



Wolverham Primary and Nursery School

Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

The Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school children can join us from the age of two in the pre-school, from the age of 3 in the nursery, or 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.) Key Stage 1 begins for our children at the beginning of Year 1. The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling.

Aims of the foundation Stage

The Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

- Personal, social and emotional well-being
- Positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning
- Social skills and persistence
- Independence
- Language and communication
- Reading and writing
- Mathematics
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Physical development
- Creative development

Early Years Principles

The following principles underline our practice:

- Learning begins at birth
- Care and education are inseparable
- High value given to the contribution of parents/carers
- Every child develops at his or her pace, but adults can stimulate and encourage learning
- All children benefit from a developmentally appropriate education
- Skilled and careful observation is the key to helping children learn
- Cultural and physical diversity should be respected and valued
- Young children learn best through play, first hand experience and talk
- Carers and educators should work in partnership with parents, who are their children's first educators
- Quality care and education require well trained educators/carers and on going training and support.

Teaching and learning

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2.

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

- The partnership between teachers and parents so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- The understanding that teachers 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 and talk or other means of communication
- The careful planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage
- The thorough knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and its delivery
- Challenge and inspiration to encourage children to do their best
- Good management skills that lead to high standards of children's behaviour
- 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 space, facilities and equipment
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents and used to inform teaching
- 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 Foundation Stage
- The clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do
- Provision for children to take part in well led adult directed and well resourced child initiated activities
- Time and opportunity for children's deep level involvement with relevant links made in their learning

Play in the Foundation Stage

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have their own opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. Play is supported by an adult when appropriate and allows children to consolidate and extend their learning based on previous experiences.

Early Years Environment

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.

- Good quality equipment
- Toilets are available in the classroom for the children to use
- Sharp and fragile objects are handled under supervision
- The classroom is warm and welcoming for the children and visitors
- There is appropriate space in the classroom to move around and gain access to all areas
- The outdoor area is used on a daily basis

Organisation

- Play and practical activities form the basis of the children's learning
- Activities are used across all seven areas of learning
- The school day starts at 8.40 and finishes at 3.00 for Reception children. Nursery children in Nursery can do half day sessions of 8.40 -11.50 or 12.00-3.00 or full days on a Monday and Tuesday and a Wednesday morning or a Wednesday afternoon and full days on Thursday and Friday. In Pre-school the children can do morning sessions – 8.40-11.45 or afternoon sessions- 12.15pm-3.15pm.
- The children have their own purpose built outdoor area which can be used throughout the day.

Special Needs

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.

- If we identify that a child that has special educational needs we follow the guidelines that are described in the Code of Practice
- Planned differentiated activities enable all children to access the curriculum
- We liaise with speech therapists, school doctors, health visitors and social workers where necessary

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

We base our practice on the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (September 2014). The experiences that our children have enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage framework provides the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Our continuous provision plan shows how the environment will be organised to provide opportunity for child initiated learning. Short term planning consists of a weekly plan and daily planning which can be adapted to take into account observations of the children, parental input and the children's own interests. Child Interest planning is completed for activities planned on a daily basis as a result of observations and unplanned incidents.

Planning

- Planning involves separate Literacy and Numeracy planning (3-5 year olds) and joint thematic planning
- Planning allows opportunity for an equal amount of child initiated activity and adult led activity
- All adults working in the Foundation Stage plan together when possible
- All the areas of learning are shown on the plans
- Play is an integral part of the planned activities
- Learning objectives are clearly shown on the short term plans
- Planning is informed by observation
- Differentiation is shown clearly on the plans
- Planning is flexible to take into account children's interests and expectation

Assessment

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

- The children are continually assessed and monitored against the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Observations are made of the children during their everyday activities, we do not carry out formal assessment tasks. School follows the statutory requirement of assessments judgements. These observations are recorded using the school Tracking and Assessment system and in the children's individual Learning Journeys. At the end of the Reception year the information from these is sent to the LA who then send it to the Department for Education.
- School takes part in the annual moderation process with the LA to ensure judgements against the profile are accurate.
- Children are assessed against criteria from 'Development Matters' and we focus on the stage the children are working at regardless of their age. Judgements about their stage of development are based on observations of the children in their self-initiated activity and a small amount of adult led activity evidence. Each child has their own tracking sheet which links to the evidence from their individual profile books. Evidence is linked as it is added to profile books and assessments are updated termly.
- Each child has their own profile book which contains photos, observation notes, quotes from the child, samples of child initiated activity, reflections from the child and input from the parents. These profiles are available for children and adults to look at whenever they like.
- Parents receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of 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 in early July each year.

The role of parents

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
- Conducting a home visit before a child joins at any stage of the Foundation Stage
- Inviting parents to half termly Stay and Play sessions. These focus on different areas of learning and parents are encouraged to join in with their child in activities relating to these areas.
- The children and their parents have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- Making the parents welcome in the classroom;
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Foundation Stage class.
- Encouraging parents to look at and contribute to their child's profile and to share information from home through their child's 'Wow! book'.
- Making opportunity for information gained from parents to be included in the planning.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents at least twice a year when the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between the child, school and parents

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