

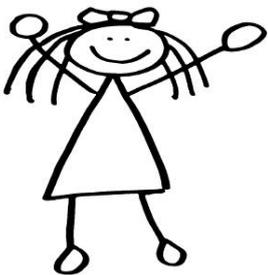
# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



**Reviewed: September 2017**

**Ratified by the Governing Body:**

**Next review date 2018 or earlier if statutory changes.**



# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Foundation Stage applies to children from three years of age to the end of the reception year. Foundation Stage 1 children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are four. Foundation Stage 2 children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday.) Key Stage 1 begins for our children at the beginning of Year 1. The Foundation Stage equips children with the key skills that are required to access learning in their later schooling. Children learn these skills through explorative play and problem solving activities which are carefully tailored to meet their learning needs. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- 1.2 Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal simply by observing the world around them and interacting with family and friends. Some children may have previously attended an Early Years setting (such as a private nursery) or have accessed play groups or workshops that are offered by Children's Centres.
- 1.3 The early years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:
- it builds on what our children already know and can do;
  - it challenges children and sets high expectations for learning;
  - it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
  - it offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
  - it provides a secure, yet rich and stimulating environment which encourages children to work and play independently.

***(Article 29: Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities – UNCRC)***

## 2 Aims of the Foundation Stage

### 2.1

The curriculum of the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing child within 3 Prime Areas:

- Personal, social and emotional development;
- Communication and language;
- Physical development;

And 4 specific areas:

- Literacy;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding of the world;
- Expressive arts & design.

### **3 Teaching and learning style**

#### **3.1**

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1.

#### **3.2**

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned and flexible curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities; the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor spaces, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- the regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

### **4 Play in the Foundation Stage**

#### **4.1**

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world. Play provides children with a safe space where they can practise and test out new ideas and skills. Children learn the importance of self-care and self-control, and begin to understand the relationship between cause and effect.

They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own, and develop an understanding of the rights that both they, and their peers have. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

## 5 Inclusion in the Foundation Stage

### 5.1

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning (see our policy on school inclusion).

**(Article 28: All children have the right to a good quality education)**

### 5.2

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that many achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

**5.3** We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary. This involves speech therapy for some of our children.

## 6 The Foundation Stage curriculum

**6.1** The curriculum for the Foundation Stage in our school reflects the areas of learning identified in the New EYFS Framework 2012, Development Matters age bands and Early Learning Goals. The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across the seven areas of learning. We understand that each area is equally important, inter linked and inter dependent.

**6.2** We recognise the fundamental importance of high quality play opportunities for children's development and provide a wide range of direct teaching and high quality planned, supported and free play to enable all children to progress in each area.

**6.3** The New EYFS Framework and Development Matters provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers use the national schemes of work where appropriate to support the planning for individual children. Our medium term planning is completed half-termly and identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals, and for those working towards Age Related Expectations for Year 1 & 2 of the National Curriculum.

## Assessment

**7.1** We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. We take into account the interests of the children and this also informs our planning. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observations, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. Each child has their own Learning Journey folder and work samples and assessments are kept in this. Teachers also record children's progress using the '2 Build a profile' app which enables teachers to take photographs and immediately link them to the associated areas of learning within the profile. We also value the contribution of parents towards their child's assessment.

**7.2** In the Nursery the teacher and learning assistants assess the ability of each child using the Development Matters Statements. During the children's first half-term in the reception class, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using the Development matters statements and the age bands. They continue to assess the pupils covering the 3 prime areas and 4 specific areas of learning within the foundation stage using the Foundation Stage Profile. We use this assessment information to support our medium term and short term planning and teaching programmes for individual children and groups of children. Within the first term we have a meeting with parents to inform them as to how well their child has settled in and to discuss issues arising from any assessments, both formal and informal, that have been made.

**7.3** The teacher completes the Foundation Stage Profile at the end of the child's reception year. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead and ensures a smooth transition from Foundation Stage 2 to Year 1. These assessments also form part of the end of year report received by the parents. We have a parental consultation meeting in July where parents can discuss their child's progress with the teacher.

## 8 The role of parents

**8.1** We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise and appreciate the role that parents play in educating their children. Some of the ways that we work with parents include:

- parents are invited into school to meet with the class teacher and collect their information packs. At this meeting, parents can discuss any issues that concern them with both the head and class teacher.
- the children visit the school and have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school. At this meeting parents can discuss any issues that concern them and ask any questions about the school. Parents also have the opportunity to explore the classrooms and to ask members of staff questions about the teaching and expectations in the Foundation Stage.
- Nursery children and their families are visited in their own homes at the beginning of term, prior to starting their Nursery Education. These home visits give parents (and their children) the opportunity to meet the teaching staff and to ask any questions or queries they may have about their child starting at school. Parents are given key information and resources to support their child with the transition in to Nursery.

- A parent conference between the class teacher and the parents of children beginning in the Reception Classes takes place prior to all children starting in Reception.
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception and nursery classes;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;  
arranging for children to start school over the first three weeks of term. We stagger the starting time of each child over this period, so that the teacher can welcome each child individually into our school. Children in the Reception Classes attend for half a day initially, and this builds up gradually to the whole day. Children in Nursery gradually build up to the 3 hour session depending on each individual child's ability to settle. We encourage parents to stay if there are problems with the child's admission;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- inviting parents in for 'Stay and Play' sessions regularly throughout the year. Teachers share the end of year expectations with parents and provide parents with resources that they can use to support their child's learning.
- offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents, such as curriculum evenings and open mornings when the parents can observe their children at work and play.
- The school provides Family Literacy classes for the Reception Parents.

## 9 Resources

**9.1** We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

**Signed:** R. K. Mahil-Pooni

**Date:** Summer 2017

**Approved by the Governing Body:** 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017

**To be reviewed in summer 2018 or if the EYFS curriculum changes**