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Welcome

Welcome to Oryx International School Foundation Stage.

The purpose of this handbook is to help parents of Foundation Stage children understand how Early Years works and what to expect. It will also include key information about procedures and policies as well as information on how to help your child at home.

At Oryx International School, we believe the first step in your child's education is the most important one. It has been scientifically proven that the preschool years are the most important, as children develop more rapidly during the first five years of their lives than at any other time.

We pride ourselves on providing a unique, learning-enriched environment accompanied by high-quality and experienced Early Years Practitioners for children aged between 3 and 5 years old.

We believe that every child is unique and special and it is our job to provide them with the appropriate attention, care, support and encouragement required to bring out his or her own talents and strengths.

It is at this stage that we lay down the foundation for children’s success, both academically and personally throughout life.
Our Mission, Our Vision, Our Aim

Our Mission
Our mission at Oryx is to deliver an engaging, value rich, broad and balanced 'British International Education Programme' to the children of the employees of Qatar Airways by highly qualified and experienced UK curriculum teachers.

Our Vision
Our vision is to ensure that students leave Oryx International School enabled, confident and ready to face the challenges that their next stage of life will bring. They will have developed effective behaviours that will enable them to thrive and succeed as global citizens of the 21st century.

Our Aim
We aim to provide a happy, secure and caring environment in which the pupils feel safe and nurtured. This, combined with educationally stimulating surroundings and activities, encourages our students to develop their inquisitive nature and learn at their own pace.

Our Team
Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two year groups which include Foundation Stage 1 (3-4 year olds) and Foundation Stage 2 (4-5 year olds).
Each class will have one class Teacher and one class Teaching Assistant and will be overseen by our Early Years Leader, Miss Donnelly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Group</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Teaching Assistant</th>
<th>Class Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Stage 1</td>
<td>Miss Hamilton</td>
<td>Charo Pagtakhan</td>
<td>Syria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Stage 1</td>
<td>Miss Gallagher</td>
<td>Joanna Jocson</td>
<td>Lebanon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Stage 1 Leader</td>
<td>Miss Donnelly</td>
<td>Shanika Shiromi</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Stage 2</td>
<td>Mrs. Rimmer</td>
<td>Catherine Alvarez-Belmonye</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Stage 2</td>
<td>Miss James</td>
<td>Lileth Ejoc</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Stage 2</td>
<td>Miss Dyson</td>
<td>Lakmaly Kariyawasam</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Stage 2</td>
<td>Mrs. Mistry</td>
<td>Prime Rose Valenzuela</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note as our numbers increase we will be adding more FS1/2 classes.
Settling in Period and Preparation for Starting School

Starting school is an exciting time for young children and their parents. It can be a daunting time too. But with a little preparation and encouragement, most children will settle in easily.

Don’t worry… Your child doesn’t need to be able to read, write or do sums before they start school! Children start school with a wide range of abilities and their teacher will be highly skilled at helping children progress at their own level. What’s most important is that you and your child have fun together in those preschool months and years - sharing stories, singing songs, playing games and talking about anything and everything.

Some tips to prepare…

- Chat with your child about starting school. What do they think it will be like? What are they most looking forward to? Is there anything they’re unsure or worried about?
- Look at Facebook, Instagram or the school website together and talk about the pictures, look how happy the children at Oryx are and how much fun they are having.
- Find photos of you and other family members at school, and chat about happy memories from your own school days. You could even set up a play date with children who already attend Oryx.
- Read books together about starting school. Examples include; I am too Absolutely Small for School' (Charlie and Lola) by Lauren Child, 'Starting School' by Janet and Allen Ahlberg, 'Topsy and Tim Start School' by Jean and Gareth Adamson, 'Harry and the Dinosaurs Go to School' by Ian Whybrow.
- If your child seems anxious about school, try focusing on the things they’ll like best-maybe the sandpit, playhouse or new friends.
- Practise the school morning routine, including getting dressed and eating breakfast in time to leave.
- Practise the school run so that you’re both prepared for the school morning journey. It is important that your child arrives to school promptly to begin their school day. This will give them time to settle and warm up.
What to expect…

During our initial settling in period in the first few weeks of school your child may experience separation anxiety. This is perfectly normal behaviour, especially for a child who is starting school for the first time. It can sometimes last for a few days, but in some cases it can last for longer periods of time depending on the individual child. This is something we can work on together to help your child feel safe and secure in their new environment.

● Let your child know you are leaving and encourage them to have a fun day. If you look worried or anxious this will transfer onto your child and make the situation worse. Be positive and reassuring and let them know you will be back.

● Playing with other children whether friends or family members, or other children at the park or playgroups is all good practise for forming friendships at school. Teach your child to ask; “Can I join in?” or “Shall we share?”

● Try to get into the school routine so your child gets used to getting up, going to bed and having meals and snack times that they will get on school days.

● Bath times and stories instead of TV and IPad will help children wind down before bedtime. Also, make time in the evening to chat about your day.

● Nutritious meals and plenty of sleep will help your child concentrate, learn and thrive at school.

● If your child has naps, it would be wise to try phasing this out. This should be more manageable when they have a good bedtime routine.

● It is quite common for children’s behaviour at home to change when they first start school. Don’t be surprised if your little one become clingier, argumentative, lethargic, excitable or prone to tantrums for a while.

● Let your child get used to school life before introducing after school activities. It is also a good idea to keep the first few weekends quiet too, as they will likely need time to recharge, just as us adults do after beginning a new job or project.

Before starting Foundation Stage 1 your child should be able to…

● Sit and listen for a short time.
● Enjoy being with other children.
● Understand the word ‘no’ and the boundaries it sets for behavior.
● Use the toilet, clean themselves and wash their hands (Accidents can happen from time to time, it is advisable to keep some spare clothes in your child’s locker). Early Years Practitioners do not toilet train your children.
● Recognise their own name when heard.
● Speak to an adult and ask for help when needed.
● Take off their cardigan and put shoes and socks on.
● Hold a book and talk about pictures.
● Share toys with friends.
● Help to tidy up their toys and resources.
● Sit at a table and feed themselves at snack/lunch times.
● Use a tissue to blow/clean their nose.
Key Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Derek Laidlaw</td>
<td>Executive Principal</td>
<td><a href="mailto:exec.principal@oryxschool.qa">exec.principal@oryxschool.qa</a></td>
<td>+974 4036 0063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Jarlath Madine</td>
<td>Head of Primary</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jarlath.madine@oryxschool.qa">jarlath.madine@oryxschool.qa</a></td>
<td>+974 4036 0063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Georgina Murphy</td>
<td>Assistant Head of Primary</td>
<td><a href="mailto:georgina.murphy@oryxschool.qa">georgina.murphy@oryxschool.qa</a></td>
<td>+974 4036 0063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss. Roisin Donnelly</td>
<td>EYFS Phase Leader</td>
<td><a href="mailto:roisin.donnelly@oryxschool.qa">roisin.donnelly@oryxschool.qa</a></td>
<td>+974 4036 0063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Julie Gano</td>
<td>School Nurse</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nurse@oryxschool.qa">nurse@oryxschool.qa</a></td>
<td>+974 3091 6800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Aulikki Botting</td>
<td>Admissions Manager</td>
<td><a href="mailto:admissions@oryxschool.qa">admissions@oryxschool.qa</a></td>
<td>+974 4036 0085</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drop off and Pick Up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Starts</th>
<th>School Ends</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.30 am</td>
<td>11.20 am (before lunch) – up until the end of Term 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.55 pm (end of school day)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Children should be dropped off and picked up by a Parent or Adult who has been registered by the school. We will not allow any child to be picked up without permission and the required ID.
- If you are late please report to the Reception to register your child.
- If your child is sick please report/email this to Reception AND/OR the Class Teacher.
- Your child should arrive to school with their school bag, a healthy snack and a healthy lunch, a water bottle, wearing sun cream, a hat and in full school uniform.
- If your child has swimming then please send them in with their swimming costume, hat and goggles in a swimming bag.
- Please label ALL of your child’s belongings!
- It is advisable that children do not bring personal belongings, toys or valuable items into school unless requested by the Teacher. Staff will not be held responsible for lost/damaged items.
- Foundation Stage 2 children who are attending after school care/clubs will be accompanied by a member of staff
- Parents should always wait in the designated area. The class teacher will release your child to you. Please do not enter the classroom without permission.

Transport

Please contact the bus company directly on Email: info@trilogistic.com Tel: +974 4017 1551 if you need to arrange for your child to use the Oryx School bus service.

Sun Protection

Please ensure that you have applied sun screen on your child before arriving at school each day during the summer months. It is advisable to purchase a longer lasting sun cream so that it will last the entire day.
Children are also required to wear hats outside during outdoor play. You may keep hats in your child’s cupboard for them to access when required.
School Uniform

There is a link to the School Uniform Brochure on the school website. Uniform Brochure

School Uniform is compulsory and the 'School Uniform Brochure' includes all the prices and guidelines.

- FS girls do not wear the skirt and blouse and only the dress is required.
- FS and Primary boys do not wear a tie and can choose to wear shorts or long trousers.
- During PE days children will be required to wear the PE uniform.
- During swimming lessons we will encourage children to get themselves undressed and dressed again - this is part of the EYFS curriculum and should be practised and encouraged at home. Children can wear their PE kits on swimming days - they should come into school wearing their swimming costumes under their PE kits.
- It is also important to remember that at this early stage and due to lots of different types of learning opportunities children will get dirty from time to time within reason. We do provide aprons for art/water/messy play but it is impossible to keep children clean and tidy at all times.

Please ensure that ALL belongings are clearly and permanently labelled with your child’s name and class.
Book bag or Infant backpack
Swim Wear

Costumes can be purchased at any outlet, as long as they are black

Shoes

These can be purchased at any outlet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permitted – leather shoes that can be polished, with no branded logos</th>
<th>Not permitted – canvas with logos or any black or coloured training shoe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Permitted Shoes" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Not permitted Shoes" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Communication

At Oryx International School we pride ourselves on the communication and relationships we build with parents. We have an open-door policy before and after school and strive to involve parents as much as possible.

In Foundation Stage we understand that it is difficult to let go of your children at such a young age. Our aim is to reassure you that your child is loved, supported and cared for. We want to establish a great relationship with parents with your child’s progress, development and well-being being the priority.

It is therefore necessary to establish an excellent line of communication and we can do this in many ways;

- Class Dojo - this is a fantastic way to communicate with one another. Simply download the app and your class teacher will invite you to sign up to your child’s class. This way you will be able to receive the most up-to-date messages, notifications, reminders, pictures/videos of learning and achievements. You will also receive a notification when your child has been rewarded with a dojo for positive behaviour, or when they have been deducted a Dojo. You also have the opportunity to message the class teacher privately about any concerns or enquiries you may have. Teachers will reply by the end of the school day which is 4pm.

- Parents are always welcome and invited into the school. We strive to listen to your feedback and comments. Feel free to schedule an appointment to come and speak with the class teacher if you require a comprehensive discussion.

- Parent teacher consultations will take place four times per year. This will give you the opportunity to meet with your child’s teacher and discuss their progress and behaviour for learning. You will be given information in advance about timings for these meetings.

- You will also be kept up-to-date via our school website and social media. Please sign up to Facebook and Twitter on @OryxSchool and Instagram on oryx_school for regular updates.

- Your child will also be given a home school book which will contain lots of useful information.
Absences and Holidays

Please let us know if your child is going to be absent from school, including their name and class, the date(s) your child was or will be absent and the reason for this. Please email this to reception@oryxschool.qa and/or your class teacher.

Attendance is extremely important for your child’s learning. It is not advisable to take holidays during term time as your child will miss out on vital learning. It is also very difficult for your child to catch up.

Is my child too ill for school? It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school when they're unwell. The UK government have issued guidelines to schools.

If you do keep your child at home, it's important to phone or email the school on the first day. Let us know that your child won't be in and give us the reason.

If your child is well enough to go to school but has an infection that could be passed on, such as a cold sore or head lice, let their teacher know. All medication is to be taken to the school nurse labelled and in a box with exact instructions on it.

Chickenpox

If your child has chickenpox, keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.

Cold sores

There’s no need to keep your child off school if they have a cold sore. Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.

Conjunctivitis

You don’t need to keep your child away from school if they have conjunctivitis. Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.

Coughs and colds

It's fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or cold. But if they have a fever, keep them off school until the fever goes. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.

Ear infection

If your child has an ear infection and a fever or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their fever goes away.

Fever

If your child has a fever, keep them off school until the fever goes away.

Hand, foot and mouth disease

If your child has hand, foot and mouth disease but seems well enough to go to school, there’s no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.

Head lice and nits

Treat head lice as soon as you spot them. You should check everyone in the house and treat them on the same day if they have head lice. Children can return to school once the condition has been treated.

Impetigo

If your child has impetigo, they'll need antibiotic treatment from the GP. Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment. Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share towels, cups and so on with other children at school.
Ringworm
If your child has ringworm, see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see the GP. It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.

Scarlet fever
If your child has scarlet fever, they'll need treatment with antibiotics from the GP. Otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease)
You don't need to keep your child off school if they have slapped cheek syndrome because once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. If you suspect your child has slapped cheek syndrome, take them to the GP and let their school know if they're diagnosed with it.

Sore throat
You can still send your child to school if they have a sore throat. But if they also have a fever, they should stay at home until it goes away.

Threadworms
You don't need to keep your child off school if they have threadworms. Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.

Vomiting and diarrhoea
Children with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school for 2 days after their symptoms have gone.
Behaviour

Rewards are linked to positive behaviour and excellent learning. All students at Oryx are grouped into houses.

The House System

The house system provides an opportunity for students to learn and collaborate in vertical groups alongside students of different ages. It also provides opportunities for siblings to spend some time with each other. The houses are the main focus for friendly, light-hearted student competition in a wide range of activities, including academic, sporting and clubs. Many student activities throughout the year are organised by houses to promote the broadest possible participation from all year groups.

When students start at school, they are assigned to a house so they can begin to develop a sense of belonging and identification through team-building and peer group activities. Siblings will be assigned to the same house. House captains will be nominated at the start of each academic year. All staff at Oryx are also assigned to houses. Each house has its own unique identity and members aspires to honour the ‘characteristics’ of their house.

Students may earn house points for a range of contributions to school life, including academic, athletic, arts, community service, behaviour and attitude.

At the school assembly each week, the house with the most points is awarded the house cup, which will be displayed in the main reception area.
Class Dojo

“To give teachers, parents, and students the power to create incredible classrooms.”

What is Class Dojo?

Class Dojo is a communication app for the classroom. It connects teachers, parents, and students who use it to share photos, videos and messages through the school day. They use Class Dojo to work together as a team, share in the classroom experience, and bring big ideas to life in their classrooms and homes.

Positive and Negative Behaviour

Each child has their very own avatar, this is normally displayed on the interactive whiteboard in class. If your child has done something amazing for example, worked really hard on a piece of work, really listened, worked as a team or show kindness towards others, they will then receive a dojo for this positive behaviour. Children get really excited about dojo’s and love to see their number increase throughout the week. If a child has earned the most dojos in the week then they are rewarded with ‘Star of the Week’ in our whole-class assembly.

Equally, if your child has shown negative behaviour, for example, hitting or hurting others, damaging or disrespecting resources or continuing not to listen then they will lose a dojo. This will decrease their score. They do get the chance to build this back up again by showing they can try harder. We try our best to focus on and reinforce positive behaviour. We want the children to:

- Work hard and always try their best.
- Show kindness, patience and RESPECT to everyone.
- Be honest and always tell the truth.
- Be polite and show good manners, always saying please and thank you.
- Respect their school, classroom and the resources provided.
- Listen to one another.
- Share feelings-tell an adult if you are upset or unhappy.
- Be a GREAT PERSON and a GREAT LEARNER!
EYFS Curriculum

At Oryx we follow the British Early Years Foundation Stage Framework along with Development Matters in order to provide the best possible care and learning for your child.

‘The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework supports an integrated approach to early learning and care. It gives all professionals a set of common principles and commitments to deliver quality early education and childcare experiences to all children.’

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- **quality and consistency** in all early year’s settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
- **a secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly;
- **partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;
- **equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practise, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

Four guiding principles should shape practise in Early Years settings. These are;

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.
4. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.
EYFS Assessments

Your child will be assessed against 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG’S) and three characteristics of effective learning.

Children should most develop the 3 prime areas first. These include:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening and Attention</td>
<td>Moving and Handling</td>
<td>Making Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Health and Self-care</td>
<td>Self-Confidence and Self-Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td></td>
<td>Managing Feelings and Behaviour</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

These prime areas are the most essential for your child’s healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them develop skills in the specific areas. These include:

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Exploring and Using Media and Materials</td>
<td>People and Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Shape, Space and Measure</td>
<td>Being Imaginative</td>
<td>The World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These 17 areas are what we use to plan your child’s learning and activities. The class Teacher and Teaching Assistant will make sure that the activities are suited to your child’s unique needs. This is a little bit like a curriculum in Primary but it’s suitable for very young children, and it’s designed to be really flexible so that staff can follow your child’s unique needs and interests.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outdoors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Learning</th>
<th>Explained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication and Language</td>
<td>Involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening &amp; Attention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Development</td>
<td>Involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving &amp; Handling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Self-Care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal, Social and Emotional Development</td>
<td>Involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Confidence &amp; Awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing feelings &amp; Behaviour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making Relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>Involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>Involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces and measure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Shape, Space &amp; Measure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the World</td>
<td>Involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• People &amp; Communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The World</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressive Arts &amp; Design</td>
<td>Involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Exploring Media &amp; Materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Being Imaginative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EYFS Assessment

In Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) our assessments are ongoing throughout the year. At the end of each term you will be updated on your child’s progress. It is important to know that all children develop at their own rates and in their own ways. The development statements and their order should not be taken as necessary steps for individual children. They should not be used as checklists. The age/stage bands overlap because these are not fixed age boundaries but suggest a typical range of development.

- In EYFS we use an app called 2Simple to record and collect evidence of your child’s learning on a daily basis. This can be in the form of a picture, notes or a video. This is collated and will give the Teacher a good idea of how your child is developing. You will receive a copy of this electronically at the end of each term.

- Our termly reports will show what age band your child is currently working at. The report will also explain the process and should be read carefully. If you have questions about the report please ask the Class Teacher.

- Your child’s written work will also be documented in their learning journey and in a Maths book, as well as display throughout the class.

- Parents play a vital role in their child’s learning journey at EYFS. We want to encourage parents to take part in their child’s assessment and learning and development as much as possible. Parents are especially vital when it comes to assessing children whose first language is not English.

- All of the information and evidence is used by the Class Teacher to then make an accurate summative assessment by the end of the year.

- At the end of each term the Class Teacher will share a copy of your child’s learning journey with you online.

- You will also be able to share evidence and add to your child’s learning journey on 2Simple- the Class Teacher will help you with the set-up of this.
Home Learning

Learning takes place at home as well as in school. All the fun activities that you do with your child as home are important in supporting their learning and development and have a really long-lasting effect on your child’s learning as they progress through school.

Even when your child is very young and is not yet able to talk, talking to them helps them to learn and understand new words and ideas. If you make the time every day to do some of the following things with your child it will make a real difference to your child’s confidence as a younger learner.

It is also good to speak with your child and share books in your Home Language as well as in English.

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<tr>
<th>Communication &amp; Language</th>
<th>Personal, Social and Emotional</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Play Simon says.</td>
<td>• Encourage friendships with other children.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ask questions about their day, interests, experiences.</td>
<td>• Have friends round to play.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Talk about what they have done, what are going to do and talk about things happening in the future e.g. Holidays.</td>
<td>• Help your child to learn how to share and take turns.</td>
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<td>• Join in with role play activities.</td>
<td>• Play board games.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Act out their favourite fairytale.</td>
<td>• Help develop your child’s interests and skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Help them to make up their own stories.</td>
<td>• Provide opportunities for them to do things on their own.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Spend quality time talking e.g. over dinner, away from noise and distractions.</td>
<td>• Encourage independence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Talk about your day. Did anything funny happen?</td>
<td>• Encourage your child to get dressed independently.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What was the best thing about your day?</td>
<td>• Talk about your feelings and how your child feels.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Talk about tomorrow or the rest of the week. Is anything exciting or interesting going to happen?</td>
<td>• Be consistent in your approach to rules at home.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Talk whilst out and about-things you can see, places things come from how things have changed over time, notices and pictures on walls, look at magazines and talk about the pictures, look at toys and talk about how they work, where you are going, what you expect to see, how you are feeling, things that have happened in the news.</td>
<td>• Make time for one to one interaction with your child.</td>
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Physical Development

• Encouraging your child to get themselves dressed and undressed independently- using buttons, zipping up their own coat.
• Writing their name and making marks in large gross motor movements e.g. with chalk, large paint brushes and rollers.
• Practise cutting skills with scissors- allow them to make snips in paper and then try to follow straight lines, then zig-zag lines.

Mathematics

• Baking-weighing ingredients.
• Finding numbers of everyday life.
• Sharing sweets.
• Play shop at home.
• Use a calendar-what day is it today?
• What date?
• Bing-you can cover all areas of Maths through this game.
• Card games- snap, pairs and matching games.
• Identify shapes in everyday life.
• Computers- brain training/big brain.

• Encourage your child to paint/draw by providing them with different materials indoors and outdoors e.g. paper, pencils, chalk, paints, old sheets, wall paper, different sized brushes.
• Play lots of different types of music to your child.
• Dance to different styles of music.
• Sing with your child.
• Make dens outside and inside.
• Encourage all ideas of creative thinking.
• Provide materials for weaving- ribbon, wool, string.
• Let child mix their own paints.
• Make and play with play-dough.
• Let them help you with painting.
• Baking.
• Use puppets to act out fairy tales such as ‘Goldilocks and the Three Bears.’
• Experiment with different ways of making things such as using card, paper, cardboard-which works best?
• Let your child design what they are going to make.
• Sing nursery rhymes.
Understanding the World

- Collect natural objects e.g. acorns, shells at the beach.
- Bring in photographs from holidays or trips to share with the class.
- Go on nature walks.
- Bake and talk about the changes in ingredients.
- Use the computer/iPad/electronic toys.
- Use the telephone.
- Use the television remote control to change channels.
- Talk about different environments.
- Talk about the weather and the changes in the seasons.
- Discuss and find out about different animals, insects, dinosaurs, birds, people etc.
- Involve your child when out shopping-encourage them to find items.
- Encourage your child to ask questions about the world around them.
- Ask them questions about the world around them.
- Ask them questions about their experiences.
- Talk about different cultures.
- Talk about similarities and differences between themselves and others.
- Talk about your experiences both past and present.

Literacy

- Practise mark making- ask them what it is they have drawn or written and then model writing it for them.
- Visit our local library.
- Read/share picture books. Ask your child questions about the story, the pictures, what they think might happen.
- Play "I spy" looking for things beginning with sounds.
- Sing songs and nursery rhymes.
- Discuss words that rhyme. Play rhyming soup.
- Encourage your child to practise writing their name.
- Encourage your child to write the sound they learned in school today.

Foundation Stage will receive home learning once per week. 1 x piece of literacy and 1 x piece of maths. This will be to consolidate the learning they have completed throughout the week and so that parents can get an idea of what the children are learning in school. This will be communicated via Class Dojo. The Class Teacher may also encourage you to complete a project or challenge related to the class theme.

We do not wish to send home heaps of worksheets in Foundation Stage. We would rather you focused on the ideas above and spending quality family time together. Towards the end of Foundation Stage 2 the children will begin to receive more written homework as they make their transition into Year 1.

More Fun Ideas for Learning at Home

*Pinterest is a fantastic way of finding amazing ideas for learning at home- you can focus on the areas your child struggles with.*
Reading and Phonics

Of course, a super important area we want parents to focus on at home is **READING**! Read, read, and read again to your child and listen to your children read as much as you can. Model good reading to your child and make it a pleasurable and fun experience. Encourage a love of reading and reading for pleasure, rather than making reading ‘a chore’. Purchasing a new book for your child as a reward or treat is also advisable rather than rewarding them with sweet treats.

In FS2 your child’s Class Teacher will send you home a reading book each week at their reading level. They will also read 1:1 with your child each week. This will include fiction, non-fiction and poetry books.

When your child begins our Read, Write Inc. Phonics program in the second term of FS2, the Class Teacher will also send you home a sound mat and the sounds that we have been learning each day.

FS1 will focus on Phase 1 Letters and Sounds before moving onto the Read, Write Inc. Phonics program.

Phase 1 falls largely within the Communication, Language and Literacy area of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In particular, it will support linking sounds and letters in the order in which they occur in words, and naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet. It also draws on and promotes other areas of learning described in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), particularly Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Creative Development, where, for example, music plays a key part in developing children’s language.

It is important that the children secure Phase 1 in Letters and Sounds before moving onto the Read, Write Inc. program.

When ready Foundation Stage will begin to learn their set 1 RWI sounds. And will then begin to practise segmenting and blending to read words and then sentences.
Physical Development and Handwriting

Children begin to form letters when they are ready. There are many stages of writing in EYFS. (See below)

To be able to write children need to have a good pencil grip and good control. We need to follow the physical guidelines to get children ready for writing.

Lots of fine and gross motor skills are needed to build up the strength in their fingers. In foundation stage we will provide lots of resources and complete lots of activities linked to physical development to help with both fine and gross motor.
Gross Motors Skills

**Gross motor should come before fine motor. Those big muscles help the little muscles!**

What are gross motor skills?

Gross motor (physical) skills are those which require whole body movement and which involve the large (core stabilising) muscles of the body to perform everyday functions, such as standing, walking, running, and sitting upright. It also includes eye-hand coordination skills such as ball skills (throwing, catching, kicking).

Why are gross motor skills important?

Gross motor skills are important to enable children to perform everyday functions, such as walking, running, skipping, as well as playground skills (e.g. climbing) and sporting skills (e.g. catching, throwing and hitting a ball with a bat). These are crucial for everyday self-care skills like dressing (where you need to be able to stand on one leg to put your leg into a pant leg without falling over).

Gross motor abilities also have an influence on other everyday functions. For example, a child’s ability to maintain table top posture (upper body support) will affect their ability to participate in fine motor skills (e.g. writing, drawing and cutting) and sitting upright to attend to class instruction, which then impacts on their academic learning. Gross motor skills impact on your endurance to cope with a full day of school (sitting upright at a desk, moving between classrooms, carrying your heavy school bag).

How can you tell if my child has problems with gross motor skills?

If a child has difficulties with gross motor skills they might:

- Be late in reaching developmental milestones (i.e. sit, crawl, walk, run and hop).
- Move stiffly and lacks fluid body movement or alternatively looks awkward and appears clumsy.
- Avoid physical activity.
- Participate in physical activity for only short periods (have low endurance).
- Cannot maintain an upright posture when sitting on a mat or at a table top.
- Be unable to perform the same skills as their peers (e.g. catch, kick, hop and jump).
- Appear less skillful than their peers in sports.
- Be unable to follow multiple step instructions to complete a physical task (e.g. obstacle course).
- Be unable to plan and correctly sequence events or steps in a process (e.g. step forward before throwing).
- Fail to perform movements safely (e.g. climbing).
- Need to put in more effort than their peers to complete a task.
- Tire frequently with physical activity.
- Lose previously mastered skill if they do not keep practicing them.
- Be unable to ‘generalise’ or transfer a skill (use the same skill in a different setting/way) (e.g. can easily change between throwing a big/heavy ball to a light/small ball).

What other problems can occur when a child has gross motor difficulties?

If a child has gross motor difficulties, they might also have difficulties with:

- Drawing and pencil skills lacking in a skillful outcome.
- Writing and drawing for long periods of time.
- Activities of Daily Living (dressing independently, holding and using cutlery).
- Maintaining posture while sitting on the floor or at a table.
- Low energy levels.
● Seem tired or lethargic and take longer to respond to stimuli around them.
● Sensory processing (responding appropriately to the environment).
● Chewing and swallowing food.
● Dribbling inappropriately.
● Demonstrate poor articulation of sounds.
● Difficulties with manipulation of small toys and utensils.

What activities can help improve gross motor skills?

● Hop Scotch for hopping, or other games that encourage direct task/skill practice.
● Simon Says for body awareness and movement planning (praxis).
● Wheelbarrow walking races for upper body strength and postural or trunk control.
● Unstable surfaces: Walking/climbing over unstable surfaces (e.g. large pillows) as it requires a lot of effort and increases overall body strength.
● Catching and balancing: Standing with one foot on a ball while catching another ball (encourages balance while practicing catching and throwing).
● Large balls: Begin catching with a large ball/balloon and only after the skill is mastered, move to a smaller sized ball.
● Obstacle courses: to combine lots of gross motor skills together into one practice.
● Playground climbing and swinging.
● Swimming.

Why should I seek therapy if I notice difficulties with gross motor skills in my child?

Therapeutic intervention to help a child with gross motor difficulties is important to:

● Increase your child’s confidence in gross motor activities (e.g. playing on the playground, running, jumping).
● Enhance their self-esteem (so they aren’t ostracized or picked last for sports teams due to their physical ability skill challenges).
● Increase sporting ability and confidence to engage in sports. Participating in sport enables a child to enrich their lives with positive people and develop strong friendships.
● Help your child develop the strength and endurance to manage the physical needs of a full school day.
● Provide your child with a strong base of support so that they are better able to use their arms and hands for fine motor skills (such as manipulating small objects, such as pencils, scissors, keys, buttons and zips).

If left untreated what can difficulties with gross motor skills lead to?

When children have difficulties with gross motor skills, they might also have difficulties with:

● Managing a full school day due to poor strength and endurance.
● Participating in sporting activities.
● Performing age appropriate self-care skills independently.
● Poor self-esteem when they realise their skills do not match their peers.
● Bullying when others become more aware of a child’s difficulties.
● Poor fine motor skills (e.g. writing, drawing and cutting) due to poor core stability, meaning they do not have a strong base to support the use of their arms and hands.
What type of therapy is recommended for gross motor skill difficulties?

If your child has difficulties with gross motor skills, it is recommended they consult an Occupational Therapist.

It may also be appropriate to consult a Physiotherapy for gross motor skills. It is important to acknowledge however that in many (but not all) paediatric cases, there is a large overlap in the skills addressed by Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy.

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Fine Motor Skills

Fine motor skills are those that involve a refined use of the small muscles which control the hand, fingers and thumb. With the development of these skills, a child is able to complete important tasks such as writing, feeding oneself, buttoning and zipperpering.

Many children who do not have strong small motor skills become more easily frustrated while doing tasks that require writing which can lead to poor self-esteem, anxiety and stress.

What can you do?

- Play games with children like Operation and Jigsaw puzzles that require pinching.
- Hide beads or other objects in putty or play dough and have the child pick the “dough” apart using a pincer grasp.
- “Chopsticks for Dummies” make picking up and releasing objects fun while building strength for writing – they are also fun to eat with! Try having many fun bits and pieces children can gather (pom-poms, cotton balls, quarter sized rocks, bottle caps, chalk, and pieces of broken crayons).
- Have children use short thin writing implements. Golf pencils, broken pieces of chalk, and short, thin short paint brushes to paint with work best because those materials reinforce a pincer grasp.
- Allow children to use markers such as Crayola Pip Squeaks; they are short and encourage a proper grasp.
- Invite children to help with meal preparations and/or serving. Have children cut vegetables using a plastic knife. The cutting process also encourages the use of bi-lateral skills (using two hands in unison while doing a task).
- Kneading dough and rolling/cutting out cookies are also a great strength building and sensory activity.
- Play dough is our best friend when it comes to fine and gross motor skills (See recipe below).

Play dough

The children will be supplied with endless amounts of play dough at school as this is a fantastic way to develop their gross, fine motor skills and creativity. They will even get the opportunity to make their own.

We will practise lots of dough disco and dough gym in FS1 and in the first term of FS2 to develop these skills.

We definitely encourage you to try this at home. Add in some maths skills by getting your child to help you weigh the ingredients and communicate what you are doing.

Recipe

You will need:

- 2 cups plain flour
- 1 cup of salt
- 2 cups of water
- 2 tbsp oil
- Food colouring of your choice

Be creative and make it scented by adding different spices or jazz it up with some glitter.

When children have developed gross and motor skills they will begin to learn to form letters and words. Below show the stages of emergent writing that you may recognise.
Pencil grip

Your child will also go through various stages of pencil grip. See below for the various stages and where your child should get to. It is very important to address a poor pencil grip early, especially if the child is left handed. If it is not corrected, it can affect speed and fluency and impact on academic achievement, as well as put undue stress on developing joints causing pain when writing later. The pencil is held between the thumb and index finger, with the pencil resting on the middle finger.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>1—1 1/2 years</th>
<th>2—3 years</th>
<th>3 1/2—4 years</th>
<th>4 1/2—7 years</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cylindrical Grasp</td>
<td>Digital Grasp</td>
<td>Modified Tripod Grasp</td>
<td>Tripod Grasp</td>
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</table>

![Diagram showing different stages of pencil grip]
Letter Formation

Foundation Stage will practise printed letter shapes before moving on to cursive handwriting in the last term of FS2 or when ready. Cursive handwriting is shown to improve brain development in the areas of thinking, language and working memory. As we begin learning to form letters we will use the rhymes from our phonics program Read Write Inc. (RWI)

### Rhymes for letter formation - taken from Read Write Inc.

- **a**: Around the apple and down the leaf.
- **b**: Down the laces to the heel and around the toe.
- **c**: Curl around the caterpillar.
- **d**: Around the dinosaurs bottom, up his tail neck & down to his toes.
- **e**: Lift off the top and scoop out the egg.
- **f**: Down the stem and draw the leaves.
- **g**: Around the girls face, down her hair and give her a curl.
- **h**: Down the head, to his hooves and over his back.
- **i**: Down the body and dot for the head.
- **j**: Down his body, curl, dot for his head.
- **k**: Down the long leg.
- **l**: Down Maisie, mountain, mountain.
- **m**: Down Nobby and over his net.
- **n**: All around the orange.
- **o**: Down the pirates, plait and around his face.
- **p**: Round her head, up past her earing, down her hair and flick.
- **q**: Down the robots back and curl over his arm.
- **r**: Slither down the snake.
- **s**: Down the tower, across the tower.
- **t**: Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle.
- **u**: Down a wing, up a wing.
- **v**: Down, up, down, up.
- **w**: Down the arm and leg, repeat the other side.
- **x**: Down a horn, up a horn and under head.
- **y**: Zig-zag-zig.
- **z**: Down the stem and draw the leaves.
Cursive Handwriting

When children are ready and secure we will allow them to begin practicing cursive letter formation. See below for the format we will use as per our school handwriting policy.
Topics

Each term we will focus on a specific topic and use this to inspire our teaching as well as linking it to the EYFS curriculum. We would love for parents to get involved in this as much as possible. Your children may also be given home learning based on our termly topics.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Foundation Stage 2</th>
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<td>Term 1: Magical Me/Growing</td>
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<td>Term 2: Animal Kingdom</td>
<td>Term 2: Space</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term 3: Summer/Pirates</td>
<td>Term 3: Fairytales</td>
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Useful Links

- [https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/login?c=0](https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/login?c=0) (Your child’s Class Teacher will give you the log in details for this program)
- [https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/](https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/) Reading Scheme with lots of lovely activities and games
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZG0rkhPkeY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZG0rkhPkeY) Dough Disco for fine motor
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSqGCY_L6CY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSqGCY_L6CY) Number blocks
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nKZIDPdVfA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nKZIDPdVfA) Number Jacks
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fu5fzbxOG4U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fu5fzbxOG4U) Alpha blocks
- [https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/](https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/) Phonics Play- great for interactive phonics games