

**La Côte
International School
Early Years
Foundation Stage
Policy**



Revised: November 2009

This policy is designed to underpin and define practice in all areas of the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage at the La Côte International School. The Early Years Foundation Stage is a distinct phase of education for children aged 3-5, which underpins their future learning and has clearly defined aims.

Aims and Objectives of Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage at the La Côte International School offers planned activities and experiences that help children make progress in their development and learning. Children will have had a diverse range of experiences and will have a wide range of skills and interests when they join the school. We aim to provide a well-planned and resourced curriculum to take each child's learning forward and to provide opportunities for all children to succeed in an atmosphere of care and respect. Children are monitored throughout Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that they are making progress. We endeavour to identify and address particular difficulties in any of the areas of learning and development, so that achievements can be celebrated. Partnership with parents is seen as key to children's learning and development.

A curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage at LCIS aims to support, foster, promote and develop children's:

- Personal, social and emotional well-being: in particular by supporting transitions, promoting an inclusive ethos and providing opportunities for each child to become a valued member of the class and the school community so that a strong self-image and self-esteem are promoted;
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning: in particular an enthusiasm for knowledge and learning and a confidence in their ability to be successful learners;
- social skills: in particular by providing opportunities that enable them to learn how to cooperate and work harmoniously with each other and to listen to each other;
- attention skills and persistence: in particular the capacity to concentrate on their own activity or on group tasks;

- language and communication: with opportunities for all children to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to practise and extend the range of vocabulary and communication skills they use and to listen carefully;
- reading and writing: with opportunities for all children to explore, enjoy, learn about and use words and text in a broad range of contexts and to experience a rich variety of books;
- problem solving, reasoning and numeracy: with opportunities for all children to develop their understanding of number, measurement, pattern, shape and space by providing a broad range of contexts in which they can explore, enjoy, learn, practise and talk about them;
- knowledge and understanding of the world: with opportunities for all children to solve problems, make decisions, experiment, predict, plan and question in a variety of contexts, and to explore and find out about their environment and people and places that have significance in their lives;
- physical development: with opportunities for all children to develop and practise their fine and gross motor skills and to increase their understanding of how their bodies work and what they need to do to be healthy and safe;
- creative development: with opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design and technology, music, movement, dance and imaginative and role play activities.

Planning the curriculum

The curriculum for the EYFS at LCIS is based on the new Early Years Foundation Stage document published in the UK. The areas of learning and development and the Early Learning Goals provide a framework in the UK for schools and other pre-five settings in planning, teaching and assessing the early years curriculum. They also provide an essential link between the pre-statutory curriculum and the Key Stage One programme of study.

We have adopted this curriculum as the basis for our planning, as they provide a framework that enables us to achieve our aims for under-fives provision.

Our curriculum framework covers the six areas of learning and development, relating to the aims for Early Years Foundation Stage:

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)**
- **Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL)**
- **Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy (PSRN)**
- **Knowledge and Understanding of the World (KUW)**
- **Physical Development (PD)**
- **Creative Development (CD)**

Our curriculum is planned through a series of themes and topics that are changed every half term. Each of these offers experiences in all six areas. In Foundation 2 the guidance in the National Frameworks for Literacy and Numeracy from the Department for Education and Skills in the UK is also used.

All children are encouraged to experience all the areas of learning and development during the week, although they may not experience them each day. Experiences and activities are planned and monitored by staff.

The staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage work together. These are reviewed by the Head Teacher regularly. The daily plans include details of the proposed activities and play opportunities, together with the objectives and teaching input each day.

Organisation of Early Years Foundation Stage

Early Years Foundation Stage at the La Côte International School is organised into two age groups with children aged 3 and becoming 4 in that academic year in Foundation 1, and children aged 4 and becoming 5 in that academic year in Foundation 2. Each class has a qualified teacher and a full-time teaching assistant to support learning. Children attend school for a full day, from 08.45 to 15.20 although children in Foundation 1 may attend for mornings only. The Early Years Team Leader oversees the practice and facilitates the staff in both classes. The staff in the EYFS work together to ensure progression and continuity in both the curriculum and the experiences offered.

The School Day

The EYFS is located in its classrooms and resource areas. Children sit in the dining room for lunch and are given a healthy cooked meal, or eat a prepared lunch from home. Before the morning break children are given a snack consisting of fruit and water. The children play outside for 15 minutes in the morning, for 30 minutes at lunchtime and will often play outside for a short time in the afternoon. There may also be an afternoon break of 10-15 minutes.

Throughout the day, planned opportunities for play are available to the children and they are given free access to a wide range of toys and materials to support their learning through exploration and interaction. Short times of teaching input are given every day by the teacher that will consist of direct teaching across the curriculum areas. These may be in the form of games, activities, collaborative learning or circle time. Adults focus on observing children in their play and responding to spontaneous opportunities to encourage discovery and development. In addition, focus activities are organised whereby children are encouraged to work with or alongside an adult on a planned activity with a clear aim. Activities may be differentiated to best support a child in their stage of development.

Activities in the EYFS are carefully planned and all opportunities for learning are embraced. The school resources and its environment are well used to encourage active and enquiring minds. Trips and visits are organised, many of which will be of an informal nature to exploit the natural environment around the school. We also use the opportunities offered by the local community through visits to local attractions and features, inviting people from the community to talk to the children and using local interest groups.

Assessment in Early Years Foundation Stage

Assessment is key to ensuring progression and continuity, and to enabling achievements to be celebrated. This information is shared with the other staff in Foundation Stage as appropriate and then passed on when the child moves into the next year group.

On admission to LCIS parents are asked to forward any reports from previous Early Years settings their child may have attended.

Children are assessed on an informal basis through regular observations and then the child's progress throughout the six areas of learning and development is charted. Assessment opportunities are included regularly in planning. Child observations are collected into an individual profile. These observations are taken throughout the setting and over the whole year. These comments are then summarised for the child's report. In addition specific assessments are made of basic literacy and numeracy skills such as a phonic check and included in the child's individual profile.

Regular work is collected in topic books or folders and is marked or cross-referenced to the notes in the individual profile. Parents and the children themselves are included in the assessment process through informal discussions.

The school report for the Early Years is written at the end of each term and gives an update on progress. The report is intended to recognise that in the EYFS children learn at different speeds dependent on their age, experience, environment and individual level of development. Children also progress at varying rates in different areas of learning and development and with different skill sets.

The intention of a report card at this age is not to make a judgement, but to recognise a child's achievements and where developments are required across all areas of learning and development. Learning is a collaboration between the school and home and the intention of the report card is also to guide parents in the activities and educational experiences they provide for their children outside of the school day.

The statements in the Early Years report are based on Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, a statutory UK assessment document completed by the end of the Foundation 2 year. The statements in each section become progressively more difficult and generally children will not achieve the last statements in each section before the ones above.

Simple symbols in the report show the child's current level of development.

The symbols are as follows:

- Category not yet relevant
- ✓ Making good progress towards the expected level of achievement for their age
- ✓✓ Achieved the expected level for the end of Early Years Foundation Stage
- ✓✓✓ Confident and independent in using and applying this skill
- ✓✓✓✓ Working independently at the level expected for the end of the second year in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The reports, in conjunction with the teacher/parent conferences, are intended as a formal means of communication with parents on progress.

The Early Years team work together to understand what the statements on the report mean within the school setting and to ensure consistency across the reports written throughout Early Years Foundation Stage. Moderation of the reports is undertaken by the Early Years Coordinator in conjunction with the rest of the Senior Management Team. Detailed guidance is being prepared, to be available to all staff in Early Years with a definition of each statement and examples of assessment that demonstrate this.

Language Acquisition

Children learn language through play and planned group activities in a natural way. We recognise, celebrate and promote children's home language and mother tongue. Parents are encouraged to continue to promote and use their home language with their children and reinforce vocabulary and concepts acquired at school through their mother tongue. Children who enter the school with English as an additional language are immersed in an English-speaking environment and their language develops through modelling and everyday language opportunities, particularly through play. Specific teaching of key vocabulary and modelling of good language is taught as appropriate within the context of other learning.

French is taught to all children in the Early Years for 30 minutes, 4 times a week. The specialist teachers use the Early Years planning, in particular the themes, as a basis for the teaching of French. The activities are play-based and encourage a natural acquisition of language.

Children with Special Educational Needs

Children with Special Educational Needs are included as far as possible in the everyday life of the class and the school. Where special provision has to be made then children are allocated staff or appropriate resources to meet these needs depending on the funding provided.

The staff from Early Years Foundation Stage meet regularly to discuss children with Special Educational Needs and an Individual Education Plan is written in consultation with parents, school staff and outside agencies who support that child. Targets are shared with the wider school staff, parents and other agencies and are updated at least twice a year. More regular reviews are required when targets are educational and therefore more specific and measurable.

Staff Development and Support

Staff training and development occurs as a part of the wider school development and includes all support staff as well as teachers.

Newly qualified and newly appointed staff are supported and mentored as appropriate to integrate into the Early Years team. An induction programme is provided for all newly appointed staff. This includes support and monitoring by another member of staff, training and opportunities to shadow more experienced members of staff.

The arrangements for performance management, appraisal or professional development include a structured discussion for each member of staff, with the Head Teacher. These include time to recognise achievements, and identify needs for training and support. All staff are involved in whole school training days every year. They are encouraged to develop both their knowledge and expertise through new materials, research and in-school training. Staff work together to 'cascade' knowledge gained in staff meetings.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Early Years Foundation Stage

Monitoring and evaluation is used to ensure consistency of good practice and to develop Early Years Foundation Stage. All monitoring and evaluation is undertaken in line with wider school development and with the Senior Management Team.

- Staff members are observed in and outside the classroom.. The focus of any observation, the activities observed and comments by both the observer and the practitioner are recorded on a monitoring sheet;
- Weekly planning is handed in to the Early Years Foundation Stage Coordinator, who monitors this with the Early Years team. Evaluations and feedback from Early Years team meetings are also forwarded to the Head Teacher.
- The Early Years team work together to evaluate each topic at the end of each half term. Long-term and medium-term planning are prepared together.
- Formal and informal staff discussions are used to assist the monitoring and evaluation process.

Partnership with parents

A partnership with parents is seen as the key to children's learning and development and therefore they have an important role in the education of their child.

Orientation day is an important opportunity to meet with parents prior to their child joining the new class. Parents are consulted and advice taken on previous experiences, the child's strengths and areas for development and information on their personal and social needs.

Informal communication takes place with parents on a daily basis whilst reports and parent/teacher conferences are a more formal means of communication.

Parents are encouraged to support their child's learning by completing home learning activities in particular in reading. Books are sent home on a regular basis and ideas for activities to support the acquisition of basic literacy skills are promoted.

Parents are informed of school activities through regular school

newsletters and letters from the individual teachers in Early Years Foundation Stage. A Communication Book is offered as a means of ensuring important information is received.

Parents are encouraged to participate in the Parents Group at LCIS and thereby become involved in the activities of the school. Class representatives from the Parents Group act as a link between staff, class parents and the group. Parents are, on occasion, asked to accompany classes on school visits or support in class for special events and for class assemblies.

The Role of the Early Years Coordinator

- Assists Early Years teachers in classroom practice through mentoring and modelling teaching and learning approaches,
- Supports staff to understand and implement good Early Years practice.
- Works within the Senior Management Team to monitor, assess and develop good practice and Continuing Professional Development.
- Develops and maintains continuity and progression across Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Ensures implementation of a regular, ongoing monitoring and assessment programme.
- Coordinates the management and purchase of resources.
- Supports the tracking of pupils' progress in Early Years Foundation Stage, including for children with Special Educational Needs.
- Liaises with parents and other partnerships.
- Disseminates and shares with other school staff and the Senior Management Team up-to-date Early Years' information.
- Works with the Senior Management Team to set goals for the future in the Early Years at the La Côte International School.

Early Years Foundation Stage – Areas Of Learning

Personal, Social & Emotional

Build relationships with adults and other children. Develop self confidence in new situations.

Learn to respond to instructions and develop an interest in all aspects of learning.

Develop the ability to concentrate, work independently, initiate ideas, listen to others, take turns, and work as part of a group.

Further their understanding of right and wrong while learning to behave and care for others.

Communication, Language and Literacy

Develop their speaking and listening skills, interact with others, negotiate plans and activities.

Enjoy stories, rhymes, songs, and poems and start to make up their own.

Take part in role play situations, developing imaginative play.

Develop early literacy skills such as retelling stories, handling, and talking about books.

Make marks which convey meaning to themselves and sometimes to others, readily turning to spoken and written language in play. Use phonic knowledge to write simple words.

Extend vocabulary and begin to link sounds to letters. Hear and say sounds in words.

Read a range of familiar words independently. Correctly form recognisable letters.

Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy

Take part in counting and number recognition activities, through games, rhymes, songs, and daily routines.

Develop their mathematical understanding, enabling them to solve problems involving shape, space, and measurement. Learn vocabulary involved in adding, subtracting and comparing.

Begin to use mathematical language such as quantity, size, and position and investigate pattern.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Ask questions about why things happen and how things work, taking an interest in their environment.

Investigate objects and materials, using their senses and a variety of tools and resources.

Look at similarities, differences, patterns, and change and begin to learn about the sequence of time and the past.

Build and construct with a wide range of objects and materials and begin to identify uses of everyday technology to support their learning.

Begin to learn about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

Physical Development

Develop an awareness of space, of themselves and others and begin to move with control, coordination, confidence, and imagination.

Understand the importance of health and safety, recognising the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active.

Use a range of tools, malleable materials, construction objects, and small equipment to develop fine motor skills.

Increase gross motor skills by using large equipment, gym activities, outdoor play, large material construction, and large brush strokes.

Creative Development

Learn to express their ideas, thoughts, and feelings through role play, movement, singing, music, art, and crafts while experimenting with a variety of tools, materials and instruments.

Explore colour, texture, shape, and form.

Respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch, and feel.

Explore how sounds can be changed, learn simple songs, match movements to music, and look at sound patterns.