

# Feltham Hill Infant & Nursery School

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

February 2021

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of Early Years education at our school. It relates to children in both the Nursery and Reception classes.

It should be used by all staff to ensure that children are happy, engaged in their learning and achieve well.

*Prepared by: EYFS Lead (February 2021)*  
*Agreed with: All school staff (February 2021)*  
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### Introduction

- Early Years education is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives and it encompasses all aspects of learning.
- It is concerned with the development of the whole child, based on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) documentation.
- All children are given opportunities to develop in and beyond the seven areas of learning and development.
- Children who have attained the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) will encounter the early stages of the National Curriculum.
- Children are viewed as individuals with their specific needs being met in appropriate ways.
- Independence is fostered and each child is encouraged to make choices, take decisions and reach their full potential.

### Overarching principles

There are four guiding principles that shape practice. These are:

1. That every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
2. That children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
3. That children learn and develop well, in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time.
4. The importance of **learning and development**. Children, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) develop and learn at different rates.

### The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

- These identify the ways in which children engage with others and their environment.
- They underpin learning and development across all areas and enable children to be effective and motivated learners.

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **Playing and Exploring** - children investigating and experiencing things, and 'having a go'
- **Active Learning** - children concentrating and keeping on trying, if they encounter difficulties and enjoying achievements
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** - children having and developing, their own ideas, making links between ideas and developing strategies for doing things

### The Curriculum

- There is a well-planned and resourced curriculum, based on real experiences.
- The stimulating learning environment both in and outdoors, encourages children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experiences.
- Children are able to move between the indoor and outdoor areas, throughout the day.

### **Areas of learning and development**

The three **Prime Areas** of learning, underpin everything in the early years:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development
  
- These areas begin to develop quickly, in response to relationships and experiences.
- They run through and support learning in all other areas, continuing to be fundamental throughout the EYFS and beyond.

The four **Specific Areas** help children strengthen and apply the prime areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design
  
- These areas include essential skills and knowledge.
- They grow out of the prime areas and provide important contexts for learning.

### **Educational Programmes**

#### Communication and Language

- The development of children's spoken language, underpins all seven areas of learning and development.
- Children are immersed in a language rich environment and have opportunities to communicate, speak and listen in different situations and for different purposes with both adults and peers.
- Adults build children's language through quality conversations, commenting on what they are doing and by adding new vocabulary.
- Children are given extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts.
- Through conversation, story-telling and role play, children share their ideas with support and modelling from an adult.
- Sensitive questioning invites them to elaborate, so that they become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.
- Planned activities and opportunities are incorporated into all areas of learning.

#### Physical Development

- Children use large and small equipment developing their co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement skills.
- They are helped to become more confident in their abilities and develop a positive attitude towards a healthy and active way of life.
- Children develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility through games and opportunities for play both in and outdoors.

- Opportunities are planned for children to develop proficiency, control and confidence through repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and using small tools.

### Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial in enabling children to lead healthy and happy lives and is fundamental to their cognitive development.
- Children are helped to develop greater self-confidence and independence, in an environment, where they feel secure and valued.
- They are supported to develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary.
- They are encouraged to explore and talk about their own feelings and emotions and those of others, to take responsibility and to develop relationships both with their peers and known adults.
- Children take part in activities as individuals, in small groups and as part of the class.
- They are helped to make good behaviour choices, develop a sense of right and wrong and explore values such as respect and friendship.
- Children are helped to consider the needs of others and to share resources, ideas and adult time.
- Children learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently.
- Staff play a crucial role, acting as positive role models, who respond to and support children's needs and interests.
- Planned activities and experiences are challenging but achievable, giving children the motivation to continue and enjoy learning.

### Literacy

- It is crucial for children to develop, a life-long love of reading.
- Reading consists of language comprehension and word reading:
  - Language comprehension develops, when adults talk to children, about the world around them and the books they read with them, and the rhymes, poems and songs they share.
  - Word reading involves both the speedy decoding of unfamiliar printed words and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words.
- Children are read a wide range of stories, notices and other written material and are taught the skills to enable them to read simple texts themselves.
- Writing involves spelling, handwriting and composition.
- Children see adults writing in different contexts and are given opportunities to write for themselves using marks, then letter shapes.
- Children are taught phonics daily, to enable them to blend and segment words when reading and writing.

### Mathematics

- Children are given opportunities to: count, sort, match, find patterns, make connections, recognise relationships and work with numbers, shapes, space and measures.
- They are taught to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within them.
- Mathematical understanding is developed through stories, songs, games and imaginative play.
- Children develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built.
- They take part in meaningful activities, to help develop their spatial reasoning skills, across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures.
- A range of purposeful experiences are planned daily, helping children to become confident and competent in learning and using key skills.
- They are helped to develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

### Understanding the World

- Children develop knowledge, skills and understanding to help them make sense of their community, their immediate environment and the wider world.
- Activities provide a foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning.
- A wide variety of first hand experiences are planned, that stimulate children's interest and curiosity.
- As well as, building important knowledge, children's vocabulary is widened and enriched.
- Children are helped to recognise their own cultural background and develop a positive self-image, whilst respecting differences in culture, custom, gender and disability.

### Expressive Arts and Design

- Children are given time to explore and experiment with ideas, materials and activities.
- They are encouraged to develop their own creative ideas which are valued by staff who provide a wide range of stimuli and ideas.
- Children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to interpret and appreciate what they hear, respond to and observe.
- Planned opportunities help children develop their imaginations and creativity, communicating their ideas and feelings through: art, music, dance, role play and imaginative play.

### The Early Learning Goals

- The early learning goals (ELGs), define the level of development children should have attained, by the end of the Reception year.
- The ELGs are not used as a curriculum or in any way to limit the wide variety of rich experiences that are crucial to child development.
- The ELGs support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development.

- When forming a judgement about whether a child is at the expected level of development, teachers draw on their knowledge of the child and on their own professional judgement.

The 17 areas of the ELGs are:

Communication & Language:

- Listening, Attention & Understanding
- Speaking

Personal, Social & Emotional Development

- Self-Regulation
- Managing Self
- Building Relationships

Physical Development

- Gross Motor Skills
- Fine Motor Skills

Literacy

- Comprehension
- Word Reading
- Writing

Mathematics

- Number
- Numerical Patterns

Understanding the World

- Past & Present
- People, Culture & Communities
- The Natural World

Expressive Arts & Design

- Creating with Materials
- Being Imaginative and Expressive

**Learning through Play**

- Play is a powerful vehicle through which children learn.
- It is referred to as 'busy learning.'
- Throughout the day, they are given opportunities for periods of uninterrupted play.
- A wide range of resources are provided, enabling children to play by themselves or with others.
- The inside and outside learning environments are carefully planned and resourced to enable staff to both support and extend children's spontaneous play and to promote planned play activities.
- The outdoor area, compliments the indoor provision but also extends learning, as it offers opportunities, that are not available indoors.
- With effective adult support, in a secure but challenging environment, children practice new skills, try out new ideas, think creatively and imaginatively and explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world.

### **Effective Planning**

- Observation and assessment of children's learning and interests, enables staff to identify next steps of learning and plan effectively, for the indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- The developmental age of the children is taken into account, as well as differentiation to allow for individual needs.
- The children's knowledge, skills, understanding and independence are developed alongside positive attitudes.
- Long and medium term plans, outline the broad brush strokes of what children will be learning in each area of learning and development, ensuring progression from the start of nursery to the end of Reception.
- Short term planning takes place both weekly and daily, recording the detail of what is to be taught and how this will happen.
- These plans follow a structure but are flexible enough to allow for individuality, spontaneous events and children's interests.
- Continuous and enhanced provision, enables children to make choices within a broad range of experiences, on a daily basis so they can plan or initiate activities themselves.

### **Quality Teaching**

- Planning is used to provide quality first teaching.
- This teaching is led by teachers and early years practitioners (EYPs).
- Children are taught in: class sessions, guided sessions and individually.
- This direct teaching gives the children the knowledge and skills to apply independently.
- Adults also teach children through the environments while children are busy learning.

### **Using Assessments**

- Observations are made at the beginning of the year to inform on-entry assessment judgements.
- In Reception, the National Baseline Assessment is administered within the first six weeks of children's entry to school.
- Staff continue to make regular observations and assessments of children throughout the year.
- These observations are recorded in the children's learning journals.
- Assessments are used to plan and support the next steps of learning and identify individual children's needs.
- Children's attainment and progress is tracked three times a year and the data analysed to identify where any interventions are needed.
- Evidence of children's progress and attainment can be found in their individual learning journals.
- These include contributions from all staff working with the child, as well as, the parents/carers.
- They also show identified next steps of learning.
- Observations and assessments of children's learning, are also used as evidence to support judgements made when completing the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

- Teachers make a judgement, as to whether each child is meeting the expected levels of development (as defined by the ELGs), or if they are not yet reaching the expected levels (defined as emerging) or exceeding the expected levels of development (EXC).
- Regular moderation ensures consistency across the classes and with other schools.
- Results are analysed to identify individual issues for Year 1 and implications for teaching and learning in the foundation stage.
- Parents/carers receive a written report on their child's progress, at the end of both the Nursery and Reception years.

### **Learning Resources**

- Learning resources are an important part of the inside and outside learning environments.
- Resources in the indoor and outdoor busy learning areas, are presented in an exciting way, to stimulate children's curiosity and interest.
- Resources are added to, or changed regularly, to reflect children's needs and interests.
- Where possible children are involved in the selection of resources.
- Resources are clearly labelled and accessible to all children, helping to encourage independence and responsibility.
- A range of displays support and enhance the learning environment.
- All displays and busy learning areas have photos, fiction, non-fiction and practitioner made books to enhance learning.

### **Continuity and Progression**

- Links are made, where possible with pre-school settings and other childcare professionals before children are admitted.
- Verbal discussions and records of assessments help staff to make appropriate provision for children.
- Continuity between the Nursery and the Reception classes is strong.
- The children learn and play together outside with staff working in close collaboration.
- Links continue into Year 1 to build on achievements and influence the curriculum provided.

### **Staffing**

- Children are taught in mixed ability classes, by a trained teacher and a fully qualified Early Years Practitioner (EYP), the teacher having over-all responsibility for the class.
- Some children with special educational needs may also be supported, by an SEN teaching assistant.
- Adult:child ratios are 1:13 in the Nursery and 1:15 in Reception.
- Staff regularly update their knowledge and expertise by attending courses, disseminating information to the team and by taking part in school based Continual Professional Development sessions.
- EYFS staff have a good understanding of how young children develop and learn, knowing when and how to intervene in children's learning to support and/or extend.

- Staff ensure that they engage in quality interactions with children throughout the day.

### **Inclusion**

- All children are given equal access to and encouraged to take part in, all activities.
- There is a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued and where racial, religious, disability and gender stereotypes are challenged.
- All activities are planned to encourage the full and active participation of all children whatever their ability, ensuring that individual potential is met.
- No child is excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability.
- The school provides SEN TAs for children with significant special needs.

### **Health and Safety**

- The safe use of equipment is taught and the idea of a safe environment is promoted.
- An emphasis is placed on personal health and hygiene at all times.

### **Admissions**

- Children are admitted to the Nursery during the first half term of the school year, following a home visit and a visit to the nursery.
- Nursery children attend for half day sessions only.
- Staff work closely with two local day nurseries and with childminders, to ensure that children entitled to 30 hours of free childcare, are able to spend 15 hours (3 hours daily) at school.
- And the rest of the time, at another setting.
- Childminders and school staff from the day nurseries, bring or collect children so that working parents/carers do not have to take their children from one setting to the other.
- There is a short, staggered start to the Reception year with children attending on a part time basis initially.
- Children who have not attended the Nursery, will have a home visit before being admitted.
- Children who join the school during the year will either be visited at home or invited to visit school prior to admission.

### **Home/School Links**

- The importance and value of positive home/school links is recognised, as working with parents/carers, has a positive impact on children's development and learning.
- There is a home visiting programme, enabling a positive partnership with parents/carers to be initiated.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to become involved, as partners in their child's education.
- Children's achievements out of school are recorded in their Learning Journals and contribute towards planning for individuals.

- Discussions take place informally, at the beginning or end of the day and on a more formal basis during termly open evenings.
- Parents/carers are invited to visit the Nursery with their child before he/she is admitted and their child's Reception class in the Summer Term, before transferring.
- There are induction meetings, as well as, a variety of curriculum meetings held for parents/carers.

### **Conclusion**

- Early Years Education plays an important role, in laying firm foundations for all future learning.
- Children make typical or better progress and attainment is high.
- Leaders often host visitors from other schools with whom they share our expertise.

This policy should be read alongside the following policies:

Behaviour including anti-bullying  
Child protection & safeguarding  
Health and Safety  
Special education needs and disability  
Teaching, Learning & assessment