

A02 EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

Edison Group of Schools

Applies To

- Edison International Academy Aspire
- Edison International Academy Al Markhiya
- Edison Global Academy Lusail
- Edison Global Academy Rawdat Al Hamama

1. INTRODUCTION

"A Big Journey Starts with a Little Step"

The Edison Group of Schools believes that every child deserves the very best start in life. The experiences children encounter during their earliest years form the foundation upon which future learning, wellbeing, behaviour and achievement are built. High-quality early childhood education has a lasting impact on children's academic success, confidence, resilience and lifelong attitudes towards learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) represents a unique and critically important phase of education. It is not simply preparation for Primary School; it is a distinct and valuable stage of learning in its own right. During these formative years, children develop rapidly across all areas of development and begin to establish the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours that will support future success.

The Edison Group recognises that young children learn best through active engagement, meaningful experiences, exploration, play, investigation and positive relationships. Children develop at different rates and in different ways, and effective early years provision recognises and celebrates these differences while ensuring that every child is appropriately supported and challenged.

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent framework for Early Years provision across all Edison Group schools while ensuring alignment with:

- The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (England)
- The National Curriculum for England
- Qatar Ministry of Education and Higher Education requirements
- Qatar National Vision 2030
- National Development Strategy 2024–2030
- NEASC Foundation Standards
- Edison Group Vision, Mission and Values

The policy reflects the Group's commitment to providing safe, stimulating, inclusive and nurturing learning environments where every child feels valued, respected and empowered to reach their full potential.

2. RATIONALE

Children develop rapidly during the Early Years Foundation Stage socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually and linguistically. Research consistently demonstrates that the quality of early childhood experiences significantly influences future educational achievement, wellbeing and life opportunities.

The Edison Group recognises that effective Early Years education should focus on the whole child. Learning and development are interconnected, and progress in one area often supports growth in others. Children's emotional security, confidence and wellbeing are therefore viewed as essential foundations for successful learning.

Our approach is based upon the belief that:

Children are active learners who construct knowledge through meaningful experiences.

Learning should be engaging, purposeful and relevant to children's interests and developmental needs.

Positive relationships are central to learning and development.

Every child is unique and deserves opportunities to succeed.

Parents are children's first and most influential educators.

Learning environments should inspire curiosity, creativity and exploration.

Observation and assessment should inform future learning opportunities.

Children should be encouraged to become increasingly independent, confident and responsible learners.

These principles underpin all aspects of Early Years practice throughout the Edison Group.

3. THE FOUR PRINCIPLES OF THE EYFS

The Edison Group adopts the four overarching principles of the EYFS Framework which guide all practice within Early Years settings.

The Unique Child

Every child is a unique individual who is constantly learning and capable of resilience, confidence, independence and success. Children develop at different rates and bring different experiences, strengths and interests to school. Practitioners should recognise and respond to these differences while maintaining high expectations for all learners.

Effective Early Years provision acknowledges that children require different levels of support, challenge and encouragement at different stages of development. Staff should therefore create personalised learning opportunities that enable each child to make progress from their individual starting points.

Positive Relationships

Children learn most effectively when they feel safe, secure and valued. Positive relationships with parents, carers, teachers and peers create the emotional foundations necessary for successful learning.

The Edison Group places significant emphasis on building strong relationships based on trust, respect and effective communication. Staff should model positive interactions and provide children with opportunities to develop social skills, empathy and emotional understanding.

Enabling Environments

The environment plays a vital role in supporting learning and development. Children should have access to stimulating indoor and outdoor environments that encourage exploration, investigation, creativity and independent learning.

Learning environments should be carefully planned to reflect children's interests, developmental needs and cultural contexts while providing opportunities for challenge and discovery.

Learning and Development

Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. All areas of learning are interconnected and equally important.

Teaching should recognise the importance of play, exploration, active learning and critical thinking while providing opportunities for children to develop knowledge, understanding and skills across all areas of the curriculum.

4. AIMS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

The Edison Group aims to provide an Early Years education that nurtures the whole child and establishes strong foundations for future learning.

The EYFS seeks to develop children who are confident, independent, curious and enthusiastic learners. Children should feel secure within their learning environment and develop positive attitudes towards themselves, others and learning.

The Early Years programme aims to:

Develop children's personal, social and emotional wellbeing.

Promote confidence, resilience and independence.

Develop effective communication and language skills.

Encourage curiosity, creativity and imagination.

Foster positive relationships and respect for others.

Promote physical development and healthy lifestyles.

Support early literacy and numeracy development.

Develop problem-solving and critical-thinking skills.

Encourage children to become active participants in their learning.

Promote respect for diversity, inclusion and cultural understanding.

Support the development of responsible global citizens aligned with the Edison Group Vision and Qatar National Vision 2030.

The achievement of these aims should be evident through children's learning experiences, relationships, attitudes and overall development.

5. CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE LEARNING

The Edison Group recognises that how children learn is just as important as what they learn. The Characteristics of Effective Learning form a fundamental part of the Early Years Foundation Stage and describe the attitudes, behaviours and approaches that support successful learning and development.

These characteristics help children develop the skills required to become independent, confident and lifelong learners. They underpin all areas of learning and should be embedded throughout daily practice.

Playing and Exploring – Engagement

Children learn best when they are actively involved in meaningful experiences. Through play and exploration, children investigate the world around them, test ideas, make discoveries and develop a deeper understanding of concepts.

Practitioners should create opportunities for children to explore independently, make choices, take appropriate risks and follow their interests. Children should be encouraged to investigate, question, experiment and engage fully with learning experiences.

The Edison Group believes that purposeful play provides an essential foundation for learning and should remain a central feature of the Early Years curriculum.

Active Learning – Motivation

Children develop confidence and resilience when they are motivated, engaged and challenged appropriately. Active learners demonstrate persistence, concentration and a willingness to continue when faced with difficulties.

Practitioners should encourage children to set goals, celebrate achievements and recognise the value of effort and perseverance. Learning experiences should provide an appropriate level of challenge while ensuring that children experience success and develop confidence in their own abilities.

Positive reinforcement and meaningful feedback help children develop a growth mindset and understand that learning is a process that involves effort, reflection and improvement.

Creating and Thinking Critically – Thinking

Critical thinking develops when children have opportunities to generate ideas, solve problems, make decisions and reflect upon their learning.

Children should be encouraged to make connections between experiences, develop their own ideas and explore different ways of approaching tasks and challenges. Practitioners should use questioning, discussion and reflection to support higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills.

The Edison Group seeks to develop children who are curious, creative and confident thinkers who are willing to explore new ideas and learn from their experiences.

6. THE EARLY YEARS CURRICULUM

The Edison Group Early Years curriculum is based upon the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and is designed to provide a broad, balanced and developmentally appropriate education for all children.

The curriculum recognises that young children learn holistically and that learning cannot be separated into isolated subjects. Effective learning experiences should therefore be interconnected, meaningful and responsive to children's developmental needs and interests.

The curriculum provides opportunities for children to develop knowledge, skills and understanding across all areas of learning while fostering curiosity, creativity, independence and a love of learning.

Learning experiences should reflect children's interests, backgrounds and experiences while providing opportunities to explore the wider world and develop an understanding of different cultures, communities and perspectives.

The curriculum should also support the development of the Edison Group Vision, Mission and Values and contribute to the aims of Qatar National Vision 2030 by developing confident, responsible and globally-minded learners.

7. PRIME AREAS OF LEARNING

The Prime Areas of Learning provide the foundation upon which all other learning is built. These areas are particularly important in supporting children's development during the Early Years and should receive significant emphasis throughout the curriculum.

Communication and Language

Communication and language development is fundamental to children's learning and development. Through language, children learn to express ideas, build relationships, develop understanding and engage with the world around them.

The Edison Group is committed to creating language-rich environments where children are encouraged to listen, speak, question, discuss and communicate confidently. Practitioners should model effective language, engage children in meaningful conversations and provide opportunities for vocabulary development throughout the day.

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Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Personal, social and emotional development supports children's wellbeing, confidence, independence and ability to form positive relationships.

Children should be encouraged to develop self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy and resilience. Learning experiences should help children understand their emotions, manage behaviour appropriately and develop positive relationships with others.

The Edison Group places significant emphasis on wellbeing and believes that children who feel safe, secure and valued are more likely to achieve success across all areas of learning.

Physical Development

Physical development contributes significantly to children's overall health, wellbeing and learning.

Children should have regular opportunities to develop gross motor and fine motor skills through a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities. Physical activity supports coordination, balance, strength, control and healthy lifestyles.

The Edison Group promotes active learning environments that encourage movement, exploration and physical confidence.

8. SPECIFIC AREAS OF LEARNING

The Specific Areas of Learning build upon the foundations established through the Prime Areas and provide opportunities for children to develop knowledge and skills across a broader curriculum.

Literacy

Literacy development involves listening, speaking, reading and writing. Children should be immersed in environments that promote a love of books, stories, language and communication.

The Edison Group seeks to develop enthusiastic readers and writers by providing engaging literacy experiences that foster enjoyment, confidence and competence.

Mathematics

Mathematics helps children develop problem-solving skills, logical thinking and an understanding of number, pattern, shape, space and measure.

Mathematical learning should be practical, engaging and integrated into everyday experiences wherever possible.

Understanding the World

Children develop an understanding of people, communities, cultures, technology and the natural world through exploration, investigation and discussion.

Learning experiences should help children appreciate diversity, develop curiosity and build awareness of their local and global communities.

Particular emphasis should be placed on developing an understanding of Qatar's culture, traditions, heritage and values in ways that are meaningful and appropriate for young children.

Expressive Arts and Design

Expressive Arts and Design encourages creativity, imagination and self-expression.

Children should have opportunities to explore art, music, movement, role play and design through a variety of engaging experiences that foster creativity and confidence.

The Edison Group believes that creativity plays an important role in children's cognitive, emotional and social development and should be valued throughout the curriculum.

9. TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACHES

Teaching within the Early Years Foundation Stage should be responsive, engaging and child-centred.

Practitioners should combine purposeful adult-led learning with carefully planned opportunities for child-initiated exploration and discovery. Effective teaching involves observing children closely, understanding their interests and developmental needs and using this information to extend learning.

Learning should be active, practical and meaningful. Children should be encouraged to investigate, question, experiment and develop independence through hands-on experiences.

Practitioners should use skilled interactions, questioning and modelling to deepen understanding and promote learning. Teaching should be flexible and responsive, adapting to children's interests and emerging learning opportunities.

The Edison Group recognises that high-quality interactions between adults and children are among the most significant factors influencing successful learning outcomes in the Early Years.

10. LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Play is central to effective learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Through play, children explore ideas, develop language, build relationships, solve problems and make sense of the world around them. Play provides opportunities for creativity, imagination, experimentation and independent thinking.

The Edison Group recognises that play is not separate from learning. Rather, play is one of the most powerful vehicles through which learning occurs during early childhood.

Practitioners should provide rich play opportunities that support all areas of learning and development while ensuring that children remain actively engaged and motivated.

Both indoor and outdoor environments should offer opportunities for exploratory, imaginative, physical and collaborative play. Staff should participate thoughtfully in children's play, extending learning through questioning, modelling and discussion while allowing children sufficient ownership of their learning experiences.

Play-based learning should be purposeful, planned and carefully balanced with adult-guided experiences to ensure progression and challenge.

11. PLANNING FOR LEARNING

Effective planning is essential to ensuring that all children experience a rich, balanced and progressive curriculum that supports their individual development and learning needs.

Within the Edison Group, planning should be informed by a combination of curriculum expectations, professional knowledge, ongoing assessment and children's interests. Practitioners should use observations and assessment information to identify children's strengths, needs and next steps in learning and use this information to design meaningful learning experiences.

Planning should be flexible and responsive rather than rigid or overly prescriptive. While long-term and medium-term plans provide a framework for curriculum coverage and progression, practitioners should remain responsive to children's emerging interests and learning opportunities. This approach helps ensure that learning remains engaging, relevant and developmentally appropriate.

Practitioners should provide a balance of adult-led, adult-guided and child-initiated activities. Children should have opportunities to learn independently, collaboratively and through direct teaching experiences. Learning activities should support challenge, curiosity and creativity while promoting progress across all areas of learning.

Planning should also take account of cultural relevance and local context. Opportunities should be provided for children to develop an appreciation of Qatar's culture, traditions, environment and national identity while also developing an understanding of the wider world.

The Edison Group expects planning to demonstrate clear progression, appropriate differentiation and meaningful opportunities for assessment. Planning should reflect the needs of all learners and support both intervention and challenge where required.

12. OBSERVATION, ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING JOURNEYS

Assessment within the Early Years Foundation Stage should be purposeful, continuous and centred on improving outcomes for children. The primary purpose of assessment is to understand each child's development, identify strengths and areas for support and inform future planning.

The Edison Group adopts an assessment approach that is based upon observation of children within their everyday learning experiences. Assessment should be integrated naturally into teaching and learning and should not create unnecessary barriers to children's engagement and enjoyment.

Practitioners should regularly observe children during both adult-led and child-initiated activities. These observations provide valuable information regarding children's knowledge, skills, understanding, attitudes and developmental progress.

Assessment information should be gathered through a range of sources including:

- Direct observation.
- Discussions with children.
- Samples of work.
- Learning activities.
- Parent contributions.
- Photographic evidence.
- Professional judgement.

The Edison Group recognises the importance of maintaining accurate and meaningful records of children's development. Learning Journeys should provide a holistic picture of each child's progress and celebrate achievements across all areas of learning.

Learning Journeys should demonstrate progression over time and provide evidence of children's developing skills, knowledge and understanding. They should also reflect children's interests, achievements and personal growth.

Assessment information should be used to:

Identify next steps for learning.

Inform planning and teaching.

Monitor progress.

Identify children requiring additional support or challenge.

Support communication with parents.

Contribute to transition processes.

Assessment should always remain child-centred and should support positive learning experiences rather than simply generating data.

13. BASELINE ASSESSMENT, PROGRESS MONITORING AND REPORTING

The Edison Group is committed to ensuring that all children make strong progress from their individual starting points.

Baseline assessment should be undertaken when children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage. The purpose of baseline assessment is to develop an understanding of each child's current level of development and identify any areas requiring support or intervention.

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Baseline information may be gathered through observations, discussions with parents, transition information and initial learning activities.

Following entry assessment, children's progress should be monitored regularly throughout the academic year. Progress reviews should consider both academic development and wider aspects of learning including social, emotional, physical and communication development.

Assessment data should be used carefully and professionally to inform decision-making and identify trends. The focus should remain on supporting children's development rather than solely measuring attainment. Parents should receive regular information regarding their child's progress and development. Reporting processes should provide a balanced picture of achievement, effort, wellbeing and next steps for learning. Reports should celebrate success while providing constructive guidance regarding future development.

14. INCLUSION, EQUITY AND EARLY INTERVENTION

The Edison Group is committed to ensuring that every child has equal access to high-quality learning opportunities regardless of background, ability, language, culture or individual circumstances.

The Early Years Foundation Stage should provide an inclusive environment in which diversity is valued and every child feels welcomed, respected and supported.

Children develop at different rates and may require varying levels of support to achieve success. Practitioners should recognise individual differences and adapt teaching, learning experiences and environments accordingly.

Early identification of developmental, learning, communication or behavioural concerns is essential in ensuring that children receive timely support. Practitioners should work collaboratively with parents, inclusion teams and external specialists where appropriate to identify and address concerns at the earliest possible stage.

Intervention should be supportive, targeted and designed to remove barriers to learning while maintaining high expectations for all children.

The Edison Group believes that inclusion is not simply about access. It is about ensuring meaningful participation, belonging and success for every child.

Children who demonstrate advanced abilities or exceptional talents should also be provided with opportunities for challenge and enrichment that support continued growth and development.

15. SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE REQUIREMENTS

The safety, wellbeing and protection of children are of paramount importance within all Edison Group schools. Safeguarding responsibilities extend beyond protection from harm and include promoting children's physical health, emotional wellbeing, safety and overall welfare. The Early Years Foundation Stage plays a particularly important role in safeguarding due to the age and vulnerability of young children.

All practitioners working within the EYFS must maintain a strong awareness of safeguarding responsibilities and comply fully with the Edison Group Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Children should learn within environments where they feel safe, secure and supported. Positive relationships, clear routines and consistent expectations contribute significantly to children's sense of safety and wellbeing. Staff should remain vigilant to any signs that a child may require additional support or protection and should follow established safeguarding procedures whenever concerns arise.

The welfare of the child must always remain the primary consideration in all decision-making.

16. PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

The Edison Group recognises that parents are children's first and most influential educators. Effective partnerships between home and school are therefore essential to supporting successful learning and development.

Strong parental engagement contributes positively to children's progress, confidence and wellbeing. Schools should actively seek to establish relationships based upon trust, communication and collaboration.

Parents should be encouraged to share information regarding their child's interests, strengths, needs and achievements. This information helps practitioners develop a more complete understanding of each child and supports personalised learning.

Communication between home and school should be regular, meaningful and supportive. Parents should be kept informed regarding their child's progress, development and wellbeing and should be provided with opportunities to contribute to their child's learning journey.

The Edison Group values parents as partners in education and seeks to create strong home-school relationships that support positive outcomes for all children.

17. TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

Transitions are significant milestones in children's educational journeys and should be carefully planned and managed.

The Edison Group recognises that successful transitions contribute positively to children's wellbeing, confidence and readiness for learning. Effective transition processes help children feel secure and enable continuity in learning and development.

Transition arrangements should support:

Entry into Nursery.

Entry into Reception.

Movement between year groups.

Transition from Reception into Key Stage 1.

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Mobile : +974 6606 1412

Transition processes should involve collaboration between staff, parents and children and should provide opportunities for children to become familiar with new environments, routines and expectations.

Particular attention should be given to supporting children who may find transitions challenging or who require additional support.

Successful transitions help establish positive attitudes towards learning and contribute to long-term educational success.

18. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective leadership is essential to ensuring high-quality Early Years provision.

School leaders are responsible for establishing a clear vision for Early Years education and ensuring that the curriculum, teaching, assessment and learning environments reflect the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The EYFS Leader plays a central role in monitoring provision, supporting staff development, maintaining curriculum quality and ensuring compliance with statutory requirements.

Practitioners are responsible for creating engaging learning environments, building positive relationships, delivering high-quality teaching and promoting children's wellbeing and development.

Leaders should ensure that staff receive appropriate professional development opportunities and that Early Years provision remains aligned with current research, best practice and regulatory expectations.

The Edison Group expects all staff to contribute positively to the continuous improvement of Early Years provision and to maintain the highest standards of professionalism and care.

19. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Edison Group is committed to maintaining the highest standards of Early Years provision across all campuses. Continuous monitoring and evaluation are essential to ensuring that children receive high-quality learning experiences and that provision remains aligned with statutory requirements, educational research and best practice.

Monitoring should be viewed as a supportive process designed to strengthen teaching, learning and outcomes for children. It should encourage reflection, professional growth and continuous improvement rather than simply measuring compliance.

School leaders should regularly evaluate the effectiveness of Early Years provision through a variety of quality assurance activities. These may include classroom observations, learning walks, planning reviews, assessment analysis, learning journey scrutiny, environment audits and discussions with children, staff and parents.

The monitoring process should focus on:

The quality of teaching and learning.

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Children's progress and attainment.

The effectiveness of assessment practices.

The quality of indoor and outdoor learning environments.

Children's wellbeing and engagement.

The effectiveness of intervention and support programmes.

Parental engagement and satisfaction.

Safeguarding and welfare provision.

Professional development needs.

Findings from monitoring activities should be used to identify strengths, celebrate good practice and inform future development priorities.

The Edison Group believes that continuous improvement is achieved when schools engage in honest self-evaluation, use evidence effectively and maintain a commitment to reflective practice.

20. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The quality of Early Years provision is closely linked to the knowledge, skills and expertise of practitioners. The Edison Group therefore places significant importance on professional learning and continuous professional development.

Early Years practitioners should engage regularly in professional learning opportunities that enhance their understanding of child development, pedagogy, assessment, safeguarding, inclusion and curriculum delivery.

Professional development should be informed by:

School priorities.

Monitoring outcomes.

Research and best practice.

Individual professional goals.

Regulatory requirements.

Student needs.

Leaders should ensure that staff have opportunities to collaborate, share effective practice and engage in professional dialogue that supports continuous improvement.

The Edison Group recognises that investment in staff development directly contributes to improved outcomes for children and strengthens the quality of Early Years provision across all schools.

21. RESOURCES AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

The learning environment is often described as the "third teacher" because of the significant influence it has on children's learning, behaviour and development.

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The Edison Group is committed to providing stimulating, safe and well-resourced learning environments that inspire curiosity, creativity and exploration.

Indoor and outdoor environments should be organised to promote independence, engagement and meaningful learning. Resources should be accessible, purposeful and appropriate to children's developmental needs.

Learning environments should:

Encourage exploration and investigation.

Promote communication and collaboration.

Support creativity and imagination.

Reflect children's interests and achievements.

Provide opportunities for challenge and problem-solving.

Celebrate diversity and inclusion.

Promote a sense of belonging.

Resources should be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant, engaging and supportive of curriculum objectives.

The environment should evolve in response to children's interests, developmental needs and learning priorities.

22. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

The health, safety and wellbeing of children are fundamental priorities within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children should learn within environments that are safe, secure and supportive. Appropriate procedures must be in place to ensure that risks are managed effectively and that children's welfare remains protected at all times.

The Edison Group expects all Early Years settings to comply fully with school policies relating to:

Safeguarding and Child Protection.

Health and Safety.

First Aid.

Supervision.

Risk Assessment.

Medical Care.

Emergency Procedures.

Attendance and Student Welfare.

Practitioners should promote healthy lifestyles through daily routines, physical activity, wellbeing programmes and health education.

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Children should be supported in developing positive habits relating to hygiene, nutrition, physical activity and personal wellbeing.

A strong focus on health and wellbeing contributes positively to children's learning, development and overall quality of life.

23. POLICY REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed annually by Principals and Early Years Leaders to ensure continued compliance with statutory requirements, educational best practice and Edison Group expectations.

The review process shall consider:

Updates to the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

MOEHE requirements and guidance.

NEASC standards and recommendations.

Research and developments in early childhood education.

Feedback from staff, parents and stakeholders.

School improvement priorities.

Monitoring and evaluation findings.

Any amendments to the policy shall be approved through the Edison Group governance structure prior to implementation.

The Edison Group is committed to ensuring that its Early Years provision continues to reflect the highest standards of educational excellence and child-centred practice.

24. CONCLUSION

The Early Years Foundation Stage represents one of the most important phases of a child's educational journey. The experiences, relationships and opportunities provided during these formative years lay the foundation for future learning, wellbeing and success.

The Edison Group is committed to providing wholistic Early Years education that nurtures the whole child and supports development across all areas of learning. Through high-quality teaching, positive relationships, stimulating environments and strong partnerships with families, the Group seeks to ensure that every child develops the confidence, curiosity and resilience needed to thrive.

By maintaining a child-centred approach and remaining committed to continuous improvement, the Edison Group aims to provide Early Years experiences that inspire a lifelong love of learning and prepare children for future success within school and beyond.