



Sheep Dip Lane
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Foundation Stage Policy

September 2019

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| Signed Chair of Governors | D Wright | | |
| Signed Head Teacher | F Parish | | |

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Sheep Dip Lane Primary School: Foundation Stage Policy

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Rationale

EYFS Curriculum Intent

In our EYFS, we strive to ensure there are no limits or barriers to our children's achievements, regardless of backgrounds, circumstances or need. Every member of the EYFS team has high ambitions for all children. The Characteristics of Effective Learning are woven into every part of our practice, promoting every child's motivation, aspirations, self-control, respect and resilience. Our long-term aim is to ensure our children know how to make a positive contribution to their community and wider society and fully able to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world in the future.

Our goal is to ensure that all children are happy and engaged. We understand that high-levels of well-being and involvement lead to high-levels of child development and indicate deeper levels of learning. Through our child-centred curriculum, we provide a high-quality, enabling environment that acts as a vehicle for children to develop their skills and knowledge and highly-skilled practitioners to assist them on their journey.

We believe that children need rich, first-hand opportunities to initiate and explore their ideas so that they can develop the learning characteristics that will support their lifelong learning. Our supportive and knowledgeable EYFS team sensitively interact with children, following their interests and fascinations, nurturing children's ability to Play and Explore, Learn Actively and to Create and Think Critically.

Our carefully planned and balanced approach to teaching and learning ensures that children experience a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led learning experiences to ensure all children can work towards their next-steps in learning.

Introduction

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

The purpose of this policy is to describe our EYFS curriculum and to show how Sheep Dip Lane Primary school strives to give every child the best possible start to their school-life.

This policy aims to explain how we;

- meet the learning and development requirements of the children
- meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements to protect our children, families and staff
- develop and deliver the educational programmes
- identify children's starting points and ensure that children make progress in their learning through effective planning, observation and assessment
- work in partnership with parents, carers and others
- ensure an inclusive approach
- evaluate our practice and strive for continuous development to improve outcomes for children

We believe that young children learn best when they are actively involved in making choices about their own learning. In our foundation stage children have access to a stimulating, exciting and multi-sensory learning environment. It enables them to develop a variety of skills, knowledge and understanding in preparation for life in school and the wider community. We feel that the foundation stage provides opportunity for all pupils to develop self-esteem and succeed in an atmosphere of care and trust.

This policy refers to the education of pupils from three to five years-old. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum ensures that children have the opportunity to develop skills, knowledge and understanding in the following **7 areas of Learning**

3 Prime Areas:

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

4 Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Children in our setting will be taught through an active learning approach. This is a way of working with children based on the philosophy that children learn best from active, purposeful and developmentally appropriate learning experiences. We encourage children from a very early age to make choices and decisions for themselves and be responsible within their own world. In this way children learn that they are capable, able to make decisions and solve problems about activities, which are purposefully meaningful to them.

Characteristics of Effective Learning;

We ensure that our learning environment and delivery of the EYFS curriculum has a strong emphasis on the characteristics of effective learning and teachers plan with these characteristics in mind;

- **Playing & Exploring** – children investigate, experience and 'have-a-go'
- **Active Learning** – children concentrate, enjoy their achievements and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties

- **Creating & Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop a range of strategies.

Our Foundation Stage aims to:

- i) Make the child's first experience of school happy, positive and engaging.
- ii) Ensure breadth and balance in the curriculum through carefully planned adult input and sensitive interaction, balanced with child-initiated and adult-supported activities. This will be appropriate to the social, emotional, spiritual and intellectual development of individual children, including those with additional needs.
- iii) Provide a setting in which children and adults are able to develop these individual skills regardless of race, social circumstances, religion, culture, gender, ability or additional needs.
- iv) Provide a curriculum firmly based on the principles of active learning to develop independence and meet the needs of the individual child.
- v) Encourage parents to become active participants in their children's learning, and to develop their own skills as part of our parental learning programmes.

Quality of Practice – Teaching, Learning & Pedagogy

We take careful considered decisions when planning and developing our multi-sensory learning opportunities for our children, focusing primarily on the Characteristics of Effective Learning which underpin our whole teaching and learning approach. We believe that young children learn best when...

- They have distinct areas within the unit that they can access to develop the 7 key areas of learning from the EYFS.
- Foundation Stage staff interact with them in a sensitive and supportive manner.
- Their learning has a careful balance of adult led, adult initiated and child initiated learning experiences.
- The foundation stage unit is set out in a carefully planned exciting way where a wide variety of quality resources are easily accessible to the children. Shadow markings and photographs show clearly where each item or resources belongs, encouraging self-confidence and independence within the classroom.
- They are working in a stimulating environment where learning is fun and purposeful and they do not make a distinction between "play and work".
- They are given time to become engrossed, work in depth and complete an activity, reflecting upon what they have learnt, allowing for high-levels of wellbeing and involvement.
- They are given opportunities to discuss their feelings, sensations and emotions, which are valued and respected by all.
- They receive high quality care and education by practitioners who are highly skilled, have a clear understanding of the EYFS, and who understand the importance of observation and how to support children with the next steps in their learning.
- Their parents and carers are valued and work in partnership with school to develop the full potential of their child.
- The activities they can choose are structured first hand experiences that are linked to children's current interests and also to topic themes and have enhancements to challenge and stimulate them.
- They are encouraged to explore, experiment, take risks, make and learn from mistakes and engage in purposeful play.
- They have adults who are good role models who expect high standards of behaviour following the school behaviour policy.

Planning The Curriculum

Planning is informed using the statutory EYFS Handbook and the Early Years Outcomes non-statutory guidance materials. A topic based approach is used to include all 7 areas of learning and the characteristics of effective learning.

A two-year cycle of topics is followed to ensure continuity, progression and full coverage of the targets set in the foundation stage profile document to enable children to reach the early learning goals and beyond.

Planning is broken down into:

Longer Term Planning

- Medium Term topic-based approach planning covering all areas of the EYFS
- Long term White Rose maths planning to ensure a structured, developmental approach towards mastery with a strong focus on application and reasoning.
- Longer term phonics planning, progressing from Phase 1 activities into individual letter sounds, CVC words & captions and high-frequency words

Short Term Planning

- Daily planning of Maths and Phonics
- Weekly Literacy planning covering elements of shared reading and Talk 4 Writing, underpinned by high-quality first-hand opportunities to develop speaking & listening skills
- Regular PD sessions to develop motor skills for writing – Squiggle While You Wiggle, Write Dance & Handwriting
- Weekly whole class Thrive sessions linked to class action plan targets
- RE planning using the Discovery RE approach and resources
- Intervention planning for targeted individual child and/or small group focus work

Accommodation, Organisation and Resources

The foundation stage bases have been designed, built and organised in such a way that they provide a multi-sensory approach to learning. They have a wide range of Continuous Provision areas set out in an exciting way to enable children to be independent active learners. The base arrangements are flexible and are designed to be safe and accessible to all children.

Resources have been chosen to be stimulating, link to topic themes and meet the needs of all children in the foundation unit. They are all well maintained and clearly labelled with shadow marking and digital photographs to develop independence in our children.

Staff carry out Gaps and Strengths analysis at regular intervals throughout the year. Staff use summative assessment data to identify any priority areas for development and enhance the provision as necessary to meet the needs of the wider cohort.

As the year progresses, the development and progression of resources that are on offer to the children in provision areas are targeted around the children's development in line with EYFS. In the FS1 base, the children have access to Continuous Provision, with regular enhancements added throughout each term that link to the topic and also to the children's interests. In FS2, during the Autumn term many of the resources that are on offer to the children are aimed at developing skills in the 40-60 age bracket of the

curriculum, whereas by Summer term many of the resources are aimed to provide opportunities for children to demonstrate their skills towards Exceeding in the early learning goals.

The children are able to make choices about the materials and equipment they use in any area. The following list gives an indication of the range of activity areas we have organised to provide the most effective environment for learning.

- A creative atrium which provides a stimulating area in which to paint, print, work with fabrics and recyclable materials through a thematic, observational approach.
- A quiet, carpeted reading zone, following a seasonal or topic related theme with a range of well-chosen and presented books.
- A Mark-making, Literacy and phonic area for the development of emergent writing that has a range of exciting stimuli linked to topic themes, accompanied by a range of supportive phonic resources.
- Mark-making tool boxes supplied around the unit to encourage purposeful mark-making linked to other activities and areas of learning.
- A mathematical area which includes a range of objects to count and sort, number lines, shapes and games, along with opportunities for investigative maths, which includes themes like counting songs and rhymes with props.
- Mathematical opportunities & resourcing are also planned within other areas of learning to further enable application of maths skills.
- Wet or dry sand, with a range of tools and equipment of varying sizes, including some small world and natural materials to provide imaginative learning opportunities.
- An exciting water play area, which includes a range of equipment and tools to focus on themes, imaginative play and measures and is gradually developed to include opportunities for siphoning, filtering and pulleys.
- Small world, e.g. furniture, characters from different stories and cultures, fabrics, small construction to provide imaginative learning opportunities and activities linked to PSHE.
- Large and small construction areas which include large/small wooden bricks, mobilo, duplo, Interstar, lasy, marble run, stickle bricks, Lego, Duploe etc used on a rotational basis linked to children's interests and topic themes.
- Two interactive whiteboards and a bank of iPad's with a range of suitable software, and access to other technological equipment including torches, CD players, Talking Tins, Beebot etc
- Materials and tools for cookery, baking and dough.
- A jigsaw, puzzle and games area to encourage problem solving and to develop fine motor skills.
- Two role-play areas (one which is topic based e.g. castle, pirate ship etc, and the other being a home-corner as our continuous provision) which provide opportunities for children to use their Speaking and Listening skills to act in role, revisit experiences and develop PSHE skills. We also use enhancement prop boxes such as birthday parties, wash-day etc to enhance the continuous provision and build upon the children interests.
- A music area where children have the opportunity to experiment with a range of small percussion apparatus, developing listening skills and important pre-reading skills such as sound differentiation and beat/syllable patterns
- An outdoor area where children can develop their physical skills on the climbing equipment, balancing equipment and also with the physical games equipment.
- The children can also learn in our sensory garden area and outdoor learning resources which have opportunities for the children to access all 7 areas of learning as an extension of the indoor learning opportunities.

Safeguarding and Risk Assessment

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our whole school safeguarding policy.

Our school community has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are our pupils. This means that we have a Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy and Procedures in place which we refer to in our prospectus. All staff including our volunteers and supply staff must ensure that they are aware of our procedures, and attend regular safeguarding training sessions.

Sometimes we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare. We will always ensure that our concerns about our pupils are discussed with their parents/carers first unless we have reason to believe that this is not in the child's

best interests. Staff fully understand and adhere to a routine of checks to ensure that the Foundation Stage Unit is a safe learning environment, and equipment and resources are continuously monitored to ensure safety.

Prevent: All staff have had basic training around the Prevent duty, (with designated safeguarding officers being trained with the WRAP3 training provided by the Local Authority), and we ensure that Fundamental British Values are embedded within our everyday practice within Foundation Stage.

Staff in the EYFS carry out daily risk assessment checks of the learning environment both indoor and outdoor to ensure the areas are safe and to minimise any preventable risk of harm.

Staffing

The Foundation Unit is staffed well beyond the legal minimum requirements of the statutory EYFS requirements.

Our current staffing (Autumn Term 2019):

FS1 base (26 children – AM only): 1 teacher and 1 Nursery Nurse

FS2 base (32 children): 1 teacher, 1 unqualified teacher, 1 Nursery Nurse (PT) plus additional PM support from the FS1 staff in afternoons

Other adults that work within the foundation stage are students and parent/community helpers.

All adults are made aware of the weekly planning and learning objective/s for each activity.

The staff within the foundation stage work together as a team in the development of planning, assessment and teaching.

Team meetings take place once a week with a focus on teaching and learning and enhancing the continuous provision areas alongside this daily discussion take place around children's individual needs.

Budget

Although the budget for the foundation stage unit is part of the whole school budget there is a separate department set aside for the foundation stage. A yearly sum of money is agreed and ratified by governors based on the needs of the unit and its priorities and link to the SIP. Decisions on buying resources are made by the Head Teacher and Foundation Stage team in consultation.

Each child can be assessed in FS1 by the local authority to receive pre-school support funding. Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) is additional funding for early year's pre-school settings to improve the education they provide for disadvantaged 3- and 4 year-olds including, but not restricted to, those adopted from care. Parents/carers complete a form each half term to assess their eligibility for school to receive additional funding which contributes towards resources and staffing to improve these children's quality of education.

Assessment

On entry into the foundation stage children are assessed using a range of approaches, with the main focus being observational assessment. Every child has detailed observations carried out on them, which identifies their stage of development and learning in each of the 7 areas of the EYFS, and also of their individual Learning Characteristics.

This is used to provide practitioners with information that:

- Informs planning for learning
- Informs planning and development of the learning environment to meet the needs of the children
- Sets targets for individual children's learning.
- Aids identification of special needs and inclusion priorities.
- Informs parents as to their child's progress and development needs.

In the foundation stage all teaching and support staff are actively involved in the assessment process. We have two strategies that focus on on-going assessment, one that is based on regular observation of the children working on activities as well as children's discussions at review time. The other is where staff work on carefully planned assessment tasks related to key objectives. The information collected by staff is recorded in systematic ways to track pupil progress, attainment and to inform target setting.

Each child's progress is recorded against the criteria outlined in the Foundation Stage Profile documentation, and updated at least termly onto school-based tracking systems and OTrack. Children's progress is shared with the child and parents informally when appropriate and formally at Parent's evenings and through written annual reports to parents.

Tapestry Online Learning Journeys were rolled out to all children from September 2016, following a highly successful trial period that began in January 2016. Every child has their own Tapestry profile to which observations are added. Parents have full access to their child's Learning Journey and regularly comment on their child's learning, while also adding observations from home. We actively encourage parents to contribute to their child's learning journey and staff will link evidence uploaded from home to the EYFS areas of learning.

Partnership with Parents/Carers

We believe parents/carers play a vital role in their children's education. They are the primary carer and first educator of their child. We feel they should feel valued, made welcome and encouraged to become an integral part of our school life and community. In the foundation stage parents/carers are given opportunities to become active participants in their children's learning, and to develop their own skills as part of our parent and child workshops.

In the foundation stage unit we also share our work, planning and information with parents through:

- Home-school Tapestry learning journeys for every child.
- A planning station where each week parents can view our weekly objective/s to inform them of what we are working towards in the unit.
- A parent's notice board where school newsletters and activities happening in the community are displayed.
- A range of children's work displayed throughout the unit and we encourage parents to look at our standards of work and the achievements of their children.
- In each area there are EYFS Continuous Objectives cards on display. These provide parents/carers and other adults with information about which areas of learning that activity develops and the key vocabulary associated with the activity.
- We speak with parents/carers informally on a daily basis, and as appropriate, to inform them of targets their child has met, new targets to work on, aspects of learning that are relevant to their child and formally at open evenings in the year. Parents/carers are given target cards at open evenings that tell them the next targets their children are working on.
- We discuss homework with parents on a weekly basis encouraging them to support their child with consolidating skills they have been doing in school.
- We hold Learning Journey Review meetings at points through the year to inform parents about the children's progress.

ICT

ICT is used in a variety of ways to support teaching and motivating children's learning. Activities will be thoughtfully planned within purposeful opportunities to develop children's techniques and skills to support their ICT capabilities.

Equal Opportunities

The foundation stage will be taught in accordance with the present school policy for teaching and learning. In line with national and LA policy we ensure that all children have equal opportunities to engage in activities and learning regardless of race, social circumstances, religion, culture, gender, ability or special educational need. Children will be encouraged to develop a positive attitude towards people of different ethnic groups, cultures, religion, gender and ability.

Citizenship/Inclusion

Equality of opportunity is a fundamental right that must be given to all children regardless of race, culture, gender or special educational needs. All children will have the same opportunity to follow the Foundation Stage Curriculum, with each child learning at the pace and level that is appropriate to them.

Admissions

Places in the foundation stage unit are offered according to the LA admissions policy documentation.

No Smoking Policy

In line with Council policy school operates a no-smoking policy in all areas throughout the site.

Induction/Transition

Our induction program has developed through consultation with parents to ensure that the entry of a child into the foundation stage is a smooth and supportive step.

The process includes:

- All families who have a child entering foundation stage 1 have a home visit by foundation stage staff, where they are provided with information explaining the routines and procedures of the foundation stage, and what their child will need when starting school, e.g. footwear, uniform...
- During the home visit, a school induction form will be completed and information about stages of development, children's, health, allergies, address, siblings, and contact numbers will be given and recorded. Birth certificates are also checked.
- Tapestry learning journey resources are given out to parents, and they are encouraged to begin to set up this journal before their child starts school. This is then added to as a continuous process throughout the foundation stage, and is an equal balance of child, parental and teacher contributions.
- At this visit the parent is also given a date to come to school for induction sessions in the foundation stage with their child. This gives parents the opportunity to look around the foundation stage unit, how we work, and discuss any concerns or queries they have with the staff.
- Prior to starting school, children and parents will participate in transition sessions when staffing allows (Mini-Mark Makers, Mini-Maths etc) to promote early pre-writing skills, early reading & early maths skills. If families can't attend the planned transition sessions each child will be given a resource bag on loan from school to promote early reading and writing in the home.
- Foundation stage 1 children following these procedures will then come in for visits where the parent will leave them for a short session to get them used to working in the unit.
- The Class Teachers meet all Foundation Stage parents at key points during the year for 1-to-1 interviews to discuss progress to date and how children are prepared for entry into Key Stage 1.
- During the summer term FS1 staff work even more closely with the FS2 staff to ensure smooth transitions. The children will spend transition time in the FS2 base - during this time they have snack time, cross curricular lessons, dinner time and stories to support this induction.
- During the summer term Foundation 2 staff members work closely with the Year 1 teacher to ensure smooth transitions. The children spend transition time in Year 1 - during this time they have communal playtimes, snack time, cross curricular lessons, dinner time and stories to support this induction.
- The first week in September, Foundation Stage 2 staff support new Year 1 pupils on learning tasks ensuring continuity and progression for children into the next Key Stage.