

Forest Academy



Foundation Stage Policy

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Forest Academy Foundation Stage Policy

Forest Academy has an established Foundation Stage, which includes the Nursery class with two part time sessions of 3 hours and two Reception classes.

We provide all children with the opportunity to develop to their full potential in a setting where they feel safe, valued and happy, and where learning is fun. Each child will experience the best possible start to their education with secure foundations on which future learning can be built.

Our Vision

Our children will journey through our school, building a memory bank of learning experiences that positively impact on them for the rest of their lives. We will build a collection of amazing memories where learning is fun and education is valued.

Mission Statement:

To be able to walk into any classroom, at any time, and see and hear all children enjoying their learning and progressing.



EYFS curriculum statement

We have our own curriculum statement that runs alongside the whole school curriculum statement. This outlines our intent, implementation and impact in more detail and can be found on our school website.

The Curriculum

The Nursery and Reception follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/299391/DFE-00337-2014.pdf .

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development.

"All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive."(DfE 2014: 1.3) They are known as the Prime areas and the Specific areas.

The 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 Specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children.

The Specific areas are:

- Literacy – Reading and Writing
- Mathematics – Numbers and Space, Shape and Measures
- Understanding the World – People and Communities, The World and Technology
- Expressive Arts and Design – Exploring and using media and materials, Being Imaginative

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning, which interlink with the school's BLP (Building Learning Power). The teachers plan activities with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics are;

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas; make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Planning

Planned programs foster learning and are challenging and progressive, extending what they already know. Each half term we plan a topic which focuses on stories to enhance their understanding. This includes a balance of adult focused and child initiated activities.

Planning starts from what the children can already do and builds on their existing experience and skills through play activities. There is a gradual progression through structured play towards the Early Learning Goals. The activities planned provide opportunities for children to extend their experience and learning in a positive, exciting and challenging environment.

Children are encouraged to be independent, at an appropriate level, through readily available and well organised resources and activities. Adult support is planned to make the best possible use of all staff and helpers in the setting.

Children with special educational needs are identified early and appropriate arrangements are made for them, so they can access the curriculum.

Play

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years. Children learn best from activities and experience that interest and inspire them. We provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children. They practice skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience in their own time and at their own level. Play gives children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and encourage others around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We provide opportunities for the children to make choices and become independent in their learning. Our children will be given

uninterrupted time to become engrossed in, and complete activities of their choice. It is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play.

Outdoor Play

All children play outside throughout most of the day whatever the weather. It is important that parents dress their child for school appropriately: warm clothes and waterproof coat when it is cold and wet; sun hat and sun screen when it is sunny.

Children get wet, muddy and messy when they play outside. We provide protective clothing for them to wear, including wellington boots, although parents can provide these things for their own child if they wish. We teach children how to minimize how messy they get and they do get better at this as they get older, but it is part of their learning and development - you cannot expect them not to get messy while playing. Children must be allowed to experience the world around them in a full, messy, muddy, wet environment if they are to make useful meaning of it. All children within Early Years have regular sessions in our Forest school site.

Adult/child Ratio

At Forest Academy Nursery, we have a team which includes a teacher each session. In the Reception classes, each class is lead by teachers and supported by a team of TA's. We offer extra TA support for children with SEN and those who need some additional help.

Accommodation/ Setting

The setting is reviewed regularly to ensure that it is safe. We have 2 interconnecting Nursery classrooms and 4 interconnecting Reception learning spaces. Classrooms are equipped so that children have a stimulating and inspiring environment to explore and investigate a large variety of equipment and resources, with opportunities for active and quiet play.

Outdoors there are different surfaces, textures, seating and planters. A large safe water feature, sand pit, mud kitchen, role play shed and purpose built climbing frame with safety surface underneath. Children have a variety of planned activities to investigate outside every day, whatever the weather. These activities cover all 7 areas of learning.

Equal Opportunities

Every child has a right to feel valued and secure regardless of social, cultural, religious, emotional and intellectual differences. Religious and cultural diversity are celebrated by providing displays, covering a range of topics and using appropriate resources and artifacts. Where possible, other adults and family members who represent other cultures are welcomed into the setting. To broaden the children's experience, they can provide us with information, photos, food and talk about festivals and traditions. No child is excluded on the grounds of culture, religion, educational needs, disability or gender.

Ensuring children feel valued, secure and confident

The school recognises the need for physical and emotional security as well as confident children. A happy, confident child is receptive to learning, because a child who achieves and succeeds develops confidence and self-esteem. We always ensure that children are presented with achievable but challenging activities. The child's self-esteem and belief in his/her ability are preserved at all cost by moving forward at a pace that is right for the individual. We provide an atmosphere where all children and adults value others. Children are encouraged to be caring, to co-operate, to support and to nurture each other. All problems are taken seriously and children are encouraged to discuss them with a member of staff. We promote an open culture where children know their problems will be addressed. Any issues of bullying are dealt with promptly following the school behaviour and anti-bullying policy.

Parent Partnerships

We recognize the value of parents and carers as their child's first teacher and provide opportunities to develop strong partnerships with them. Parents, carers and other family members have an important role to play in the education of their child. We do this through;

- Welcoming parents into school and working with them to establish a positive and supportive partnership between home and school.
- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts school
- The teachers visiting all children in their home setting prior to starting school or holding a meeting at school to talk to their parents.
- Staff visiting the feeder playgroups and talking to the play leaders about the children joining Nursery or Reception.
- Children having the opportunity to spend time in their class before starting school.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting before their child starts school.
- Staggering the starting time of each child in Nursery, so staff can welcome and spend quality time with them.
- Reception having a gradual start to a full day.
- Using Tapestry, our online Learning Journey, to keep parents informed of their child's progress on a regular basis and allowing parents to respond to the observations and send us the achievements their child has made at home.
- Offering play and stay sessions on a variety of subjects.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- Formal meetings for parents at which the teacher and the parents discuss the child's progress in private.
- Keeping parents informed of planned topics and activities through regular newsletters and on the website.
- Running parent workshops to share ideas they can work on with their children at home.
- Sending a report home on their child's attainment and progress towards the end of the child's time in Nursery and Reception.

Assessing and observations

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the early years. Children are observed by staff to assess their level of development, their interests and learning styles. We observe them through child initiated activities and some adult focused activities, collecting samples of work, photos and listening to what they tell us. The observations inform future planning, provide information to target their learning priorities and to plan relevant activities and experiences. The information is collated in each child's individual Learning Journey folder, in books, on Tapestry and Target Tracker, which will also include information and observations provided by parents.

Safeguarding

The school takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously. Any concerns, which the school has, will be noted and, if deemed necessary, will be reported to the relevant agency. The safety of the child is always of paramount importance. The full Safeguarding Policy is available in school and online for parents to read if they wish.

Positive Behaviour Management

The Nursery and Reception classes follow the same Positive Behaviour Management policy and systems as the rest of the school. Please refer to Behaviour Management Policy for more information.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow this policy. The Senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring system.