



**Teaching and Learning
Policy – Early Years
Foundation Stage**

Teaching and Learning Policy for the Foundation Stage

Rationale-

" The human mind is not a vessel to be filled but a fire to be kindled.' Plutarch AD 43

Aims-

This policy outlines the principles for good practice across the Foundation Stage. It uses the four guiding principles from the EYFS framework of every child is **a unique child**, children learn through **positive relationships**, children develop well in **enabling environments** and **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. These principles will ensure a continuity of practice through the Foundation Stage that will enable all children to become competent and confident independent learners. It also works within the whole school ethos of 'helping children make their mark'.

The Foundation Stage is a distinct phase in education, which begins when children enter Nursery and continues until the end of the Reception year. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is important in its own right as well as underpinning all future learning by supporting and fostering children's personal, social and emotional well being and establish positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning.

Our main aims for all children are:

- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum for every child to develop the building blocks for future learning
- To plan a curriculum that is relevant, fun and based on real experience
- To provide first hand experiences to put their learning into context
- To provide a safe and secure learning environment
- To develop confidence , independence and self esteem
- To encourage and motivate children to become independent learners
- To support children on the first steps of their learning journey
- To provide a range of learning opportunities such as solitary play, independent group play, adult supported play, adult directed learning and discrete teaching
- To develop social skills and relationships
- To reflect the diversity of social and cultural backgrounds in the class
- To provide a free flow curriculum where learning happens inside and outside
- Take children interests and use them to plan relevant activities
- To provide children with a secure grounding in preparation for year

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The curriculum is divided into seven areas of learning. These are the –

three prime areas

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

specific areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts and design

Teaching and Learning the Foundation Stage

The role of adults

'Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development. Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. It is expected that the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. But throughout the early years, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, practitioners must discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. Practitioners must consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support. They should link with, and help families to access, relevant services from other agencies as appropriate.'

(Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012)

It is the role of all adults to support children's learning using a range of strategies. Adults are responsible for setting up a rich and stimulating learning environment that encourages independent play and investigation. Time needs to be given to allow children to explore the environment independently and learn at their own pace. Adults are also to use a range of teaching strategies such as supporting child initiated play, leading activities that have been planned from child interests and discrete teaching sessions. Adults need to plan for balance of these activities depending on the needs of the child. It is the role of all staff to ensure that the needs of all children are being met equally and that all children have an opportunity to take part in all activities. Adult led activities will become more frequent across the Foundation Stage as children progress with their learning. In the Nursery there will be some appropriate times for whole class sessions such as singing or story sessions. As children move into Reception these whole class sessions will also occur for maths and phonics. These will begin as short 15 minute sessions and will increase in length over the course of the year as is appropriate.

'There is an ongoing judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. 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.'

(Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012)

Planning and Assessments

All adults are to make informal observations of children at work and play to contribute towards **formative assessments** that are kept on each child. These can be in the form of short written observations, long narrative videos and photographs which are stored in each child's e file. These are then used in a focus child system to plan for activities based on child interests.

Teachers are to use these formative assessments within their planning cycle. There are 3 stages of planning that are the responsibility of the teacher.

- **Long term planning**- these are drawn up by the Foundation Stage team. These plans show curriculum coverage over all areas of learning during the Foundation Stage and show a progress in skills that are being learnt.
- **Medium term plans**- These cover a term or half term period and cover the skills, concepts and knowledge to be taught through a specific unit.
- **Short term plans**- These show on a daily/ weekly basis how skills have been broken down to a specific learning objective. They show how staff deployment and how a balance of teaching strategies is being delivered. The needs of specific groups or individuals may be highlighted on these plans.

Teachers are to plan challenging tasks based on systematic and accurate assessments of children previous skills and needs. Plans are to be shared on a regular basis amongst the team with nursery nurses being given the opportunity to plan their own sessions. Teams are required to meet at least once a week to discuss weekly plans and any changes that may be necessary. Planning needs to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the children.

Teachers are also expected to keep **summative assessments** on each child in the Foundation stage. Each child will have an on-entry assessment after six weeks of starting at the Nursery. The same criteria will be used for a progress check after six months. There will be an end of nursery report that is shared with the Reception teacher and the parents. There is also a transition meeting for each child between the Nursery and Reception teacher. Every six weeks children are in Reception are assessed against the Foundation stage Profile and phonics and maths phases. All assessments are to be submitted to the phases leader and Deputy Head at the end of each half term. At the end of Reception the Foundation Stage Profile is submitted for each child. An end of year report is shared with the year one teacher and the parents. There is also a transition meeting between the Reception and year one teachers.

Enabling Environments

Children learn through having an interesting, stimulating and a safe environment and the time with which to explore it. A well set up learning environment is a powerful additional teacher. The EYFS framework of 2007 refers to three aspects of the learning environment. These are the emotional environment, the indoor environment and the outdoor environment. All are to be equally valued and planned for by staff. A wide range of independent play opportunities need to be provided through stimulating and well resourced areas such as sand, water, role play areas, writing area, book area, music, small world play and construction. Areas need to set up with a clear purpose for learning. Children need to have as much access to the outdoor classroom as possible with a free flow approach operating. Both the Nursery and Reception class have access to their own areas that are resourced for their own specific use.

Displays need to promote, support and reflect children's current interests and learning. There needs to be a balance between self initiated and adult led work on display and all displays need to be changed frequently to maintain interest.

Parents as partners in learning

In Nursery to achieve smooth transitions between home and school a series of visits are planned for both the child and parents. These involve the child and parents coming for stay and play sessions in the Nursery, the parent coming for a meeting with the head teacher and members of the Foundation Stage team and a home visit by the Nursery staff. All of these are intended to make both the child and the parent feel as confident as possible when they start in the Nursery. In Reception children are either visited in their setting by the Reception Class teacher and/ or invited to visit the Reception Class in school. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their child's learning. They are welcomed into the classrooms at the start of the day and time is given to build relationships with parents at this time. If a parent wishes to discuss a particular issue with a member of staff this is not dealt with in class time. They can make an appointment before or after school, whatever the member of staff is able to offer.

Parents are encouraged to share information about their child. This is gathered through informal discussions that may be recorded as part of the

child's formative assessment and home- school forms that parents are asked to fill out. Translations into home languages will be offered when available. Information is regularly given via letters or the reading record book, that parents are encouraged to write in. There are parent meetings or workshops to explain ways that parents can support learning at home. Parents will also get information on their child through parent teacher meetings each term and an end of year report.

Staff training and development

'A quality learning experience for children requires a quality workforce.'

Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012

All staff in the Foundation Stage have access to training through the professional development and training offered via the school. This occurs through whole school training sessions, phase meetings and individual observations and written feedback. External training programmes will be offered when appropriate to an individual's training needs and in line with the school development plan.

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