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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Aims

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning.
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences.
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development.
- To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere.
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

The Curriculum

Reception children within the Federation follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document 2014. This clearly defines what we teach. The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, the three prime areas and four specific area. The prime areas are important because they lay the foundations for children's success in all other areas of learning and of life.

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 provide the range of experiences and opportunities for children to broaden their knowledge and skills.

- Literacy – *Reading and Writing*
- Mathematics – *Number and Shape, Space and Measure*
- Understanding the World – *People and Communities, The World and Technology*
- Expressive Arts and Design – *Exploring Media and Materials and Being Imaginative*

We aim to meet the diverse needs of all children through appropriate planning and monitoring of the above seven areas. The Early Learning Goals are expectations that most children will reach by the end of their Foundation Stage year.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage practitioners plan activities within the Early Years classrooms and outdoor environment 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*

Creative Development with opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design and technology, music, movement, dance and imaginative and role play activities

Play

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, 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 as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child-initiated play, which is controlled, and adult led activities is very important to us.

Monitoring and Assessment

The early year's teacher will monitor each child's progress throughout the school year, using informal records and Tapestry. This is essential to ensure that they are making progress and that particular difficulties in any of the areas of learning, whatever the cause, are identified and addressed as soon as possible.

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. To ensure we have evidence of a child's progress in the EYFS we use a range of strategies all of which come together in their individual learning journey on Tapestry. We are very proud of our learning journeys: these are collections of children's work, photos and observations which create a detailed picture of the child. Where appropriate, we include individual next steps for children's learning, often responding to parent comments with suggestions of support for moving children forward. Staff use iPads in the setting which allows us to capture and note observations and next steps for learning. Parents have immediate access to the learning journeys through the Tapestry, our online learning journey, they also have access to the paper versions which are stored in the classrooms. They are

encouraged to contribute through the use of our Tapestry, encouraging parents to add their own WOW moments when they capture their child completing a significant event that happens at home. Parents also receive challenges to support and extend the children's knowledge through their current topic. The journal is given to parents when their child enters Year 1 or leaves our setting. On entry to Reception we carry out a DFE accredited Early Excellence baseline assessment for each child. At the end of Reception the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the Reception child's end of year report and can be discussed in the final Parents' Evening in Reception.

Parents as Partners with the school

The school acknowledges parents as a child's first and most enduring educators – working together we will have a positive impact on the child's development and learning. A successful partnership needs a two way flow of information, knowledge and expertise. The school will work hard to develop this. All parents are welcomed into the Reception class and valued for the contribution they make to their child's education, parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's Tapestry account and build their learning journal. We will use a variety of ways to keep parents fully informed about the curriculum. A child's progress and achievements will be discussed and recorded through meeting and parents evenings. Usually these are held in the autumn and summer terms. Some children will have a home language other than English. The school values this linguistic diversity and will provide opportunities for a child to develop and use their home language in their play and learning.

Induction to school

Opening mornings are offered during the Autumn term allowing prospective parents to tour the school before they make their decision as to which school their child will attend. We have developed strong links with local pre-schools, Early Years staff visit regularly and attend transition meetings each term. Every effort is made to contact prospective parents/carers to invite them to events. During the summer term parents are invited to an induction evening where they receive key information about the school, routines and expectations for their child starting school. Children are invited to several induction afternoons where they will meet the Early Years Team and their peers. The school also holds a taster morning where the children visit with their key workers and join in with a 'typical' morning.

Starting school

Each school in the Federation follows their own agreed admission policy. However some children may be more ready and able to cope with the admission patterns of the school day than others. In this instance the school will take responsibility in consultation with parents/carers to set a timetable for settling in. The introductory period will be assessed and reviewed – giving enough time for a child to become secure and for teachers/parents to discuss each child's circumstances interests, skills and needs.

The Federation realises that the Foundation Stage is about learning and about emotional well being, knowing who you are and where you fit in and feeling good about yourself. It is also about developing respect for others, social competence and a positive disposition to learn.

Transition to Key Stage 1

We aim to make the transition from Foundation Stage to KS1 as harmonious and successful as possible. The Reception and Key Stage1 staff liaise on a regular basis to discuss the progress and needs of the children concerned. During the final term in Reception, opportunities are made for the children to work in Year 1 and for new class teachers to join children in their current classroom, a familiar setting.

Role of the Governors

It is the responsibility of the Reception Class teacher to provide a report to the Governors on at least an annual basis or as often as is appropriate.

Reviewed: Autumn 2019

Date of Next Review: Autumn 2021

Signed:

Mrs Claire Collett

Executive Headteacher

Mrs Ros Blowers

Chair of Governors