

Policy for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Introduction

The EYFS applies to children from the age of three years to the end of the Reception Year. In our school all children join at the beginning of the year in which they will turn 5. (Compulsory schooling starts at the beginning of the term after a child's fifth birthday). Many of our children will already have attended a variety of pre-school settings in the community and the school works closely with all providers and parents to ensure a smooth transition into school.

We have a programme of visits and meetings prior to entry to the EYFS which enables children to become familiar with the staff, their new setting and the demands of a school day. Arrangements during the period prior to compulsory schooling are flexible and take into account individual needs.

The EYFS is important preparation for later schooling and the education we offer at this stage is based on the following principles:

- ❖ It builds on what children already know and can do
- ❖ It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged by virtue of race, gender, disability, faith or culture
- ❖ It offers a structure for learning which has a range of starting points; content that matches the needs of young children and activities which provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors
- ❖ It provides a rich and stimulating environment

Aims of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing:

- ❖ Personal, social and emotional well-being
- ❖ Positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning
- ❖ Social skills
- ❖ Attention and perseverance
- ❖ Language and communication skills
- ❖ Reading and writing skills
- ❖ Mathematical skills
- ❖ Knowledge and understanding of the world
- ❖ Physical development
- ❖ Creative development

Teaching and Learning

The EYFS curriculum guides the work of our practitioners under the following four themes:

A Unique Child
Positive Relationships
Enabling Environment
Learning and Development

Within these themes, teaching and learning through purposeful play is fundamental to the EYFS. Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences which help them to make sense of the world. They begin to practise skills, build up understanding, control themselves and manage relationships with others. They have the opportunity to think creatively, alongside others as well as on their own, and learn how to communicate with other children, as they investigate and solve problems. They are enabled to express fears or anxieties in safe, secure and controlled situations.

Effective teaching and learning in the EYFS takes place when:

- ❖ Information from pre-school settings is shared and built on
- ❖ There is a good partnership between teacher and parents so that children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- ❖ Teachers have a clear understanding of how young children learn and reflect this in their teaching
- ❖ Teachers employ a range of approaches which address children's needs, provide first-hand experiences and build on children's interests
- ❖ Teachers make appropriate interventions to extend and develop interest, skills and understanding, through play, talk and other means of communication
- ❖ A carefully planned curriculum enables children to make progress towards Early Learning Goals
- ❖ Children are encouraged to communicate and talk about their learning, and develop independence and self-management
- ❖ Learning is supported through appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment
- ❖ Future learning needs are identified through careful observation and are planned for
- ❖ Aims and objectives are clear and focussed and are regularly evaluated and improved on
- ❖ The training needs of EYFS staff are identified and addressed regularly

Inclusion in the EYFS

In our school we believe that every child matters and we give every child the best possible opportunity to succeed. We do this by:

- ❖ Taking account of children's life experiences when planning the curriculum
- ❖ Setting realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of the individual: boys and girls; SEN: more able children; children with

- disabilities; children from a range of social and cultural backgrounds and from diverse ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds
- ❖ Planning learning opportunities which build on and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests
 - ❖ Planning learning opportunities which develop their self-esteem and self-confidence
 - ❖ Providing a safe and supportive environment in which every child feels valued
 - ❖ Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
 - ❖ Monitoring the progress of all children and providing support appropriate to their needs and abilities

Assessment

We make regular assessments of the children's learning through careful, focussed observations. These are carried out by all practitioners and supporting adults, and enable teachers to make sure that future planning is informed by identified need. During the first half term of school, teachers assess the developmental stage of each child, in each area of the curriculum and use the information to modify the teaching programme for individuals and groups of children.

Observations continue throughout the year and evidence of children's progress, including examples of their work, is collected and annotated in individual Learning Journeys. These are shared with parents on a half termly basis and are used to assess individual progress towards Early Learning Goals.

Progress is recorded using the EYFS profile on a termly basis. The results of final assessments are completed and reported to the LA in June. The information is also passed to and discussed with the child's next teacher so that they can plan appropriately for the year ahead. At the end of the school year, parents receive an annual report which summarises their child's progress in each area of learning, highlights their strengths and identifies their future learning needs.

The Role of Parents

We recognise the vital role that parents play in the earliest and continuing education of their children and we are committed to a partnership between home and school. We aim to develop that relationship by:

- ❖ Involving parents at every stage in the transition process from pre-school to school: we offer open mornings, induction meetings, shared activities e.g. afternoon tea, prior to children starting school

- ❖ Offering parents regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress or share any concerns through our open door policy, including 'stay and play' time at the start of the school day.
- ❖ Having a flexible admissions arrangements which enable us to meet individual needs
- ❖ By including individual discussion time with parents in the induction timetable
- ❖ Offering a range of activities throughout the year which encourage parents and the wider family to come in and share the children's learning e.g. dads and grandads' day, Christmas decorations' day
- ❖ Offering a programme of presentations throughout the year to inform parents about the EYFS curriculum
- ❖ Offering a range of home-learning opportunities to encourage parental involvement, including Learning Together books
- ❖ Providing a home school diary to encourage and enable regular communication, especially for working parents

Monitoring

The effectiveness of the EYFS will be monitored through:

- ❖ Lesson observations
- ❖ Planning scrutiny
- ❖ Discussion of Learning Journeys
- ❖ Moderation of Profile assessments
- ❖ Analysis of on-entry and end of term teacher assessments
- ❖ Pupil Progress Meetings

Links to other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- ❖ Safeguarding and Child Protection
- ❖ Inclusion
- ❖ Equal Opportunities
- ❖ Race Equality
- ❖ SEN
- ❖ G&T
- ❖ Health and Safety
- ❖ Disability Equality Scheme
- ❖ Gender Equality Scheme

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This policy will be reviewed in 2015 but may be reviewed earlier in the light of changing school circumstances or changes to national policy.