



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Statement

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfES 2007) states that;

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know that provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the framework that provides that assurance.”

At Laurel Avenue Community Primary School, the term “Foundation Stage” refers to children in Nursery and Reception.

Reception class children attend full time. Nursery children access 15 hours of provision per week, either 5 morning sessions, full days Monday and Tuesday plus Wednesday morning or Wednesday afternoon with full days Thursday and Friday. From September 2017 there is the option of 30 hours provision per week for children who qualify through a new government funded initiative for working parents.

Aims

We believe that the Foundation Stage is a vital early step in allowing children to become lifelong learners. We aim to ensure that each child’s experiences in the Foundation Stage reflect the four key principles of the EYFS;

A Unique Child – Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive Relationships – Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.

Enabling Environments – The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children’s development and learning.

Learning and Development – Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

In order to achieve this we will;

Ensure that all children feel safe and valued.

Take time to develop good relationships between staff and children.

Work with parents and carers, respecting and valuing their input.

Provide opportunities for quality play in a varied, challenging and safe environment, indoors and outdoors.

Encourage children to learn in a variety of ways, and to become creative and critical thinkers.

Observe children carefully and take account of their interests when planning future learning.

Give equal weighting to the six areas of the EYFS curriculum.

The Curriculum

The EYFS curriculum consists of six areas of learning;

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Communication, Language and Literacy Development

Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Creative Development

Physical Development

These areas are interconnected, and all equally important. Opportunities are made to develop children's language skills, including speech, and their maths skills across all areas of learning. The Foundation Stage is set up to allow children to explore and learn across all the areas, every day. Children are encouraged to develop independence in selecting and developing their own activities, and in finding equipment independently. The enclosed outdoor area is available to all children for a significant part of every session.

The curriculum is delivered through a combination of child-initiated play and adult-led focussed tasks and reflects the priorities of the School Improvement Plan. Planning follows Durham LEA's guidance, consisting of:

Long-term planning, which outlines the experiences children will have in the areas of the Foundation Stage Unit, both indoors and outdoors, and the equipment which will be provided.

Medium-term planning, which identifies particular EYFS objectives to be covered within a term, and activities which will be used to achieve this coverage.

Short-term planning, which sets out the play experiences which will be offered within a week, and the way in which adult-led activities will be delivered.

Planning is constantly evaluated in order to inform next steps.

Assessment

Assessment is ongoing throughout each child's time in Foundation Stage. Assessment is based mainly on notes taken by practitioners as they observe and work with children, as well as on some focussed assessment tasks.

Children in the Foundation Stage have their achievements recorded on Durham LEA's recommended assessment templates, with records updated on a termly basis. They are assessed against the EYFS outcomes throughout their time in Foundation Stage and a final assessment is made in June of their Reception year. This is passed onto the Year 1 teacher to allow for continuity of progression.

All children also have a digital "Learning Journey", in which significant events in their learning are recorded in photographs, commentary, and referenced to EYFS outcomes. Parents are invited to contribute notes or pictures to show new things their child has learned at home.

Parents are invited to Open Days each term, when they can talk to the teacher about their child's progress. However, parents are also welcome to talk to staff and look at their child's Learning Journey at any time.

Transitions

We aim to make each child's experience of starting Nursery as enjoyable as possible. Parents visit with their child at least once, and as often as they wish, before the child's start date. Parents are given an information pack including the Foundation Stage Brochure. When children start in Nursery we offer a flexible approach, offering parents the chance to stay with their child initially if they feel this will help them to settle well. Some children stay for their full sessions immediately, whilst others start with a shortened session which is extended when parents and staff feel best for the child.

Most of our Reception children begin their year in a familiar environment, having already spent time with us in Nursery. Time is set aside to settle in any new children, and to provide information for their families.

During their Reception year, children take part in more whole school activities, such as assemblies and playtimes. This enables them to mix with older children and get to know staff throughout school. Towards the end of the year they visit their new class and teacher, and work on a "Moving On" topic in PSED to ease their transition into Year 1.

Inclusion

The Foundation Stage is an inclusive environment, where each child is supported and challenged according to their needs. The physical environment is regularly evaluated to ensure all children are able to access all areas and activities.

Children with identified Special Educational Needs have an Education Healthcare Plan or an SEND Support Plan, which is shared with parents, to ensure they are working to specific targets

which meet their needs. When appropriate staff work with external agencies (e.g. Speech and Language Therapist) to devise and deliver individual support programmes.

Children with English as an Additional Language are supported with advice from the Ethnic Minority and Traveller Service.

Welfare

At Laurel Avenue Community Primary School we place great importance on the welfare of our children. All legal welfare requirements are met, and a file is available in the classroom detailing the many steps we take to safeguard pupils.

*Signed: N Dixon
Chair of Learning, Teaching and Achievement Committee*

Date: September 2017

*Signed: Mrs C Lawson
Co-ordinator*

*Reviewed: September 2017
Review Date: September 2020*