



FLAKEFLEET PRIMARY SCHOOL

Foundation Stage Policy

September 2017

Philosophy

Throughout the Foundation Stage at Flakefleet Primary School the children are cared for and provided with a stimulating and challenging environment to try to give them the best possible start to their career at school. In partnership with family and carers we enable them to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

This policy links with the Every Child Matters agenda, in that every child has a right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their Reception Year. Our Nursery takes children from three years of age and works with both Reception classes in our Foundation Stage Unit. In our school, children join the Reception classes at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday. Key Stage 1 begins for our children at the beginning of Year 1.

The EYFS is important in preparing children for later learning. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Most have been to our nursery and others have attended one of a range of 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 activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- it provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- it enables children to make an effective transition from home to school.

EYFS Principles

Effective practice in the EYFS is built on the following five guided themes, describing how they can be put into practice.

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development
- Responsibility

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2. It includes whole class teaching, working with small groups or individuals, providing stimulating educational experiences within continuous provision and on-going observations.

Classroom organisation. The Foundation Stage Unit consists of one nursery and two Reception classrooms with a shared resource area. One teacher is assigned to each class and they work in partnership and as a team with the Teaching Assistants and PPA cover staff. Each teacher has their own class, although for much of the time the children are able to access all resources across the area. The children use the school hall and studio for P.E, Dance and assemblies and they have access to the kitchen, library and music room on a regular timetabled basis. The enclosed outdoor area is used to develop all areas of learning throughout the year.

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

- The partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- The understanding teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching; we start from the child and his/her needs and plan the learning linked to our assessments and observations;
- The range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication; we believe that children learn through active, hands-on experiences both inside and outside of the classroom;
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years 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 indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through regular observations and assessments, which are regularly shared with parents;
- The good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- The clear aims and success criteria for our work, and regular monitoring to evaluate our planning and improve what we do;
- The regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Early Years Foundation Stage using the Appraisal System to inform this.

Play in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Play underpins the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences that help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules.

Children are given the opportunities to explore and discover within a safe and supported environment. The children have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as 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.

The children are involved with both group and individual play, some initiated by adults, some by the children. They learn through the three characteristics of effective learning - being active learners, playing and exploring and creating and thinking critically, working with a wide range of resources. Through play children will develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. It gives children the opportunity to take risks and make mistakes.

Inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage

In our school 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 planning for their learning (see our policy on school inclusion).

In the Early Years Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that as many as possible achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage.

Some children progress beyond this point. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from 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 taking action to provide support as necessary. This involves additional interventions, including communication and language and speech therapy for some of our children.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage in our school reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals. The Early Learning goals that cover the knowledge, skills and understanding which the children should acquire by the end of the Reception year, the educational programmes covering the matters, skills and processes taught and finally the assessment arrangements to ascertain their achievements.

The Prime areas of learning:

Personal, Social and emotional development

Communication and Language

Physical development

The Specific areas of learning:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning. None of the areas of

learning can be delivered in isolation from the others, they are equally important and depend upon each other to support a rounded approach to the development of each child.

By the end of the Reception year in our school, children have a daily mathematics lesson and a literacy session. Teachers initially address the requirements in a flexible way but, as part of the smooth transition to Key Stage 1, they put the more structured literacy and mathematics sessions into operation by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teaching and planning is based upon the children's interests, however, we try to formulate a rough medium term plan every half term. This often changes as the children's interests vary during the term. The weekly/daily short-term planning consists of focussed tasks and assessments for the areas of learning in addition to continuous provision arrangements and activities to enhance the children's learning.

Assessment

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage is ongoing and is an integral part of the learning and development process. The staff make systematic observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. The observations and assessments are used to identify learning priorities and plan the next stages in the learning experiences for the child. The observations are then matched to the Early Learning Goals and are recorded as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. This may take the form of photographs, examples of work or observations.

During the children's first weeks in Reception class children are assessed using a baseline test and teachers' own assessments, the results of which informs the need for additional interventions and support for children. The results are analysed and we then use them to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort of children. Targets are set for each child to work towards. We use this information to modify the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. We share the initial assessment information with parents at the parental consultation meeting in October.

The teacher completes half-termly assessments throughout the child's Reception year to monitor and measure progress. Information from assessments and observations informs half-termly completion of the E-Profile and the school's own assessment system.

Each teacher keeps an Early Years Foundation Stage Profile folder for each child and uses these to record examples of each child's work in all areas of learning. These folders contain a wide range of evidence that we share with parents at each parental consultation meeting and inform our judgements throughout the year.

All assessment information is shared with parents as part of the annual School Report alongside the results of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results that are sent to the LEA in July. The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile folders are moderated at local level in Cluster groups and by LEA advisors.

Parents receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning along with their characteristics of effective 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 early July each year. Targets are set for the transfer to Year 1 and are shared with both new staff and parents.

The Role of Parents

We believe that all parents have a vital role to play in the education of their child. staff. We recognise the role that parents have played and their future role in Parents are made to feel welcome and valued in their dealings with all members of educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- The teacher visits all children in their Playgroup or Nursery setting prior to their starting school;
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Nursery and Reception classes;
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. If needed a meeting will be set up between the staff and parent/carer so that any issues can be resolved quickly. There is a formal meeting for parents in the Autumn and Spring term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- Offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents. There is regular communication with home through the child's Reading Record diary and via the online app Class Dojo. We invite parents to curriculum evenings to discuss the kind of work that the children undertake in the Reception class. At the start of every term a Home School link and Curriculum map will be sent home informing parent/carers of the topics and areas of the curriculum to be covered and also any relevant information that may help the parent/carer of the child. Regular Newsletters are sent so that parent/carers are informed of whole school issues. These are also available on the school's website.

Transition Arrangements

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

Starting 3-4 Year Old Nursery – Parents and children are invited to attend a starter morning or afternoon, where they are introduced to the staff and surroundings and to learn more about Nursery life. When children join the Nursery at September, January or April, the following procedures will apply in order that they can gradually adjust to their new surroundings:

- During the first week, children will attend for two hour sessions only.
- During the second week, and thereafter, children will attend for the full session time unless Nursery staff and parents or guardians agree that it is not in the best interests of an individual child.

Starting Reception – Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an Induction Meeting in the Summer term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff and learn more about the Reception curriculum. This is an opportunity for staff to:

- To go through the school handbook;
- Explain about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals;
- Explain about holidays and absences;
- Explain the arrangements for the gradual induction in to reception.

New class sessions - The children are given three opportunities to come in to school to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class. They will spend an afternoon in their new class. Parents can leave their child during this session.

This means that before they join their new class the Reception environment is already a familiar place to them. Arrangements are also made for the children's new class teacher to visit them in their current nursery setting.

September Intake - When children join the school in September the following procedures will apply in order that they can gradually adjust to their new surroundings:

- During the first week, children will attend for the morning or afternoon session only.
- During the second week, and thereafter, children will attend for the full school day unless Foundation staff and parents or guardians agree that it is not in the best interests of an individual child.

Starting in Key Stage 1 (Year 1) - Throughout the Reception year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in Key Stage and whole school assemblies as well as sharing playtimes with the Key Stage 1 children.

Children have the opportunity to meet their new class teacher and spend a morning in their new class during the summer term.

Resources

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. We also build in structures to the day that change during the school year as we move towards the needs of the Literacy and Numeracy sessions and the smooth transfer to year 1.

Safeguarding & Welfare

‘Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.’
(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014)

At Flakefleet Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Keeping Safe - It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Flakefleet's Safeguarding Children Policy).

Good Health - All children are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of milk. They have access to water at all times.

Intimate Care - "Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene and it is good practise for the school to inform the school nurse of all children requiring intimate care.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. No intimate care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or guardian of that child and all parents and guardians will be asked to provide that permission when their child joins reception at Flakefleet Primary School.

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