



# Foundation Stage Policy

**Full Governing Body agree to adopt this policy September 2017 and agree next review date of July 2018.**

## Foundation Stage Policy

### Introduction

“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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage  
Department for Education 2014

### Aim

Our aim in the Foundation Stage is to provide a progressive and stimulating curriculum that will encourage each child to develop the skills, understanding and attitudes to work and play that will allow each child to develop to their full potential.

To help children achieve their potential we, as an academy will;

- Give each child a happy, positive and magical start to their school life;
- Offer a wide range of new and exciting experiences for the children to explore, test and consolidate;
- Provide an engaging, stimulating environment to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally;
- Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere;
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- Help children recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

### The Curriculum

The Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) follow the Early Years Foundation Stage framework which stipulates what we teach. The curriculum requires the children to access learning both indoors and outdoors. The framework includes seven areas of learning and development. The first three areas are important to allow them to show curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, develop further self esteem and form relationships which will allow them to thrive. These areas are called ‘Prime areas’.

Prime areas are;

- **Communication and Language** – Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking;
- **Physical development** – Moving and Handling and Self care;
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – Making relationships, Managing feelings and behaviour and Self confidence and Self awareness.

The other four areas of learning are referred to as ‘Specific areas’. These areas help to develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

Specific areas are;

**Literacy** – Reading and Writing;

**Mathematics** – Numbers, Space, Shape and Measures;

**Understanding the World** – People and communities, The world and Technology;

**Expressive Arts and Design** – Exploring and using media and materials and Being imaginative.

Each area of learning is implemented through carefully planned, purposeful play in which practitioners have considered the individual needs, interests and stages of development of each of the children.

In planning and guiding the children's activities all practitioners observe and reflect on the **different ways** that the children learn.

These are formally known as the characteristics of effective learning and are described using the following three key characteristics:

- **Playing and exploring** – how the child investigates and experiences things, or their 'have a go' attitude;
- **Active learning** – how the child concentrates and can keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their own achievements;
- **Creating and thinking critically** – how the child develops their own ideas, makes links between their ideas, and develops strategies for doing things.

### **Assessment**

Children's learning is assessed continually to ensure that future planning reflects the needs of all learners.

Each child has a profile which the practitioners continually gather evidence towards to assess where the children are and their next steps. This evidence is gathered through observations, photographs, and videos as well as the work the children produce and discussions with each child and their parents.

The assessment will be shared with parents at parent's evenings and next steps discussed for their child. At the end of the year a written report will be sent home with each child to celebrate their achievements and identify next steps for them.

### **Inclusion and Equal Opportunities**

Children with special educational needs will be supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. The practitioners and the school's SENDco will provide additional information and advice to parents and arrange external intervention and support as necessary (See separate SEND policy).

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual.

### **The Induction Process**

For children due to join Foundation Stage 1 (Nursery class) the induction process begins during the summer term:

- Foundation practitioners visit children and families in their home setting;
- Foundation practitioners meet with pre-school practitioners from which September's intake will be taken;
- Invitation to a 'New to Nursery' parent's meeting;
- Invitation to 'Stay and Play' sessions for each child and their parents or carers.

When children join the school in September a graduated programme will be used to allow children to adjust to their new surroundings and feel confident to leave their parents. This will be shared with parents at the home visits and the induction evening. Every child's induction will be individualised to meet their needs (See separate Induction Programme leaflet).

The children moving from Foundation Stage 1 to 2 (Nursery to Reception) will spend transition sessions familiarising themselves the practitioners and their new environment before the end of the summer term.

### **Home and School Links**

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we aim for the school, parents and carers to work closely during the Foundation Stage years. This can have a very positive impact on a child's development, but relies on a two-way flow of information and knowledge.

We develop this working relationship between the school and parents and carers as follows:

- We outline the school's expectations in a home school agreement;
- We hold a parent consultation early in the year to establish how a child is settling;
- We operate an "open door" policy that will allow parents and carers to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner;
- If practitioners have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them;
- Parents are able to contribute to their child's profile with observations from home;
- We conduct a further parent consultation late in the spring term to inform parents and carers formally of a child's progress and discuss next steps;
- We encourage parent volunteers to help develop early reading in school.