, so please provide suitable outdoor clothing, clearly labelled with your child's name.
- Children will be encouraged to be aware of the changes which occur to their bodies when exercising.

3. Communication and Language

We aim to help children in small and large groups:

- to listen attentively and talk about their experiences through stories, songs, rhymes, poems and audio tapes.
- to talk about their experiences and surroundings.
- to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.
- to use speech to express their thoughts and ideas effectively.
- to recognise that their contributions to discussions are valuable.

4. Literacy

We teach children

- to understand that words and pictures carry meaning.
- to make up their own stories and take part in role play.
- to access books and handle them carefully, turning pages and following the text from left to right and top to bottom.
- to recognise their own names and some familiar words, the letters of the alphabet by shape and sound and to help them towards writing skills, through a variety of matching games, jigsaws, patterning, and printing activities.
- to use phonic knowledge to decode regular words.
- to develop writing skills.

5. Mathematics

We aim to develop children's mathematical language and understanding:

- through stories and games, activities and number rhymes.
- to compare, sort, match, order sequence, measure and count in the course of their pre-school activities.
- to become familiar with concepts of colour, size, shape, weight, quantity and sequence.

to work towards recognising and using numbers 1-20 and beyond, when ready.

6. Understanding the World

We aim to encourage the children:

- to talk about where they live, their environment, families and events in their own lives, past and present.
- to have opportunities to explore and recognise living things, objects and events, both natural and man-made.
- to talk about their observations, ask questions and on occasions record what they have discovered.
- to be introduced to programmable toys and computers.

7. Expressive Arts and Design

We aim to enable the children:

- to explore sound, colour, texture and shape, and space through art, music, stories, imaginative play
- to express their ideas and communicate their feelings through a variety of activities and a range of resources e.g. painting, collage, printing, dough work, music-making and model making.
- to choose materials and equipment to practise skills such as cutting, joining, folding and designing and constructing.

More information can be found at https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2014/08/EYFS_Parents_Guide-amended.pdf

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDS

Photographs of the children will be taken as evidence of learning experiences and outcomes. These will be posted on our secure, online learning journal system, Tapestry, to which only you as parents have access. Sometimes pictures of children participating in activities may be posted on the school website or on our social media pages. You are able to opt out of this if you wish to. If you have any concerns about this please speak to the Early Years Foundation Stage Manager.

VISITORS TO EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

All visitors, but not parents or carers normally collecting a child, will be required to register at the main school entrance reception. A record will be made of the following details:

- Name of the visitor
- Purpose of the visit
- Arrival time
- Departure time.

Visitors will normally be issued with an identification badge from reception, as indication that they have signed in and they can then be admitted to the Early Years Foundation Stage building.

UNCOLLECTED / MISSING CHILDREN

In the event of a parent or designated person failing to collect a child, every effort will be made by the staff member in charge to contact the parent as soon as possible. If the usual person due to collect the child cannot be contacted then the emergency person will be contacted.

If all attempts fail to make contact with a suitable adult, the child will be cared for in After School Care with the Infant staff until 6pm. The child will be looked after by the Headmaster and his wife after 6pm.

Every effort will continue to be made to make contact with the parents, and in the event of prolonged lack of contact the headmaster will inform the police and/or the duty social worker.

The safety and welfare of our children at Kingsmead School is our prime responsibility. All adults working at school are trained to appreciate that they have a responsibility for helping to keep the children safe at all times. There are clear arrangements for handing over Early Years children to the care of their parents / guardians at the end of the school session. There are clear arrangements for registering children in the morning and the afternoon. There are physical security measures which prevent unsupervised access to or exit from the EYFS building. More details of the Missing Child policy can be found on our school website.

SAFEGUARDING

There is a Safeguarding policy, following national guidelines, which can be viewed on the school website. The school recognises its responsibility to protect the welfare of every child.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Kingsmead has a policy of non-selective entry; pupils are not selected by their academic ability. Early Years Foundation Stage children of any race, religious faith and sex are welcome after their second birthday.

The two principal questions we ask when we receive an application for pupil admission are:-

1. Do we have room in the year group for which admission is requested?
2. Will this applicant be able to enjoy success in the academic and social environment of Kingsmead?

THE PROCEDURE FOR ADMISSIONS

Parents obtain a prospectus.

Parents arrange to visit the school, meet the Head of Early Years Foundation Stage and Headmaster to be shown around.

The applicant may spend some hours, or a whole day, in the classroom with pupils of the same age. This is sometimes referred to as a "Taster day".

If the applicant is transferring from another school, a reference is sought from that school at this point.

If the criteria for admission have been met, the Headmaster writes to the applicant's parents offering a place and explaining procedures about dates of terms etc.

The parents signify their acceptance of the offer by sending in a cheque for the registration fee and deposit and/or completing a direct debit form for sessional care if appropriate.

TIMES OF SESSIONS

Children in Foundation Kindergarten can attend sessions at the convenience of their parents' needs, between 2 and 10 half-day sessions per week. Children in Foundation Nursery are encouraged to attend all five morning sessions per week, to ensure the full Early Years curriculum is delivered. As children progress to Foundation Reception class, full-day attendance is required all week.

Early Years Foundation Stage children may arrive from 8.10am to 8.30am, though Breakfast Club is available from 7.50am to 8.10am. Our younger children (Foundation Kindergarten and Foundation Nursery) may opt for part-day sessions. In this case, the morning session ends at 11.15am (before lunch). An extended morning session, including lunch, is available until 1pm. The normal school day finishes at 3.30pm, and After School Care is available to all pupils whose parents request it, until 6pm with the option of staying for a cooked tea.

SESSION STRUCTURE

(Typical for our youngest children in Foundation Kindergarten)

8:10am onwards. Children arrive, hang up their coats and place their snack in their named basket. Children choose from a variety of activities, some adult-directed. Activities include:

- Small world play e.g. dolls' house, cars or trains.
- Themed role play e.g. Snow Palace.
- Sand and/or water play
- Creative activities e.g. painting, printing, collage.
- Table top or floor activities:
- Manipulative / fine motor skills e.g. dough, threading.
- Language / Mark making e.g. chalking, finger tracing in sand, lotto, snap games.
- Mathematical e.g. matching, sorting, ordering, counting games, pattern making with beads, bobbins, pegs.

9.45am – 10:15am. Tidy up, toileting, snack time and story.

10.15am - 10:45am. Outdoor play (In inclement weather alternative activities can be provided indoors.)

10:45am – 11:45am. Different activity choices and a focussed activity, which may include:

- Construction toys

- Table top or floor games and jigsaws
- Singing
- Music and movement

11:45am. Toileting for those staying to lunch.

11:50am – 12:20pm. Lunch.

12:30pm – 1:00pm. Free play outdoors. Parents/carers arrive to collect 'morning only' children.

For those children staying on for the afternoon session, a 'rest' period is available from 12:30pm followed by a structured afternoon following a similar pattern to the morning, but offering different activity choices.

We incorporate story telling and games into our sessions and add extra activities to tie in with our topics.

If you or your child has any problems or queries, however small they may seem, please don't hesitate to discuss them with us. Your children are our priority and we want them to be happy here.

Key Person

Each child is assigned a key person, whose role is to ensure that your child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help him/her to become familiar with the setting, and to build a settled, positive relationship with you and your child.

CLOTHING

Children in Foundation Kindergarten wear a simple practical uniform. As they progress to the Nursery class, they adopt the school's more formal uniform. Further details can be supplied on request.

DRINKS, BREAKS AND MEALS

Drinking water is available at all times. There will be a break, mid-morning, during which a drink of milk or water will be supplied by the school. Parents are asked to send in a healthy snack to accompany this. Lunch is provided, prepared in school and eaten in the dining room. A nutritious and varied menu is available daily. Should your child have any specific dietary needs or allergies the Head of Foundation Stage and the kitchen staff must be informed in writing.

OUTINGS AND TRIPS

Parents will be asked to complete a form giving permission for their child to go on local outings (e.g. to the park) when they register the child. Such outings will not involve motorized transport and children will either walk or be pushed in suitable buggies.

Parents will normally be informed of any outing either verbally or in writing which will involve motorized transport. Suitable insurance and seat belts or child seats will be supplied by the operator of the motor vehicle.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

We at Kingsmead aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We value all children as individuals and respect their needs. We aim to provide a secure and stimulating environment in which all children can reach their full potential. We aim to support children's individual needs and allow them to develop at their own rates, and in their own ways.

We welcome the opportunity for parents and children to visit prior to starting at school- to discuss ways in which children's special needs can be met. This is often done with a taster session or day/s.

We welcome co-operation with other professionals who are working to support a child's special need and will use advice to meet each child's needs more effectively.

We understand that children with special educational needs benefit from the happy atmosphere of a stimulating early years setting which we aim to provide.

We take a positive approach to inclusion, which aims to identify the difficulties our setting may pose for children with special educational needs.

We will aim as far as possible within the current building constraints to provide access for children with mobility difficulties.

We will offer support, encouragement and seek advice especially from parents in order to allow all children full participation in activities

We will support play activities using resources that are individually appropriate in order to offer a variety of active learning experiences.

We will seek to promote a supportive environment in which each individual is valued and where all children can play together without fear of discrimination or prejudice.

Here at Kingsmead the Head of Early Years Foundation Stage is the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator for Early Years.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

We understand that parents are also educators of their children and therefore have an important role in their child's education. They also hold information crucial to those supporting the child in our school. We aim to ensure that parents are involved in all areas of their child's education and talk to parents about their child's progress informally on a regular basis including achievements as well as any areas of concern.

Our online Learning Journal system, Tapestry, enables you as parents to share in your child's learning.

We are aware that a child may have two parents who live apart and who are both entitled to be informed and involved.

We aim to involve and inform parents fully in decision-making by working together as partners, and consulting them when we feel other professional involvement may be necessary and by arranging meetings when appropriate to discuss concern.

We respect the validity of different views and seek constructive ways of reconciling differences.

We aim to ensure that parents understand procedures and are aware of how and where to access support.

We aim to be open and sensitive when discussing concerns. We recognise the personal and emotional investment of parents and aim to be aware of their feelings.

We respect the differing needs parents themselves may have such as disabilities or communication barriers.

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Kingsmead School Early Years Foundation Stage promotes good behaviour by pupils, seeking to develop good relationships with staff and other children. Children in Early Years Foundation Stage should feel happy and confident in their surroundings and with other pupils and staff. Early Years Foundation Stage children are expected to show an increasing awareness of the needs of others and a courteous response to adults.

We aim to teach them to understand there are values and codes of behaviour for a community to live and work together. These values and codes of behaviour are based upon Christian principles as Kingsmead is a Christian school.

Unacceptable behaviour will be reduced by:

Alerting children to their behaviour and requesting a change of approach.

Challenging bullying or harassing behaviour and encouraging other children to do the same.

Separating a child from others where necessary, to prevent harm to self or others.

Alerting parents to concerns about poor behaviour where it is serious and /or persistent. Such discussion will not seek to blame or exclude a child in the first instance, but will be conducted with the aim of finding a resolution for any problems in full co-operation with the parents.

An incident book is maintained in which all cases of serious or persistent misbehaviour are noted. Any incident will normally be recorded within 24 hours of the event. Any recorded incident should normally be communicated to a parent or carer, also within 24 hours.

The member of staff overall responsible for behaviour management issues is the Headmaster, Mr Mark Gibbons. The school reserves the right to suspend or to seek withdrawal of the child from the setting either temporarily or permanently in the event of serious persistent misbehaviour.

MEDICATION

All medication normally should be administered by the parent/carer. However, parents of children with a particular medical condition (e.g. asthma) should see the class teacher or Early Years Foundation Stage Manager. It is possible for medication to be given by the school nurse provided written permission is given by parents and the medication is stored in a locked medicine cabinet.

SICK CHILDREN

We want all our children to attend school on all school days if at all possible. However sickness affects all children from time to time and there are clearly occasions when it is not appropriate for a child to come to school. This may be because the child is too ill to be able to cope or because the child is suffering from an infectious disease which could be passed onto other children.

If a child is suffering from an infectious disease (e.g. mumps or chicken pox) the parents should contact their GP and keep the child off school until the GP decides it is prudent for the child to return to school.

If a child has suffered from vomiting and/or diarrhoea, parents must keep their child off school until they have had neither symptom for at least 48 hours.

If a child has a bad cold or cough, parents will need to decide, in consultation with the Early Years Foundation Stage staff, whether it is appropriate for the child to come into school.

If a child is absent from school on any school day, it is the responsibility of the parents to contact the school and explain the reason for the child's absence.

If a child has been absent from school on medical grounds, the parents should send in a note to the school when the child returns. The note should explain the reasons for absence, give any medical information that needs to be passed on and certify (in the case of infectious diseases) that the infectious stage is now over.

If a child becomes ill during the school day, every effort will be made to contact the parents or nominated childminder. If the parents are not able to collect the child straight away, arrangements will be made within the school, to care for the child until the parents are able to come.

First Aid Policy

At Kingsmead School all of the Early Years Practitioners working within the Foundation Stage are Paediatric First Aid qualified. We are also able to call upon the expertise of our school Matron.

It is the policy of Kingsmead School that its pupils, staff and visitors should be kept free from injury wherever possible. In cases when injury or illness does occur, the responsibility for dealing with it rests with the Matron.

PROBLEMS AND COMPLAINTS

Kingsmead has always aspired to be a school with a Christian ethos and a caring, family atmosphere. Consequently most problems are resolved quickly and easily. However, if parents do have a complaint, they may expect it to be treated by the school in accordance with this procedure.

Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

Stage 2 - Formal Resolution

Stage 3 - Panel Hearing

Conclusion

The Complaints Policy can be found on the School website, under School Policies in the Parents section. Parents can be assured that all concerns will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by paragraph 6 (2)(j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

IN SUMMARY

We hope this information has answered all of your questions; however, we realise that parents and carers may require more information than we are able to provide here. If this is the case then please do not hesitate to contact the Headmaster or the Head of Foundation Stage who will be happy to help.

We look forward to welcoming you and your child to Kingsmead School.