

King's Stanley C of E Primary School

Policy on the Foundation Stage

1 Aims

- 1.1 The most vital consideration in the Reception Year is to ensure that our children enjoy a smooth and gradual transition from home to school, free from stress and anxiety. To this end every effort is made to encourage contact and communication between the school and parents, the children and their pre-school settings before they start school.
- 1.2 Once these positive relationships have been formed and our children start school, we aim to provide a warm, caring atmosphere where all children will feel valued and secure. The most important factor in this is the close relationship between staff and each individual child.
- 1.3 We hope to provide a learning environment where children will work towards meeting all the Early Learning goals through first hand experiences, child-initiated and adult-led activities and play.
- 1.4 A well planned and balanced curriculum relevant to each individual's needs and interests will help all children to achieve and feel success in their learning and also lay a good foundation for the National Curriculum.
- 1.5 We hope this policy for the care and education of our Reception children will help to maintain the high profile of these very young children in our school. The Reception Year is one of the most important learning years in a child's life. Hopefully this policy will help ensure that parents, staff and governors all work together to maintain a high quality of provision for the Reception children in King's Stanley C of E Primary School.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 The Foundation Stage extends from birth to the end of the Reception year. Entry into our primary school is at the beginning of the school year in which the children are five (although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday).
- 2.2 The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and also in preparing children for later schooling. It is the Development Matters Statements and Early Learning Goals that set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- 2.3 Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been learning in one of the various educational settings that exist in our community. The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:
 - it provides a rich and stimulating environment
 - it offers 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
 - it builds on what our children already know and can do
 - it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged

3 Objectives

3.1 The curriculum of the Early Years Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by promoting and developing:

- personal, social and emotional development
- literacy
- communication and language
- mathematics
- understanding of the world
- physical development
- expressive arts and design
- the characteristics of learning through playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically

4 Play at the Foundation Stage

4.1 We put great emphasis on the value of learning through play as we believe that this approach is best suited to the way that young children learn. We believe that a well planned play environment with opportunities for talk and discussion with adults will ensure that our children will not only learn and absorb new skills and knowledge but will also gain pleasure and enjoyment from their first experiences of school life.

The essence of play is the concentration with which these young children try out new ideas, practise and consolidate new skills and knowledge, and learn how to meet and resolve problems. Whenever possible adults will be at hand to encourage the children to think and talk about their learning.

Many of the activities and materials we present to the children are carefully planned and structured to achieve certain learning outcomes. However, we also offer a range of other resources that allow child-initiated play.

5 Teaching and learning style

5.1 The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 or 2.

5.2 The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents/carers that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching
- the 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
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management
- the support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors

- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents and carers
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the Foundation Stage

6 Inclusion at the Foundation Stage

- 6.1 We believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.
- 6.2 At the Foundation Stage, we set 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 children progress beyond this point. We help them do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.
- 6.3 We meet the needs of all our children through:
- planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
 - using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on 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 are in advance of their language and communication skills
 - monitoring children's progress, and providing support within school or from external agencies as necessary

7 The role of parents and carers

- 7.1 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 and carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:
- talking to parents or carers about their child before their child starts in our school (New Parents Night, Meet the Teacher Night and extra meetings if requested or needed);
 - visits by the teacher to all children in their pre-school settings prior to their starting school
 - home visits are also offered to every family prior to their child starting school
 - King's Stanley Playgroup runs pre-school sessions, which are open to all the children who are due to start school in September, in the Reception classroom in Term 6. This gives the children an opportunity to get used to coming to the school and to get to know the foundation stage staff. This also give the class teacher and teaching assistants an opportunity to get to know the children through observations, play and talk with the children and the playgroup staff

- offering parents and carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's needs, well-being and progress in our reception class, including before and after school, parent's evenings and termly timetabled afternoons where parents can come into the classroom and their child can share their work with them
- encouraging parents to share their child's successes at home by using Wow! Vouchers
- encouraging parents and carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- having flexible admission arrangements, and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances
- arranging for children to start school over the first three weeks of term, so that the teacher can welcome each child individually into our school
- regular communication with home through the 'Today's Activities board', the child's reading diary and Wow vouchers
- once the children are full time we run a New Parent's Coffee Morning and Evening. This is an informal event where parents get to meet other parents, PTFA and discuss any concerns/queries with the Reception class teacher

7.2 There is a formal meeting for parents and carers twice a year, at which the parents/carers discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents and carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.

8 The Foundation Stage curriculum

8.1 Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.

8.2 The Early Learning Goals form part of the National Curriculum, and are in line with the objectives stated in the Primary Framework for literacy and mathematics. Accordingly, our children have daily literacy and mathematics lessons. Our children also have access to a range of games and resources that allow both child-initiated and adult-led activities to take place to help support and extend their learning in literacy and mathematics.

8.3 The Early Years Foundation Stage, a topic based approach, and the children's interests provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Our medium-term planning is completed termly, and identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Development Matters Statements and Early Learning Goals, and also for those working towards Levels 1 and 2 of the National Curriculum. However, the activities planned are flexible as the teacher will adapt their plans based on the children's needs and interests.

8.4 The school makes full use of the outdoor classroom and has a free-flow system between the indoor and outdoor learning environments. The outdoor area is set-up in a way that our children can have access to child-initiated activities that cater for all areas of learning for the Foundation Stage Curriculum. Outdoor group and whole-class adult-led activities for all areas of the Foundation Stage Curriculum are also regularly timetabled.

9 Resources

9.1 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 the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

10 Assessment

- 10.1 The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning and three Characteristics of Learning contained in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage mainly takes the form of observation, and this involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. Assessments during adult-led activities are also completed. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.
- 10.2 During the first term in the Reception class, the teacher assesses the ability of each child, using the Development Matters Statements and Early Learning Goals. The information provided by pre-schools through the transfer records is also used when completing the baseline assessments. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.
- 10.3 The teacher completes a summative assessment three times a year using our school system. At the end of the final term in Reception, we send a summary of these assessments to the LA for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead.
- 10.4 The Reception staff keep progress books (Learning Journeys), and use these to record examples of each child's learning. These Learning Journeys contain a wide range of evidence (including photos, short and long observations and Wow Vouchers) that we share with parents and carers at each parents evening and when parents come into the classroom to see their child's work.
- 10.5 Parents and carers receive an annual report that offers comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress. The report also comments on the children's attainment within the ELGs and parents are given the opportunity to make an appointment and discuss the assessments if they wish. We complete these in June, and send them to parents and carers in early July each year.

11. Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare

- 11.1 King's Stanley C of E Primary School has a policy and procedure for safeguarding children. We follow our school Child Protection Policy which uses the guidance set out in the publication 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – Summary'.
- 11.2 The Head Teacher is the designated practitioner (the Senior Teacher will deputise if the Head is not on the premises) to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the setting and liaising with local statutory children's services agencies as appropriate.
- 11.3 All staff are able to respond appropriately to any safeguarding issues. They discuss any concerns with the class teacher, and, if appropriate, a Cause for Concern form is completed and given to and discussed with the Designated Child Protection Officer
- 11.4 We have and implement an effective policy for ensuring equality of opportunities, and for supporting children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator provides support, advice and monitors the special needs of the children.
- 11.5 We meet all the legal requirements set out in the Statutory EYFS for Premises and Security, Outings, Medicines, Illness and Injuries, Food and Drink, Smoking, Behaviour Management, Safe recruitment and staffing arrangements and Equality of Opportunities.

- 11.6 The Reception Class Teacher is the Key Person for all the children in the class. When supply cover is used the class teaching assistants become the Key People as they know the children and their individual needs.
- 11.7 We use the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 1.3 to ensure our environments meet the Early Years requirements.

12 Monitoring and review

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