

# Early Year Foundation Stage Policy.



**Reviewed: September 2024 by Pooja Vyas EYFS lead.**

**Ratified by the Governing Body: 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

**Next review date 2025 or earlier if statutory changes.**



# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1** The Foundation Stage applies to children from three years of age to the end of the reception year. Foundation Stage 1 children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are four. Foundation Stage 2 children join us 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 Foundation Stage equips children with the key skills that are required to access learning in their later schooling. Children learn these skills through explorative play and problem solving activities which are carefully tailored to meet their learning needs. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- 1.2** Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal simply by observing the world around them and interacting with family and friends. Some children may have previously attended an Early Years setting (such as a private nursery) or have accessed play groups or workshops that are offered by Children's Centres.
- 1.3** 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 challenges children and sets high expectations for learning;
  - 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 secure, yet rich and stimulating environment which encourages children to work and play independently.
  - It provides a language rich environment where children learn new vocabulary every day.

(Article 29: Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities – UNCRC)

## 2 Aims of the Foundation Stage.

The curriculum of the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children within 3 Prime Areas:

- Personal, social and emotional development;
- Communication and language development;
- Physical development;

And 4 specific areas:

- Literacy;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts & design.

### 3 Teaching and learning style

**3.1 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 Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1.**

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

- Establishing a strong partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- Building positive relationships with parents and providing regular effective feedback, helps to ensure that parents are aware of the end of year expectations and can further support their child at home, using similar strategies to the ones used by teaching staff at school.
- Teachers develop a secure understanding of how children make progress and learn, and are flexible, making changes to their teaching as appropriate.
- Teachers are active participants in the Visible Learning scheme which encourages teachers to carry out case studies and monitor the impact of various elements of their teaching practise.
- Teachers use a range of approaches and offer children first-hand experiences whenever possible. There is an emphasis on creating a language rich environment, ensuring that children are given clear explanations and that teachers make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- Teachers carefully plan a flexible curriculum that focuses on the interests of the children as much as possible. This helps to keep children engaged in their learning and supports them to 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 indoor and outdoor spaces, facilities and equipment;
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, 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 for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- The regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

#### **4 Play in the Foundation Stage**

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world. Play provides children with a safe space where they can practise and test out new ideas and skills. Children learn the importance of self-care and self-control, and begin to understand the relationship between cause and effect.

They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own, and develop an understanding of the rights that both they, and their peers have. 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 in the 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). (Article 28: All children have the right to a good quality education)

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that many 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 speech therapy for some of our children.

#### **6 The Foundation Stage curriculum**

The new EYFS framework comes into place in September 2021. The full document can be found using the link below:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/974907/EYFS\\_framework\\_-\\_March\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf)

Since September 2021, the end of year Early Learning Goals which the children are assessed against have changed. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage in our school reflects the areas of learning identified in the New EYFS Framework 2021 and Early Learning Goals. Teachers will continue to refer to complimentary documents including Development Matters and Birth to 5 Years, to support them with planning and identifying next steps for children.

This new framework aims to allow teachers to focus on the specific needs of the children, and to exercise their professional judgement to assess and identify next steps to move children’s learning forward. Teachers are expected to have a secure knowledge of their children and to use this

<p><u>Learning Intention: To describe a character</u></p> <p>I can hear the initial sound in words.</p> <p>I can find the letters I need on an alphabet mat.</p> <p>I can read back what I have written.</p>	<p><u>Learning Intention: To describe a poppy flower</u></p> <p>I can hear the initial/multiple sounds in words.</p> <p>I can find and copy the letters I need on the</p>
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knowledge to promote good progress. At Kenmore Park Infant and Nursery School, class teachers have worked together to establish assessment protocols for September and are well prepared for the upcoming changes.

Although the new framework advises a move away from written records of assessments, the well-established habit of making ongoing consistent assessments, can help to support teachers to make accurate judgements.

Assessment within the Early Years will continue to be an ongoing feature of good or outstanding teaching.

In our reception classes, each child completes one adult led Literacy activity every week which is recorded in their books. The children also complete a practical Maths task with the teacher every week. Besides these there are other adult led activities each week (usually 1:1 reading for Phonics).

The Literacy books provide a snapshot into a child’s development and also clearly track their progress since the start of the year. Each time an activity is recorded in the books, teachers refer to the ‘learning sticker’. Our learning stickers include the learning objective for the session, as well as 3 well differentiated success criteria. *Two examples of a learning sticker is below:*

Before the activity begins, teachers talk the children through the success criteria and give them reminders of what they are expected to achieve throughout the activity. Once the activity has been completed, teachers use the success criteria to make an assessment judgement regarding how the child has done. If the child was able to show that they have met the targets, then the statement is highlighted green. If the child is continuing to develop the skills needed to achieve the target, then the statement is highlighted in orange. If the child has not been able to achieve the target then the statement is highlighted in pink.

Teachers talk children through the judgement that have been made and identify next steps for them. These next steps are conveyed verbally to the child and usually corrections are done with the teacher present during the same session.

This form of assessment is ongoing and is already well established practise within the Early Years, and although the new framework advises against written records of assessment, this habit of ongoing consistent assessments support teachers when making judgements.

We recognise the fundamental importance of high quality play opportunities for children's development and provide a wide range of direct teaching and high quality planned, supported and free play to enable all children to progress in each area.

Our medium-term planning is completed half-termly and identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals, and for those working towards Age Related Expectations for Year 1 & 2 of the National Curriculum.

**6.1 Phonics & Reading:** Children in Nursery are introduced to Phase 1 Phonics which is continued throughout the year. They are introduced to lots of stories and books from the very beginning to encourage the love for reading. From September 2022 a new Phonic scheme was introduced Reception upwards which is called Little Wandle. Teachers and Support staff have received training to impart instructions based on this scheme and restructured their timetable based on the requirements of the scheme. Each child is read with 2 times per week using books that are consistent with their Phonic knowledge.

Phonic assessments are done every half term and book levels are reviewed and revised based on these assessments. Books are also sent home for reading along with a reading record for parents to comment in. Each Early years' class and outdoor area has an inviting Book corner with a variety of books for children to access. To encourage and support reading, children in Reception visit the local library twice a year and parents are encouraged to join the library and borrow books regularly.

**6.2 Vocabulary and Oracy:** At Kenmore Park we strive to provide a language rich environment for the children and have a special focus on developing vocabulary through quality interactions, reading and Oracy. Children in Nursery are exposed to stories and books from the very beginning and are supported to speak in full sentences to develop future Oracy skills. In Reception, children are encouraged to use sentence stems during each lesson and also while interacting with peers and adults during independent learning time.

## 7 Assessment

We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. We take into account the interests of the children and this also informs our planning. Assessment in the Foundation Stage is ongoing and pupil progress and attainment is regularly reviewed. Each child has their own portfolio on Class Dojo, where work samples can be shared between teachers and parents. Class teachers are also able to share next steps with parents using this platform. We highly value the contribution of parents towards their child's assessment and learning.



As of September 2021, all reception children will be taking part in the On Entry Baseline Assessment. Class teachers carry out these assessments on a 1:1 basis with every child and upload their responses to the national website.

Having taken part in two of the prior Baseline pilot schemes, staff and Kenmore Park Infant and Nursery School are well prepared for carrying out these assessments

In the Nursery the teacher and learning assistants assess the ability of each child using assessment statements that have been tailored to the needs of the cohort and also refer to the Development Matters Statements. During the children's first half-term in the reception class, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using assessment statements based on the new Early Learning goals and also refer to the Development matters statements where needed. They continue to assess the pupils covering the 3 prime areas and 4 specific areas of learning within the foundation stage using the Foundation Stage Profile. We use this assessment information to support our medium term and short term planning and teaching programmes for individual children and groups of children. Within the first term we have a meeting with parents to inform them as to how well their child has settled in and to discuss issues arising from any assessments, both formal and informal, that have been made.

The teacher completes the Foundation Stage Profile at the end of the child's reception year. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead and ensures a smooth transition from Foundation Stage 2 to Year 1. These assessments also form part of the end of year report received by the parents. We have a parental consultation meeting in July where parents can discuss their child's progress with the teacher.

## **8 The role of parents**

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise and appreciate the role that parents play in educating their children. Some of the ways that we work with parents include:

- parents are invited into school to meet with the class teacher and collect their information packs. At this meeting, parents can discuss any issues that concern them with both the head and class teacher.
- the children visit the school and 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. At this meeting parents can discuss any issues that concern them and ask any questions about the school. Parents also have the opportunity to explore the classrooms and to ask members of staff questions about the teaching and expectations in the Foundation Stage.
- Nursery children and their families are visited in their own homes at the beginning of term, prior to starting their Nursery Education. These home visits give parents (and their children) the opportunity to meet the teaching staff and to ask any questions or queries they may have about their child starting at school. Parents are given key information and resources to support their child with the transition in to Nursery.

- a parent conference between the class teacher and the parents of children beginning in the Reception Classes takes place prior to all children starting in Reception.
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception and nursery classes;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- arranging for children to start school over the first three weeks of term. We stagger the starting time of each child over this period, so that the teacher can welcome each child individually into our school. Children in the Reception Classes attend for half a day initially, and this builds up gradually to the whole day. Children in Nursery gradually build up to the 3-hour session depending on each individual child's ability to settle. We encourage parents to stay if there are problems with the child's admission;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- inviting parents in for workshops and seminar sessions regularly throughout the year. Teachers share the end of year expectations with parents and provide parents with resources that they can use to support their child's learning. Parents can also observe their children learn during these sessions and get an insight into how their children are responding to their learning environment.

## 9 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.

## 10 Class Dojo

All parents are expected to sign up and create an account for Class Dojo. The Class Dojo app is the main communication tool between parents and teachers. Key messages are uploaded onto the Class Dojo app and parents can send direct messages to teachers. Parents are also expected to share special moments or milestones their child has achieved on class dojo which is then shared with the whole class, so the child feels appreciated. Teachers also share 'WOW' moments for each child with parents regularly.

## 11 Home Learning

Every Friday, children in Reception will be set home learning tasks to complete. The activities will be based around the key skills that have been taught during the school week. A typical weekly home learning will consist of Phonics, Literacy, Maths and Topic activities. Parents are





encouraged to take photographs of their child's work and upload them to their child's portfolio on Class Dojo. Teachers are able to review the uploaded items and allocate Class Dojo reward points as necessary.

## 12 Parent Workshops/Seminar Lessons

- a. Parent workshops will be held at school. These workshops provide parents with an insight into the curriculum and highlight ways that parents can best support their child's learning.
- b. Teachers will set up activities in the school hall and model a lesson for the parents. They will also model a range of activities that can be done at home to support learning in specific areas. Parents will also be provided resources like Phonic mats, online links and number lines to support children at home.