



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage extends from birth to the end of a child's fifth year. Entry into our school is at the beginning of the school year in which the children are five.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is important in its own right and in preparing for later schooling. The early years are critical in a child's development. Children develop rapidly during this time - physically, emotionally, intellectually and socially. The Early Years Foundation Stage is about developing key learning skills such as listening, speaking, concentration, persistence and learning to work together and cooperate with other children.

Curriculum Aims and Principles

The principles that will guide the work of the Early Years Foundation Stage practitioner are grouped into four themes:

- A unique child - every child is a competent learner from birth.
- Positive Relationships - children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and or key person.
- Enabling Environments - the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.
- Learning and Development - children develop and learn in different ways and at different rate and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter connected.

Within these principles there are key issues which are paramount to the successful delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage. These are:

- Meeting the diverse needs of children - practitioners need to deliver personalised learning.
- Partnership Learning - early years practitioners have a key role in working with parents to support their children.
- Flexible Provision - practitioners need to take into account the differing needs of individual children.
- Play - children must have opportunities to play indoors and outdoors and have opportunities for spontaneous play.

Organisations

Entry Arrangements and Transition

- Most children start in the September of the year they turn five. Children start full time straight away on the first day of term.
- Parents receive an early year's introduction brochure.
- Children have three taster sessions. They come for one afternoon session where they are split into small groups and two morning sessions where the whole group comes in. They stay for lunch after the second morning session in order to get used to the eating environment.

- The Class teacher will visit the children in their nursery setting during the summer term.
- Parents and children are invited to an informal meeting after school to get to know other parents and children.
- Parents are invited to a formal information evening.
- Children are given extra taster sessions if deemed necessary by the child's nursery.
- Children are provided with photos of their taster session which also includes a photograph of the class teacher and teaching assistants so they can get used to the faces and names over the summer holidays.
- Children are given an 'All about Me' booklet to fill in to bring to school in September to help reception class staff to get to know the child and their circumstances.
- Children transferring from the Lea Pre school will have additional opportunities to visit the class and the pre school will work closely with the Reception class teacher to optimise the transition process

Snack and Lunchtime Arrangements

- Children are provided with milk every day as part of the Universal free School Meals
- Children are provided with free school fruit.
- Children are offered school dinners or to bring their own packed lunch.
- Lunch is from 12.00pm - 1.10pm.

Equal Opportunity

- See separate policy

Structure of Day

- School starts at 8.55 am and finishes at 3.30pm.
- Lunch is from 12.00 to 1.10pm
- There is a morning and afternoon playtime both lasting 15 minutes.
- Assembly is at 3.10pm everyday
- The children have a 20 minutes phonics session every day.

Indoor and Outdoor Provision

- Children have free flow access provision to large outdoor area.
- Children have access in all weathers. Wet weather clothing is provided.

Planning and Organising the Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the *prime* areas, are:

- communication and language;
- physical development; and
- personal, social and emotional development.

Providers must also support children in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy;
- mathematics;
- understanding the world; and
- expressive arts and design.

Long Term Planning - Objectives are taken from the EYFS framework and are organised throughout the year to ensure coverage of all seven areas of learning.

Medium Term Planning - Objectives are set out based on whole class and individual development needs. Activities are then outlined within the whole school topics.

Weekly Planning - detailed planning setting out weekly activities based on development needs. The day is structured to accommodate all areas throughout the day. This is either through child initiated activities or teacher led activities.

Phonics - the school follows the Letter and Sounds framework for teaching phonics. When children enter the reception class they will start on Phase One which continues throughout the year. Alongside this they will focus on Phase Two and Three, and depending on their progress, in to Phase Four.

Teaching and learning

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 Early Years Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching in other Key Stages.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Early Years 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 curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years 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 space, 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 Early Years Foundation Stage.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep trying if they encounter difficulties.
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas and make links.

Well planned play is a key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge. Children are given opportunities through outdoor and indoor play. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

Assessment and Record Keeping

All effective assessment involves analysing and reviewing what you know about each child's development and learning. You can then make informed decisions about the child's progress and plan next steps for their developmental and learning needs.

Formative assessment - this is done on a daily basis through observations, photographs, videos, collecting things the children have drawn or written and information from parents. This is collated together to form each child's individual profile (special book). This informs everyday planning.

Summative assessment - The EYFS baseline is completed within the first month of starting Reception Class. It summarises the whether the pupil is working below typical, typical or above typical for their age in each of the 6 areas of learning; Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development, Literacy, Mathematics and Characteristic of Learning. Through out the year the children's progress and learning is tracked using the age bands set out in Early Years Outcomes. Activities are planned around the highlighted gaps in learning and development.

Phonics assessment - children are assessed regularly on their development through the phonics phases.

Reporting to Parents - A yearly report is written which gives details on children's progress in all seven areas of learning. There are three parents meetings a year. There are two formal meetings where progress and targets are shared and an informal meeting where work is shared. Children are informed of their child's attainment against the learning goals at the end of reception and are given their child's special books.

Moderation - Early Years Foundation Stage profiles are moderated yearly. This is done on a three year cycle. There is an individual moderation done once every three years and cluster moderation completed in the other two years. Early Years staff will moderate internally with the whole staff group and across schools within and beyond our school collaboration.

Staffing, Equipment and Resources

Currently there is one full time Early Years Foundation Stage practitioner, supported by two teaching assistants, who provide support for five mornings a week and five afternoons a week. Other staff provide one to one support and interventions where needed.

Resources are stored within the classroom and in outdoor storage sheds and are bought from a separate Early Years Foundation Stage budget. The Early Years Foundation Stage Leader is responsible for buying resources from this. Resources are bought based on the areas of learning and outdoor and indoor provision.

Partnership with Parents

Parents are children's first and most enduring educators. We recognise the positive impact on children's development and learning when we work in partnership with parents. At our school we achieve partnership with parents through:

1. Welcoming and valuing parents to our school.
2. Providing opportunities for parents and children to familiarise themselves with the setting before starting school.
3. Inviting parents to induction meetings during the term before their child starts school.
4. Offering parents the opportunity to discuss their child's progress throughout the year.
5. Regular communication with home through newsletters, information boards, text messages, curriculum guidance, Twitter, home-school reading diaries, termly letter detailing the curriculum.
6. Providing curriculum meetings where parents are informed of expectations and given an insight into the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum.
7. Asking parents to contribute to their child's special books by writing formal comments on their child's progress, and by informing the class teacher of any 'wow' moments in their child's development.

Policy monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the governing body and was approved at the meeting in January 2016. It will be reviewed in January 2018 or earlier if necessary.