

Slaley First School

Policy on the Early Years Foundation Stage

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and also in preparing children for later schooling. It is the Statutory Framework and Profile for the Early Years Foundation Stage that set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- 1.2 Entry into our primary school is the term after the child's third birthday, (although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday).
- 1.3 Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Some 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 builds on what our children already know and can do;
 - it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
 - 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 provides a rich and stimulating environment.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 The curriculum of the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by promoting and developing:
 - personal, social and emotional well-being;
 - positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning;
 - social skills;
 - attention skills and persistence;
 - investigative skills;
 - creating and thinking critically;
 - language and communication;
 - reading and writing;
 - mathematics;
 - understanding of the world;
 - physical development;
 - expressive arts and design.

3 Teaching and learning style

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- 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;
- 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 their potential.
- 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;
- 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.

4 Play at the Foundation Stage

- 4.1 Through play, our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears, or re-live anxious experiences, in controlled and safe situations.

5 Inclusion at the Foundation Stage

- 5.1 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
- 5.2 At the Foundation Stage, we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most meet the expected levels of development on the EYFS Profile. 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.
- 5.3 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 (such as speech therapy), as necessary.

6 The Foundation Stage curriculum

- 6.1 Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Statutory Framework for the Early years Foundation Stage. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.
- 6.2 The Framework provides the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers use the national schemes of work, where appropriate, to support their planning for individual children. Our medium-term planning is completed half-termly and our weekly planning outlines learning objectives related to this.
- 6.3 Wherever possible, learning will be guided by children's expressions of interests, learning schemas and developing skills at the 'teachable moment'; the moment at which a child shows interest or need to develop a certain skill.

7 Assessment

- 7.1 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 the Prime Areas of Learning as well as the Specific Areas of Learning contained in Development Matters in the EYFS. 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 takes the form of observation, and this involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.
- 7.2 During the first term in the foundation class, the teacher assesses the ability of each child, using the age appropriate bands. 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. We share the information contained in the Foundation Stage Profile at our parental consultation meetings.
- 7.3 The teacher completes an assessment each term, and revises the child's placement in the age appropriate bands. 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. In addition the foundation teacher reflects upon the different ways in which children learn and provides the Key Stage 1 teacher with a summary of the child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning.
- 7.4 Parents receive an annual report that offers brief 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. We complete these in June, and send them to parents in July each year.

8 The role of parents

8.1 We believe that all parents 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 the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school during home visits.
- meeting with new reception parents.
- opportunities given to the children to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our foundation class;
- Completing an e-learning journal which is shared with parents on a regular basis, giving them the opportunity to comment upon their child's learning.
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- having flexible admission arrangements (where required), and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- arranging for children to have a phased entry into Nursery.
- providing various activities that involve parents, i.e. regular communication with home through the child's school diary, and inviting parents to curriculum evenings, in order to discuss the kind of work that the children are undertaking.

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

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 in self initiated tasks to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

10 Monitoring and review

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

Signed: *M. Ainslie* (EYFS Teacher)

D. Brett (Headteacher)

M. Rastall (Chair of Governors)

Date: July 2019