

Yeadon Westfield Infant School

Early Years Policy

2017-Review 2020

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all children, and expects our staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies.

Philosophy

We believe that the Early Years Foundation Stage is what it suggests- A foundation for all future learning and as such is significantly important in its own right. It is vital therefore that we provide a high quality learning environment to enable children to grow intellectually, physically, emotionally and socially.

Aims

We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum built on the themes of:

- ❖ A unique child
- ❖ Positive relationships
- ❖ Enabling environment
- ❖ Learning and development
- ❖ The Unique Child reaches out to relate to people and things through the **Characteristics of Effective Learning** which move through all areas of learning.
- ❖ Playing and exploring
- ❖ Active learning
- ❖ Creating and thinking critically.

We aim to use these themes as a basis to teach the prime areas and the specific areas;

Prime areas;

Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

Communication and Language.

Physical Development.

Specific areas;

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the world.

Expressive Arts and Design.

We will work with the children towards the Early Learning Goals for these areas during their time in the Foundation stage. In the Foundation Stage however we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that our aim is that most achieve or exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point and we will look towards the objectives for key stage one when planning to meet their needs.

We aim to build upon what the children already know and can do and to develop a disposition to learn and a positive attitude to learning guarding against early failure. The children will be encouraged to think for themselves and develop skills of confidence, independence and co-operation.

We aim to ensure that all children feel secure, included and valued, and to work with, and alongside parents and carers encouraging them to join us at every opportunity.

Principles

We do not make a distinction between play and work thus we aspire to achieve our aims in a safe friendly environment where the emphasis is on FUN and physical participation through a variety of topics and activities.

We value the contribution of all children and offer them a safe and supportive learning environment.

Using a range of teaching strategies the Early Years practitioners will be supporting their learning, extending their knowledge and understanding, helping them to gain confidence and develop skills.

To ensure this we will provide a well planned and resourced environment which gives children rich and stimulating experiences through a mixture of free choice and directed activities. The activities will be carefully differentiated in order to cater for different children's needs.

Communication and Language

Within the Foundation stage we aim to provide a rich literate environment with opportunities for children to hear, use, see and read familiar words. The children will be encouraged to communicate, feelings ideas and

thoughts to adults and each other. They will be given opportunities to experiment with words, sounds and texts. During their time in the Foundation stage, children will be given opportunities to explore and develop within the areas of Communication and Language.

The children will be given opportunities to listen attentively and talk about their experiences both in large and small groups.

They will be encouraged to speak clearly and audibly gaining confidence and control and beginning to show an awareness of the listener.

They will be encouraged to say please and thank you. The adults will take the opportunity to extend their vocabulary and help them to explore the meanings and sounds of new words.

They will be enabled to use this growing vocabulary with increasing fluency to express their thoughts and convey meaning to the listener.

They will have the opportunity to listen and respond to stories, songs, nursery rhymes and poems. Gradually the children will develop the ability to sustain attentive listening, responding to what they have heard by asking questions and developing ideas.

They will have the opportunity to make up their own stories and to take part in role-play, thus using language to organise, sequence and clarify their ideas, feelings, thinking and events.

Literacy:

Reading

Children will be given the opportunity to enjoy books and will be shown how to handle them carefully. They will be shown how books are organised and enabled to understand that words and pictures carry meaning.

They will be shown that in English, print is read from left to right and from top to bottom.

They will be introduced to the association of letters and sounds through a structured phonics scheme (Sue Lloyd Jolly Phonics), and will be given the opportunity to associate sounds with patterns in rhymes, with syllables, and with words and letters.

They will be given the opportunity to recognise their own names and some familiar words, including the 45 sight words in the National Literacy strategy.

They will be introduced to the books and characters from the Oxford Reading Tree scheme, and will begin to show an understanding of the elements of story.

They will be encouraged to look at non-fiction text and shown how to find information and answer questions.

Children will take part in a range of reading activities for example, independent, shared and guided reading. The children will begin to read a range of familiar and common words and simple sentences independently.

Writing

The children will be encouraged to 'emerge' as writers. They will be given the opportunity to progress to using pictures, symbols, familiar words and letters. The children will be encouraged to form letters correctly.

They will be shown that writing communicates meaning and have the opportunity to discover the many different purposes of writing.

They will be shown how to write their own names with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters.

The children will be encouraged to write captions and labels, recipes, lists and stories. They will be helped to use their developing phonic knowledge to write simple regular words and make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words.

Through the provision across the Foundation stage we will seek to encourage children to write for a variety of purposes and in a variety of contexts.

Mathematics

This is seen as an integral part of all areas of the Foundation stage and we aim to provide opportunities to stimulate children's use of mathematical vocabulary and concepts. The environment and daily routines are such, that children will be given opportunities to observe number and patterns.

During their time in the Foundation stage the children will be given the opportunity to use and explore the language of mathematics such as circle, in front of, bigger than and more, and to describe shape, position, size and quantity. They will be encouraged to develop their vocabulary as expressed in 'Big Maths'.

We will encourage the children to begin to use their developing mathematical understanding to solve practical problems.

They will be introduced to number through number rhymes, songs, stories, counting games and activities, with the emphasis on hands on, practical and real life activities.

They will be given opportunities to compare, sort, match, order, sequence and count using everyday objects.

They will be given the opportunity to recognise and use numbers to 10 and to explore and develop an awareness of larger numbers.

Children will be encouraged to record numbers and use number operations such as addition and subtraction through practical activities and will be enabled to use the language involved.

A small group daily numeracy session will be a part of the regular routine in Foundation Stage 2.

Understanding of the World

In this area of the curriculum the children will be helped to develop their ability to make sense of the world around them. They will be encouraged to:

Talk about where they live, their environment, their families and past and present events in their own, and others' lives. They will begin to explore their own beliefs and cultures and those of other people.

They will be given the opportunity to look at the purposes of some features of the area in which they live.

They will be given first hand experiences that encourage exploration, observation, prediction, discussion, critical thinking, asking questions and problem solving.

Children will be given opportunities to explore and recognise features of living things, objects and events in the natural and made world and to look closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change.

They will be encouraged to talk about their observations, ask questions and gain information about why things happen and how things work. They will sometimes be encouraged to record their findings.

Opportunities will be provided to enable the children to explore and select materials and equipment and use skills such as cutting, joining, folding and building for a variety of purposes.

The children will be introduced to the computers to support their learning and enabled to explore a variety of different software.

Personal Social and Emotional Development

The children will be encouraged to grow in confidence, show appropriate self-respect and establish effective relationships with other children and adults.

They will be given opportunities to work as part of a group and independently, developing their concentration and perseverance in learning and encouraged to seek help, where needed.

Opportunities will be provided to enable them to initiate ideas and to solve simple practical problems in order for them to develop an eagerness to explore new learning, to be motivated to learn and confident to try new activities.

They will be encouraged to become independent in selecting an activity or resources and in dressing and personal hygiene.

We will seek to ensure that children are sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and show respect for people of other cultures and beliefs. A variety of religious and cultural events will be explored in line with the R.E. scheme of work.

Children will be encouraged to express their feelings and behave in appropriate ways, developing an understanding of what is right, what is wrong and why.

They will be shown how to work as part of a group, taking turns and sharing fairly and will be encouraged to begin to understand the need for agreed values and codes of behaviour within groups of adults and children so that they work harmoniously together. Reminders about behaviour and everyday routines will be clearly displayed as appropriate.

The children will be shown how to treat living things properly and their environment with care and concern. Feelings such as wonder, joy or sorrow in response to their experiences of the world will be encouraged.

Children will be encouraged to maintain their attention, to concentrate and to sit quietly when appropriate.

Expressive Arts and Design

We aim to provide a rich, stimulating environment in which the children will be encouraged to express themselves creatively and are given sufficient time to explore, and develop ideas. We aim to provide activities, which are enjoyable and stretch their imagination along with opportunities to work alongside a talented adult to extend and develop their work.

Children will be given the opportunities to:

Explore sound and colour, texture, shape, form and space in two and three dimensions.

They will be enabled to respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel.

They will be encouraged to look at and explore the work of famous artists.

Through art, music, dance, stories and imaginative play, they will be given the opportunity to show an increasing ability to use their imagination, to listen and to observe.

The children will be given opportunities to sing simple songs from memory, to match movements to music and to recognise repeated sounds and sound patterns.

They will use a widening range of materials, suitable tools, instruments and other resources to express ideas and to communicate their feelings.

We will give value to the children's creativity by expressing appreciation, and interest and displaying children's work for others to admire.

Physical Development

The children will be given the opportunity to develop and extend their physical skills in order that they:

Move confidently and imaginatively with increasing control and co-ordination and an awareness of space and others.

Use a range of small and large equipment and balancing and climbing apparatus, with increasing skill.

They are shown how to travel under, over, around and through balancing and climbing equipment.

Handle appropriate tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control.

Made aware of the importance of keeping healthy and what contributes to this.

Children will be encouraged to be aware of the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active.

Experiences

Alongside and enhancing these areas of learning we will aim to provide a wide variety of experiences which, although there are permanent areas within the classroom, will not be stagnant. Therefore a wide variety of different resources will be added and removed to these areas as appropriate during the school year. These areas will also be used to fulfil specific learning objectives as appropriate.

These include the following:

- ◆ Role-play
- ◆ Home area
- ◆ Dry and Wet Sand
- ◆ Malleable activities
- ◆ Large construction
- ◆ Small scale imaginative play
- ◆ Jigsaws puzzles and games
- ◆ Paint and collage
- ◆ Musical Instruments
- ◆ Water tray
- ◆ Writing/Mark-making
- ◆ Outdoor play

Visits and visitors will also be used as appropriate to complement and enhance these experiences.

Planning the curriculum

Regular meetings will be held with all members of staff in the Foundation stage. Evaluation, assessment and observations will be used to inform future planning. All practitioners will be encouraged to contribute to future planning which seeks to ensure access to a broad range of experiences, which meet the children's needs.

Evaluation and Assessment

We believe that evaluation and assessment are crucial factors which enable us to plan and deliver the Foundation stage curriculum. Therefore:

We work with parents/carers to establish a baseline of learning for all children entering Foundation stage one and plan our curriculum to stretch and strengthen this learning.

We will use the Foundation stage profile to assess children on their entry into Foundation stage 2. A child's individual profile will be discussed and agreed with parents within 6 weeks.

These initial assessments will then be updated regularly using the eye profile and appropriate targets set and monitored termly for each child. These will be discussed with parents. A summary of the child's achievements in the Foundation stage profile will be passed on to the Key stage one teacher.

All learning within the Foundation stage will be carefully evaluated and assessed by:

Observation and discussion, written, physical, photographic and taped evidence.

Check lists of children's achievements will be used, together with observation sheets.

Activities will be evaluated on completion with regard to fulfilment of learning objectives and children's progress monitored. This information will then be used to inform future planning.

Where appropriate work will be marked in line with the whole school marking policy.

Key worker groups

Key workers for all full time children are the class teachers. Part-time children will be assigned on entry to a key worker who will be responsible for the pastoral care of the child.

Admission Policy

Children will be admitted to the Foundation stage in line with the whole school admission policy.

Equal Opportunities

The curriculum will be delivered in line with the whole school equal opportunities statement.

We will use materials and resources which reflect diversity, are free from discrimination and which challenge disability, racial and gender stereotypes.

Special Educational Needs

We will aim to identify early any special educational needs a child may have and respond quickly, in order to develop an effective strategy to meet those needs, so that later difficulties may be avoided.

We will aim to work closely with staff from other agencies, such as health visitors, speech therapy, sensory impairment services and parents/carers, to provide the best learning opportunities for individual children.

Children who are identified as having a special educational need at any time will have an Individual Education Plan and their progress and achievements will be carefully monitored in line with the Code of Practice, and the whole school Special Educational Needs Policy.

Parental Involvement

A home visit will be planned for each child before entry into both Foundation stage one and two and parents are welcomed at any time.

Parents will be encouraged to work with the children on activities such as painting, drawing, reading, baking, etc.

The Foundation stage profile will be shared with parents and their comments added. Parents will be kept informed of their child's progress through both informal and formal meetings throughout the year, when they will also be given opportunities to express any concerns they may have with their child's key worker.

Policies and planning will be clearly available for parents to see and a variety of useful information leaflets will be at hand to help their child with reading, writing, mathematics etc.

Various courses for parents may be available and parents will be made aware of these through posters, leaflets etc.

Liaison with outside agencies

Foundation stage practitioners will regularly attend meetings of the Leeds Early Years Forum, making links with other types of settings for Foundation stage within the local area. Close links with local health visitors and the speech therapy service will also be fostered. Children with special educational needs will be referred to and from suitable outside agencies as their needs suggest.