



Danemill
Primary School

Only the best is good enough.

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Overview

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are important and interconnected in order for children to become successful and well-rounded learners. We want children at Danemill to have a rich and varied experience and therefore adopt a holistic approach towards children's learning, ensuring that our curriculum is designed to enable and encourage each individual to thrive. All of our learning is underpinned by the following key areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Characteristics of Effective Learning

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect on the different ways that children learn, and then reflect these in our own practice. We understand that all children learn in different ways so provide a rich and varied experience for them to develop characteristics of learning within our environment. These 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; and
- creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

All of these areas are important for fostering children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn and form relationships with both peers and adults. Through a mixture of purposeful play, adult led and child-initiated activities, we are able to develop each of these areas. Children become confident and curious learners who are eager to explore new learning in a variety of contexts throughout our environment.

Danemill’s Perspective

At Danemill, our school believes that ‘Only the best is good enough.’ We support children in becoming motivated and resilient learners so that they take pride in their environment and what they achieve within it. In EYFS we make sure that children feel supported and nurtured in order to grow throughout their time at school. We provide a broad and balanced curriculum so that each child can develop personally, socially, emotionally, physically, creatively and intellectually to reach their full potential.

We believe in creating inquisitive learners and encourage children to understand and explore different topics by basing our learning around key questions each term. Through a wide range of learning opportunities and discussions, children will investigate questions such as “What makes us special?” and “Why is water important to us and our world?” We explore these ideas within a local, national and global context, encouraging children to think outside of their immediate environment and expand their understanding of the world we live in.

Enabling Environments

We have worked hard to create an engaging, happy and calm environment for the children in EYFS. We have observed and analysed our own practice to optimise the learning environment and taken into account the children's opinions. Resources are carefully selected so that children have the tools they will require to become inquisitive learners, who are keen to have a go and explore their environment independently. When visiting EYFS, you will notice that many of our activities encourage collaboration and other key social skills so that children become familiar with sharing, negotiating and problem solving amongst their peers. We recognise that supporting children to become good communicators makes their time at school much more rewarding and enjoyable. As these qualities develop, we encourage children to self-select their resources, giving them more freedom to explore learning in their own way. We optimise our outdoor learning area as much as possible, frequently using this as the base for our lessons. We endeavour to teach our children about the natural world as much as possible and see this as an incredibly stimulating and ever-changing environment for the children to learn in. Our aim throughout is to ensure that our child-initiated learning is developed through our open-ended resources and deepened through open questioning and challenges set by our team of highly dedicated staff.

Parents as partners

At Danemill we consider parents our partners and pride ourselves in having open and positive communication with parents and carers whose perspectives and opinions we value highly. We will always endeavour to use parent perspectives to create opportunities for involvement in your child's learning. An emphasis on parental and community engagement is something we are looking to develop throughout the course of the year. Tapestry is a tool we use frequently in order for you to gain insight into your child's learning at school. We encourage parents to also share comments and pictures on this as we recognise the playing and learning done at home is very valuable in creating a well-rounded picture of your child. Throughout the school year we ensure there are opportunities for adults to come in and experience the classroom environment with their children and celebrate different events. We want all children and adults to feel part of our Danemill Family.