



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

### Introduction

The Foundation Stage applies to children from two years of age to the end of the reception year. In our school, children can join us as they turn 2 years old. (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday.) The Foundation Stage helps to build on the child's earliest experiences to provide a secure foundation for learning throughout their school years and beyond.

### Aims of the Foundation Stage

Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been to Doxey Nursery and a range of other settings that exist in our community. The early year's education we offer our children is based on the following EYFS principles:

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

The EYFS Learning and Development requirements guide us to look carefully at the children in our care and consider their needs and interests. By looking at their stages of development we can plan a challenging and enjoyable experience across all areas of learning. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas, the *prime* areas, are:

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

Staff must also support children in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- Literacy;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding the world; and
- Expressive arts and design.

### 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 Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 & 2.

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

- 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 that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;

- 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;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children 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 space, 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.

## **Play in the Foundation Stage**

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They 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.

## **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 Foundation Stage takes the form of observations, photos and children's work, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. The children's assessments, observations and work are celebrated in a Learning Journey that is shared with the parents at Parent's Evenings.

During the children's time in the nursery and reception class, the teacher assesses the ability of each child. We send the results of these assessments to the LEA for analysis. The LEA returns these assessments in January and we then use them to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort of children. We use this information to modify the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

Parents receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress

## **The role of parents**

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school, including home visits;
- completing a one page profile alongside the parents and child
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school (visiting the children in the nursery and inviting the children into Reception class for story time);
- 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 reception class;
- 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 with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- Having flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parents to become secure, and by allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- Arranging for children to start school over the first week 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. 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;
- Offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents. There is regular communication with home through the child's school diary, weekly newsletter to parents. We invite parents to curriculum evenings to discuss the kind of work that the children undertake in the reception class.