



# Overfields Primary School

## Foundation Stage Policy

Reviewed annually  
Author: S Curtis & S Duncan

# Foundation Stage Policy

## Document Purpose

This policy reflects the values and philosophy in relation to the teaching and learning experiences of the Foundation Stage. It gives a framework within which staff work and gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment.

## Introduction

The Foundation Stage is the period of education from three to five years. It starts in Nursery and ends in the Reception year. The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, as children develop and absorb more in their first five years of life than at any other time. It prepares children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

The early stages of human development are very important. *'We all follow the same learning patterns but we all learn at different rates'* Liz Way (Advisor). Learning is a lifelong experience which we are all involved in. Everyone involved with young children has an important contribution to make their education. Therefore, we cannot work in isolation as effective learning is based on an active partnership with all those involved with the child. The Early Years education we offer the child is based on the following principles:

- it builds on what children already know and can do
- it encourages the whole person to be valued
- 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 stimulating, language rich environment which is fun to be part of.

## **Aims of the Foundation Stage**

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children:

- **Personal, social and emotional wellbeing:** by supporting the transition to and between settings, promoting an inclusive ethos and providing opportunities for each child to become a valued member of that group and community so that a strong self-image and self-esteem are promoted.
- **Positive attitudes and disposition towards their learning:** effective classroom practice will motivate children to learn and develop in confidence to become successors.
- **Social skills:** by providing opportunities for children to work harmoniously alongside others, enable them to learn how to cooperate and listen to each other.
- **Attention skills and persistence:** to provide opportunities for children to become absorbed and develop the capacity to concentrate.
- **Language and communication:** providing opportunities for children to become active speakers and communicate in a widening range of situations responding to adults and each other. To extend the range of vocabulary and communication skills they use and to provide opportunities for them to listen to each other.
- **Reading and writing books:** valuing the importance of print and the richness of books, providing opportunities for all children to explore, enjoy, learn about and how to use words and text in a broad range of contexts.
- **Mathematics:** opportunities for children to develop their understanding of number, shape, space and measure by providing learning experiences in which they can explore, enjoy, learn, practise and discuss.
- **Knowledge and understanding of the world:** providing opportunities for children to explore the environment safely to find out more about living things and places that have significance in their lives, to solve problems and make decisions.
- **Physical development:** providing opportunities for children to develop and practise their fine and gross motor skills, to be aware of others, to

increase their understanding of how their bodies work and what they need to do to be healthy and safe.

- **Creative development:** providing opportunities for children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design and technology, music, movement, dance, imaginative and role play activities.

## Teaching and learning styles

Learning needs to be a continuous and dynamic process. We provide excellent features of good practise to take the children's learning forward. We believe in providing opportunities for children to succeed in an atmosphere of care and of feeling valued, these are:

- The relationship between parents, children, teachers and other agencies working in harmony to create a partnership, which supports and values all children. Each child's individual contribution is recognised, valued and encouraged in an atmosphere of acceptance and trust.
- The understanding of the early stages of human development, how children develop and learn and how this affects the style of teaching.
- A 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.
- A carefully planned curriculum that helps children to achieve progress towards and within the 'early learning goals' by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- To provide opportunities for children to participate in activities that build on what they already know, extend their interests and develop their intellectual, social and emotional abilities.
- To communicate; listening, sharing ideas, deciding and talking about their learning, to develop independence and self-management.
- To support the learning experiences with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.
- Observations, monitoring and assessment to identify progress and future learning needs of children and evaluate and improve what we do.

- The regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

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

Young children are motivated to learn through play. They are able to practice and build on ideas, concepts and skills which help them to make sense of the world. They can also take risks, make mistakes, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. Through play children have the opportunity to think creatively with others as they investigate and solve problems.

### **Inclusion in the Foundation Stage**

Children need security, familiarity and an interesting and happy place in which to learn. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. Each child's individual contribution is recognised, valued and encouraged in an atmosphere of acceptance and trust. All activities are offered to our children regardless of gender, race or special needs.

We acknowledge that a majority of our children arrive to the setting below typical. We therefore, set realistic, achievable targets and challenging expectations that meet the needs of both boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, children with ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet these needs through:

- planned opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests to develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- use a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- to provide learning opportunities which encourage active involvement and motivate children;
- to provide a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;

- provide challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- to monitor children's progress and take action to provide support as necessary e.g. language support therapy.

## **The Foundation Stage Curriculum**

The curriculum within our Foundation Stage reflects the six areas of learning set out in the Curriculum Guidance for Early Years. The carefully planned experiences we offer our children enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

We have a two year cycle of topics throughout the Foundation Stage. The Medium Term Planning is completed each half term and identifies the intended learning outcomes.

## **Assessment**

Assessment begins on the initial meeting with the parent and child and during the children's first three weeks into Nursery. Regular observations and assessments of children's learning are made to ensure that further planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of planned and unplanned observations – Entry to Nursery Assessment, Age related tracker from Nursery through Reception and Foundation Stage Profile.

Children's progress in the Foundation Stage is tracked against the six areas of learning and link closely to the stepping stones and Early Learning Goals. Each child has a Learning Journey. The teacher and child support the compilation of evidence to document significant learning experiences within the Foundation Stage.

Weekly planning meetings allow all practitioners to feedback on the weekly journey and any significant experiences they want to discuss with reference to planning, activities and outcomes. This information then feeds into the following

planned activities. Within the weeks curriculum children have opportunities for self-initiated play. Through careful observations and adult interaction, support can be given to extend or challenge the child in their learning progress. Staff training needs and other issues regarding the children in our care are part of the ongoing discussion.

Parents of children in Reception and those at the end of Nursery receive an annual report near the end of the school year. It offers comments on their child's progress in each area of learning and celebrates their success as well as highlighting their next steps in learning.

### **The role of parents**

We value the role parents play in the education of their child. We work in partnership to support the child in developing his/her full potential. We do this through:

- Learning Together course for parents three weeks prior to their child starting.
- Parents and children are invited into the setting, to spend time with their teacher and peers before they begin their part time placement.
- Termly newsletters are sent home to inform parents of the teaching and learning experiences offered to their child in the setting with some suggested home activities.
- Offering activities that support the involvement of parents. There is regular communication with home through the child's day. Parents are encouraged to share in the activity and the learning opportunities.
- Parents' noticeboard is displayed in the EYFS setting to inform them about the terms curriculum, Sure Start and any other Early Years information.
- There are several sessions throughout to discuss the children's progress. A transition meeting takes place with parents prior to the child starting full time school to discuss and concerns.
- There is a formal meeting with parents three times a year to discuss their child's progress and future needs.
- Regular meetings are held with parents of children who are placed on an Individual Education Plan.

- Courses are offered to parents throughout the year, when they are available.

We endeavour to provide a well-planned and resourced curriculum to take children's learning forward. We provide opportunities for each child to succeed in an atmosphere of care and of feeling valued. We encourage children to make their own choices, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. Adult led activities provide opportunities for children to acquire more skills, knowledge and understanding. The monitoring of each child's progress throughout the Foundation Stage is essential to ensure that they are making progress and that particular difficulties in any of the learning, whatever the cause, are identified.