

Woodthorpe J.I. School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The prime aim of the Early Years Foundation Stage, EYFS, is to give children the best possible start to their education in school.
- 1.2. The EYFS is underpinned by a principled approach. The principles are grouped into four themes:
 - A unique child
 - Positive relationships
 - Enabling environments
 - Learning and development.Each theme provides four commitments for the education of children.
- 1.3. The Early Years Foundation Stage covers children's learning from the age of three to the end of the Reception year. Children usually start with us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five, although they are not legally required to attend until the start of the term after their fifth birthday.
- 1.4. Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been learning in one of several pre-school settings in our community. Our approach is designed to:
 - build on what our children already know and can do;
 - ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
 - offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
 - provide a rich and stimulating environment.

2. Aims of the Foundation Stage

- 2.1. The curriculum of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the 17 Early Learning Goals, underpins all future learning by promoting and developing:

Communication and Learning

- Learning and attention;
- Understanding;
- Speaking;

Physical Development:

- Moving and Handling;
- Health and Self Care;

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Self Confidence and Self Awareness;
- Managing Feelings and Behaviour;
- Making Relationships;

Literacy

- Reading
- Writing

Mathematics

- Numbers;
- Shape, Spaces and Measures

Understanding the World

- People and Communities
- The World
- Technology

Expressive Arts and design

- Exploring and using media and materials;
- Being imaginative.

3. Teaching and learning styles

3.1. Features of practice in our Early Years Foundation Stage include the:

- partnership between teachers and parents that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- identification and tracking, through observations, of children's progress and planning for their learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents;
- good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school;
- clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- regular identification of training needs for all adults working in the Stage.

4. Play at the Early Years Foundation Stage

4.1. We encourage our children to use a balance of structured and free play to explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. In doing this, they:

- practise and build ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules;
- have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own;
- communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems
- express fears, or re-live anxious experiences, in controlled and safe situations.

5. Inclusion at the Early Years Foundation Stage

5.1. We do believe that every child matters. We have high expectations for all and give our children every opportunity and encouragement to achieve their best. We celebrate success. We take account of children's own range of life experiences and personal challenges when we plan for their learning and when we interact with them during the process. We do this by:

- setting realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage; some progress beyond;
- planning to meet the needs of:
 - both boys and girls;
 - children with special educational needs because they may:
 - have particular emotional or other challenges, including disabilities;
 - be more or less able;
 - have English as an additional language;
 - children from various backgrounds, including:
 - social and cultural;
 - ethnic groups.

5.2. We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build on and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and that develop self-esteem and confidence;
- using a range of teaching strategies that address children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively;
- offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- employing resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding may be in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring and evaluating children's progress, providing support and referral (such as speech therapy) as necessary.

6. The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

6.1. We ensure our curriculum is relevant to the children and builds on their interests enabling them to develop their skills, understanding and knowledge in all areas of learning:

- Children make links and discuss their learning
- First hand experience and a play based approach to learning
- Learning through movement, their senses and being active
- Finding out children's prior knowledge of a subject to support with any misconceptions and build on this knowledge
- Developing learning opportunities through children's interests
- A balance of adult directed and child initiated activities
- Learning inside and outside
- Children working at length and depth
- Organisation which allows independence

- Partnership with families and carers
- Observation led assessment
- Well planned and purposeful activities which engage and interest the children
- Adults modelling language well to extend children's speaking skills.

7. Transition from Pre-school Settings

- 7.1. The Reception teacher and teaching assistant visit principal feeder settings during the summer term to observe children expected to join us and practice in the setting in order to better understand the changes children will face.
- 7.2. The Reception teacher and teaching assistant will also make home visits to children who are identified as having specific needs.
- 7.3. Parents and children are invited to join us for two Stay and Play sessions and an induction meeting during the previous summer term. The sessions include:
- introduction to the school, its aims and values and the Home-School Agreement;
 - practical preparation suggestions, sources for school clothes, etc;
 - play experience for the children in their new setting;
 - a laminated flip-over book showing labelled photographs of key features and people at school for parents to look at with children over the summer break.
- 7.4. Intake is staggered. Children attend school for three mornings, then three mornings with lunch and then full days to help with adjustment to the new setting:
- children are:
 - helped to settle and encouraged to participate and enjoy themselves;
 - introduced to school places and people who will be important to them;
 - observed for initial assessment;
 - introduced to school routines, behaviour norms, etc;
 - parents are:
 - reassured that, if their child is distressed, s/he will be well cared-for, and that the parent is telephoned with an update during the morning;
- 7.5. We seek reports and assessments from feeder settings so that we can check and add to our own initial assessments.

8. Assessment

- 8.1. Attainment on entry to Woodthorpe J.I. School Reception class is assessed using Developmental Matters Age Related Bands, a best fit approach.
- 8.2. Children are assessed on an on-going basis using observation during the Reception year.
- 8.3. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that planning reflects identified needs. Assessment primarily takes the form of observation, which involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate.
- 8.4. We keep evidence of progress, eg record sheets, samples of children's work

and relevant photographs. The assessments are used to make adjustments through the year to the teaching programme, personal plans, group membership, etc, to give the best opportunities to each child. Assessments and evidence are shared with parents at consultation meetings.

- 8.5. At the end of the final term in Reception class the children are judged to have either achieved (expected), exceeded or be working towards (emerging) each Early Learning Goal. They are also assessed on how they learn using the Characteristics of Effective Learning. These are:
 - By playing and exploring
 - Through active learning
 - By creating and thinking critically.
- 8.6. The Reception teacher meets the Year1 teacher for handover and suggests appropriate grouping of children to start the new year. We also prepare pupil and class folders of records, examples of work and photographs that move up the school with the class. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead.
- 8.7. Parents receive an end-of-year report that offers brief comments on their child's progress in each Early Learning Goal and in the Characteristics of Effective Learning. We complete these in June, and send them to parents in early July. We encourage parents give us feedback on the report and on the year, to inform our planning.
- 8.8. We conduct self-assessment of our Early Years Foundation Stage performance and develop our expertise and practice. For this we use:
 - comparative statistics from the LA for its schools;
 - assessment moderation meetings designed to ensure that assessment interpretations are compatible with national guidelines;
 - visits to other schools;
 - feedback from parents and children
 - information from professional groups and publications.

9. The role of parents

- 9.1. We believe that all parents and carers have an important role to play in the education of their child. We therefore recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating their children. We do this through:
 - following our transition process (see 7 above);
 - offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress;
 - encouraging parents to talk to us if there are any concerns;
 - offering a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents, eg:
 - 'Inspire' workshops and school productions;
 - suggestions of games, family outings and activities to do in support of work in school, e.g. on phonics, key words, reading, 'our world';
 - providing activities that involve parents, e.g.:
 - regular communication with home;
 - curriculum workshops - to discuss the kinds of work that their children are undertaking;
 - participating in school trips, class activities and general class help.
 - Home Challenges (homework activities)

- Read Write Inc cards (phonics, reading and writing)
- Weekly 'Thunks' (speaking and listening)
- Home Learning Bags (fine motor skills)

9.2. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the parents discuss the child's progress with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.

10 Equality

Woodthorpe J.I School has equally high expectations of all pupils and is committed to encouraging and enabling all pupils to achieve the highest standards. Pupil attainment and progress is monitored by gender, racial group and other groupings and evaluated to identify trends and patterns of under achievement. Support and intervention are planned and implemented should any disparities between groups be found.

11. 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 independent learning by balancing teacher-led activities with self-selection by the children from a range offered. We use open ended resources to allow children to make choices, express their creativity and support their independence. There are endless possibilities for the ways that open ended materials can be manipulated and used. Children will practice critical thinking as they experiment and create.

12. Monitoring and review

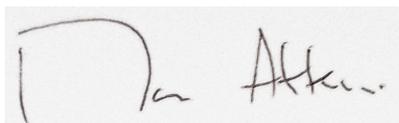
This policy is monitored by the governing body, and will be reviewed in three years, or earlier if necessary.

13 The Rights of Every Child

Woodthorpe JI School uses the U.N. Convention of the Rights of the Child to ensure that every policy supports the improvement of life chances for children.

Related policies: Transition, Teaching and Learning, PSHE, Equality Scheme, SEND & Inclusion.

Signed:



Approved: 14 November 2019

Review: November 2022