

Folly Hill Infant School



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Curriculum suite

Signed Chair of Governors

Signed Headteacher

Date: Autumn 2018

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INTRODUCTION

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday. Pupils will learn in line with Early Years Foundation Stage guidelines. Key Stage 1 begins for our children at the beginning of Year 1. The Early Years Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals (ELG) set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been to one of a range of settings that exist in our community. The early years education that we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- it builds on what our children already know and can do;
- it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- it offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- it provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- it promotes 'in the moment' planning whereby individual interests are followed, valued, acted upon and used to inform planning;
- it provides a good balance of both adult-led, adult framed and child-led activities; and
- it supports children in becoming independent learners with access to resources.

These principles are in line with the four principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and Development

AIMS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

The curriculum of the Early Years Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by (i) supporting, fostering and promoting the characteristics of effective learning and (ii) through prime and specific areas of learning.

Characteristics of effective learning

- Playing and exploring- engagement
- Active learning-motivation
- Creating and thinking critically-thinking

Prime areas of learning and development

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

Specific areas of learning and development

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

LEARNING AND TEACHING STYLE

Our policy on learning and teaching defines the features of effective learning and teaching in our school. These features apply to learning and teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the learning in Key Stage 1.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Early Years Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents/carers, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers and teaching assistants have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play or talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the pre-school environments that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- the regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

PLAY IN THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences which help them make sense of the world. They practise and develop ideas and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

INCLUSION IN THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary. This involves speech therapy for some of our children.

THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM

The curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage in our school reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals. The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

The Early Years Foundation stage curriculum is based on the four themes of Unique Child, Positive relationships, Enabling Environments and Learning and Development.

The Childcare Act 2006 provides for the EYFS learning and development requirements to comprise three elements:

- the early learning goals- the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the end of the academic year in which they reach the age of five
- the educational programmes- the matters, skills and processes which are required to be taught to young children
- the assessment arrangements- the arrangements for assessing young children to ascertain their achievements

Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012) provides the basis for planning throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. Our medium-term planning is completed termly and identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards and exceeding the Early Learning Goals.

The children are encouraged to initiate learning themselves as well as taking part in adult-led activities. Provision for child-initiated learning is planned through Continuous Provision plans for different areas of the learning environments. Enhancements are then made to each of these areas to support learning through various topics.

ASSESSMENT

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage takes the form of observation and questioning and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate.

All child-initiated and adult-framed observations and assessments are recorded in a Learning Journey book. This book is individual to each child and reflects the progress and achievements children make through the year and is a personalised record of a 'child's story'. Focus adult-initiated activities for Literacy and Maths are planned every week (alternating) and evidence of children's progress in developing their literacy and maths skills is recorded in a Book of Learning.

At the end of the children's year in the reception class, the staff assess the ability of each child against the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Day to day assessments are made using Development Matters and next steps are identified in the cycle of planning. Progress towards the ELGs is tracked electronically on SIMS EYFS tracking and is updated regularly.

The teacher completes the assessment at the end of the child's reception year and records each child's attainment level. This data is sent to County for analysis. The standardised scores are returned to the school for comparison with County and national scores. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead.

Parents receive an annual report that offers comments on each child's progress in each area of learning and a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. It

highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June and send them to parents at the end of the summer term.

EYFS staff meet with their Confederation colleagues on a termly basis to quality control their moderation procedures.

ASSESSMENT SCALES

The assessment of the EYFS is based around 17 Early Learning Goals. For each ELG, teachers must judge whether a child is meeting the level of development expected at the end of the Reception Year (expected), exceeding this level (exceeding), or not yet reaching this level (emerging).

THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- offering parents and children a home visit at the start of the Autumn term;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- having flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parents to become secure, and by allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- arranging for children to start school over the first two weeks of term. We stagger the starting time of each group over this period, so that the teacher can welcome each child individually into our school. We would encourage parents to stay if there were problems with the child's admission;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents. There is regular two-way communication through Reading Record Books and weekly Rainbow News, which is sent via email. Parents are also able to communicate with the child's teacher using email. We invite parents to curriculum evenings to discuss the kind of work that the children undertake in the reception class.

RESOURCES

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.