

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2020

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is advantageous both in its own right and in preparation for all stages of school. Children can start nursery the first term after their third birthday and start school in the year they turn five. Therefore, some children can spend the best part of three years in the foundation stage. There are many aspects of learning and development to consider, in order to ensure Early Learning Goals (ELG's) are reached with the best possible outcomes. Development in the EYFS is holistic and therefore covers a vast area of skills, knowledge and attitudes to support future progress.

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances." (p5, DfE 2017)

Children enter into Nursery or Reception with a variety of previously learned skills that we as a setting, must build on and develop further. Some children have attended other nursery settings and some continue to attend two settings in preparation for their chosen school. Both settings must then work together to support this child. Our nursery setting is available between 8.50 am and 12 noon each day.

We adhere to the four guiding principles which shapes practice in early years settings. These are:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies: Safeguarding, Inclusion and Send, PSHE and Equality, Admissions, Behaviour and Health and Safety.

Our Foundation Stage Principles and Practice

The curriculum has seven areas of learning based on the newly revised Early Years Framework September 2021

There are three prime areas:

Communication and Language
Personal and Social Development
Physical Development

And four specific areas:

Literacy
Maths
Understanding of the World
Expressive Arts and Design

Each of these areas have an Early Learning Goal to achieve and this can be supported by using the non-statutory developmental guidance of 'Development Matter' or 'Birth to Five'. They enable children to develop holistically, to support and prepare each child for the future.

As practitioners, we support and develop each child's 'Characteristics of Learning'. These are the skills that promote effective learning and support our intent.

Characteristics of Learning:

Playing and Exploring: Children learn to explore independently, with purpose and risk.

Active Learning: Children learn to stay focussed and engage with persistence and resilience.

Creating and Thinking Critically: Children develop their own ideas and theories through testing and adapting.

Teaching and Learning

We use the statutory framework and the educational programmes to develop and implement our curriculum so that it is bespoke to our school and its pupils. We also use enquiry topic questions as a tool to create 'awe and wonder' in our learning. Our children are respected and taught as individual learners and our parents play an equally important role in their learning. We value continuous provision and ensure this is enhanced to support the development of skills, topic understanding and independence. We ensure children have independent access to resources and that they are supported in their own planning and assessment of learning. We strongly believe that learning should be appropriately challenging and that children should be rewarded for achievement and for seeking challenge. Teaching is balanced with independent learning and is supported with sensitive interactions and modelling. A more formal style of teaching is offered to Reception children in the afternoons. We ensure children have a sense of belonging and feel safe in their environment, where they can be listened to and valued for their views and contributions.

Observations and Assessment

We feel that consistent communication between practitioners is vital for effective observations of children. Assessments of children are mostly obtained through observations and discussions and recorded using the online journal 'Tapestry'. We work on the basis that...a good practitioner knows when to watch and when to support interactions, or prompt extensions of ideas. Children's learning journeys are tracked using our knowledge of the child and the development matters guidance to inform our next steps.

SEND and Inclusion

Children with additional needs are given equal opportunities irrespective of race, gender or culture, to develop their individual next steps in learning. All children learn differently in our setting and we ensure that everyone has access to learning that supports their own unique learning style. We strongly believe that it is crucial that additional needs are identified early so that support can be put in place.

Transitions

Transitions into Nursery and Reception are supported through home visits and an introductory session. Parents of children moving into nursery complete an 'All about Me' booklet and practitioners of reception children who have been to other nursery settings complete a transition document which includes relevant information for the transition. Contact with previous settings are via a telephone call or a visit to the setting if necessary.

Transitions to Year 1 for Reception are supported through a 'move up day', through discussions, and relaying of information between teachers.

This policy will be reviewed...2024