

## **FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY**

**Reviewed:** March 2013

**Next Review:** March 2015

The Foundation Stage is about developing key skills such as speaking, listening, concentration, persistence, independence and learning to work together and to co-operate with other children. It also includes early communication, literacy, numeracy and motor skills that will prepare young children for Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.

### **Our aims are:**

- To make the child's first experience of school happy, positive and fun.
- To ensure breadth of balance in the curriculum through carefully planned adult input and sensitive interaction using the educational programmes and early learning goals set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance.
- To encourage parents to become partners with the school in the education of their children.
- To provide a curriculum firmly based on active learning to meet the needs of the individual child.
- To foster a love of learning, enquiring minds and the ability to discuss, adapt and negotiate.
- To help children to develop self-control and to respect the feelings, needs, culture and abilities of others.

### **The Principles of the Foundation Stage**

- To provide a welcoming environment for children and their families
- To ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued
- To establish positive relationships with parents
- To keep parents well informed about the curriculum and their child's progress
- To build on what children already know and do and to celebrate achievement
- To encourage positive attitudes and dispositions in learning
- To encourage independence
- To value children's interests, providing a balance of adult led and child initiated activities
- To help children to build friendships and learn to co-operate with each other
- To provide a solid foundation in the three prime and four specific areas of learning through well planned, rich stimulating experiences
- To make careful observations in order to support and extend children's learning appropriately
- To ensure that children with special educational needs are identified and receive appropriate support.

## **Assessment**

On entry to school and throughout the Foundation Stage children are assessed using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile . Assessments are made through observation of children engaged in adult led and child initiated activities. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss their child's progress with staff on a termly basis through out the Foundation Stage. Reports to parents are completed at the end of Nursery and Reception.

## **Partnership with Parents**

Examples of our practice are:-

- Discussions with Foundation Stage staff prior to admission, either in the home environment or in the Nursery
- Information booklet and annotated photograph album, illustrating the daily routines and activities loaned to parent's on their initial visit
- Shared visits to Foundation Stage with parents before entry
- Transition Day for parents and children moving into the reception class, which includes visits into the classroom, a school dinner and a meeting with the Foundation Stage staff.
- Entry profile to which parent's contributions are valued
- Regular curriculum newsletters
- Open door policy, where parent's are encouraged to accompany their child into the classroom at the start of the day
- Opportunities to meet with staff on a regular basis to discuss their child's progress
- Curriculum workshops for parents
- Parents are encouraged to help in the Foundation Stage area and on education visits
- Parents and friends association

## **Liaison with other Agencies**

We have good links with the following agencies which support our work in the Foundation Stage:

- Butterfield Pre school, including before and after school care
- Previous early years settings
- Foundation Stage cluster support group meetings
- Speech and Language Service
- Health visitors from local Health Centres
- Educational Psychology Service

## **The Foundation Stage Curriculum**

The Foundation Stage Curriculum is for children aged three to the end of the reception year. It is organised into seven areas of learning.

### **Prime areas**

- Personal and Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Specific areas

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

The Early Years Foundation Stage guidance provides the development matters statements and Early Learning Goals which are used to inform our planning. The Early Learning Goals establish expectations for most of the children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Through play, in a secure environment with effective adult support, children can:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world
- Practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules
- Be alone, alongside others or co-operate as they talk or rehearse their feelings
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems
- Express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

*Our key principles are to:*

- Establishing warm and caring relationships
- Nurturing self esteem and confidence
- Promoting self respect and respect for others
- Encouraging self-discipline
- Encouraging independent learning
- Promoting awareness and appreciation of different cultures

*Through:*

- Praising achievement
- Circle time (SEAL)
- Resources that promote positive images
- Providing positive role models
- Provide secure routines and a safe environment
- Labelling resources clearly
- Self-registration in the Nursery
- Planning time and space for children to focus on activities and experiences that develop their own interests
- Planning for children to work independently, and also in collaborative groups where they need to share and co-operate

### **Physical Development**

Our key principles are:

- Developing an improving co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement
- Helping children gain confidence in what they can do
- Offering appropriate physical challenges, enough space and time, and a range of resources both inside and outside to develop skills such as climbing, balancing, throwing, catching, manoeuvring wheeled toys
- Encouraging a variety of movements through dance
- Developing fine motor skills and hand-eye co-ordination through drawing, cutting, painting, manipulating clay and dough, pouring sand and water, threading beads, construction kits and tools

### **Communication and Language**

Our key principles are:

- Valuing children's talk
- Providing opportunities for children to communicate their thoughts ideas and feelings, and to develop conversation with children and adults
- Incorporating communication and language development in planned activities in each area of learning
- Giving opportunities to share and enjoy a wide range of rhymes, music, songs, poetry, stories and non-fiction books
- Encouraging careful listening through games, stories, circle time, music. Using the BLAST programme to support children with communication problems. Using open ended questioning to stimulate thought and encourage the children to express their own thoughts

### **Literacy**

- Providing an environment which promotes the written language, displaying signs, labels, notices and environmental print around the areas in the setting
- Promoting children's emergent writing through role play, small world play and across other areas – using a variety of writing materials and responding to stimuli such as post cards, greetings cards, letters
- Providing opportunities for children to see adults writing for a purpose eg writing a shopping list for the cookery ingredients the class needs
- Encouraging children to use a variety of cues when reading
- Encouraging a good grasp of phonics using the activities in Letters and Sounds and the comprehensive collection of resources available in school
- Encouraging handwriting skills by supporting fine motor control and hand-eye co-ordination through activities such as malleable play, bead threading, jigsaws, peg boards, mark making using a range of materials
- Encouraging children to value books
- Encourage children to take books home to share with their family
- Encourage children to share books together,

## **Mathematics**

Our key principles are:

- Giving children a variety of opportunities to count, sort, match and order real objects
- Developing mathematical understanding through practical activities and first hand experiences
- Providing meaningful context for maths eg. Stories, role play, real problems such as planning a party, cooking
- Singing number rhymes and songs on a regular basis
- Developing children's use and understanding of mathematical language
- Providing opportunities to explore volume and capacity, for example, in building and construction
- Looking for numbers, patterns, shapes in the environment
- Using and experimenting with numbers, including numbers larger than 10
- Developing a sense of time through daily routines
- Developing positional language through small world play eg. positioning furniture in the dolls house or animals on ie farm.

## **Understanding of the World**

Our key principles are:

- In this area of learning children are developing the knowledge, skills and understanding to help make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for later work in science, history, geography, design and technology, and information and communication technology
- Providing a wide range of activities indoors and outdoors that stimulate children's interest and curiosity
- Promoting children's thought and investigation by asking open ended questions
- Encouraging the children to explore the immediate environment around the school
- Developing geographical concepts, features and language through small world play
- Introducing children to different environments through visits
- Recreating and exploring different aspects of their environment and the wider world through role play eg. Shops, doctors, post office, garden centre
- Using water play investigate floating and sinking, absorption, water power, bubbles, ice etc
- Using sand play to compare the qualities of dry and wet sand
- Using paints, malleable materials and cooking to explore materials and observe changes
- Using construction kits, blocks and 'found' resources to develop design and technology skills
- Use of tape recorder/cd player, programmable toys and computers to develop ICT
- Developing a sense of time through daily activities
- Developing a sense of the past, present and future through discussion about events eg today we are doing this, yesterday we, tomorrow we will....
- Using photographs to compare, contrast, notice changes and

sequence in chronological order eg photos of the children now, as toddlers, and as babies

- Using stories and role play to recreate life in a different time
- Using artefacts eg traditional toys, their baby toys to introduce discussion about the past, to compare and contrast
- Listening to older people's memories of their school days

### **Expressive art and design**

Our key principles are:

- Providing a stimulating environment
- Valuing children's creativity and original ideas
- Encouraging children to express themselves through art, music, dance, role play and imaginative play
- Encouraging imaginative play in a range of contexts eg. Role play, small world play, construction, malleable materials, sand and water play, puppets, storytelling
- Providing a balance of adult-led and child initiated activities
- Providing multi-sensory experiences
- Providing opportunities for children to explore colour, shape, texture and space
- Providing opportunities for children to enjoy and respond to music
- Providing a wide range of good quality materials with which children can explore and experiment
- Allowing sufficient time for children to explore and experiment, develop and refine ideas
- Helping children develop confidence in their own ideas and abilities
- Helping children become more independent in making choices, selecting resources and techniques and responding to stimuli

### **Outdoor Play**

Our key principles are:

- Planning for opportunities for children to play outside, in order to promote their physical development, health and general well-being
- Providing purposeful, stimulating experiences and activities that stimulate children's interest and curiosity.
- The outdoor environment allows for children to learn by working on a larger, more active scale, and can provide for a wide range of different experiences.

### **Equal Opportunities**

We ensure equal opportunities for every child by:

- Valuing every child
- Treating each child as an individual
- Providing an environment which is free from stereotypical images
- Using resources that positively reflect diversity
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies, based on children's needs
- Planning challenging opportunities for more able children
- Facilitating equal access to activities by all children
- Supporting children with special education needs as appropriate

- providing additional support from adults
- adapting activities or environments
- using specialist aids and equipment
- using multi-sensory materials and experiences

Supporting children with English as an additional language

- valuing children's home language
- providing books, notices, CD's, tapes in child's home language
- providing a range of opportunities for child to engage in speaking and listening activities in English with peers and adults.

### **Assessment**

Our key principles:

- Careful observations carried out while children are engaged in classroom activities, in order to gain an insight into children's interests and what they can do
- Careful observations carried out during focused group work in order to assess children's level of understanding related to specific skills and concepts
- Discussions with children about their interests and their learning
- All observations, assessments and recording are an integral part of teaching, as they inform future planning for children's needs
- Recording assessments on the STEPS profile on a regular basis
- Exchange of information with parents prior to the child's admission to Nursery and at regular intervals during Foundation Stage
- Reports for parents at the end of Nursery and the Foundation Stage, reporting on the child's progress in the areas of learning and the three learning characteristics.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

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