

KEW WOODS PRIMARY SCHOOL



**Early Years Foundation Stage
(EYFS) Policy**

Overview

This document is one of a series that make up the whole curriculum statement for the school. It states the school philosophy about the contribution which the Foundation Stage makes to our pupils' education and the way in which the 'Early Years Foundation Stage' and the National Curriculum are delivered in practice. In effect it is an expanded policy statement and, together with the long, medium and short term planning, constitutes the school scheme of work.

This policy supports staff in consistently promoting the four EYFS themes of The Unique Child, Enabling Environments, Positive Relationships and Learning and Development. It also supports children in making progress in the seven Areas of Learning. At Kew Woods Primary School, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) covers Nursery and Reception classes.

OBJECTIVES

1. To celebrate diversity, and promote equality of opportunity for all children.
2. To create a climate where children can continuously learn without fearing failure or to be judged and without having to seek approval from others.
3. To secure the entitlement for all the children to a play-based curriculum which is broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated, which offers continuity and progression and develops their physical, intellectual, emotional and social abilities.
4. To acknowledge each child's individual strengths, interests and address her/his special needs and learning styles.
5. To provide a secure and stimulating environment which encourages children to be active learners and develop her/his unique pattern of interests and talents.
6. To acknowledge the role of parents/carers as the child's first and prime educators and to develop a whole Foundation Stage Approach on how best to support young children's development.

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

- personal, social and emotional well-being;
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning;
- social skills;
- attention skills and persistence;
- language and communication;
- reading and writing;
- problem solving, reasoning and numeracy;
- knowledge and understanding of the world;
- physical development;
- creative development.

These aims are in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012)

Teaching and Learning

Learning is seen as life long with each stage complete in itself but leading on to the next. As a starting point for children, the development of a love of learning, and a positive disposition to learning is as important as what is learned. Learners are considered to be constantly active and needing real purposes and contexts for their learning to be effective. Learning opportunities should therefore:

- reflect these real life contexts
- have concrete applications wherever possible
- involve problem solving
- give enough time to the learner
- recognise working memory constraints

Talk is seen as essential to the child's development; it is given high priority in recognition of its crucial role in early learning. It involves a range of strategies which often need to be taught. These include:

- collaborative talk
- talk for reflection on learning including Plan, Do and Review
- shared sustained thinking

Adults will support children's development by:

- careful and regular observation using iPads/ iPads to assess each child's progress and needs;
- ensuring a genuine respect for the views, capabilities and ways of learning of young children
- embedding new learning in what is known or familiar
- using a variety of different teaching strategies and organisation
- the provision of materials, artefacts and information at appropriate times to enhance understanding
- the provision of opportunities to participate in first hand, practical experiences and real life situations
- the provision of a wide choice of tools and materials to encourage children's planning and decision making skills and their sense of autonomy
- ensuring a daily balance between adult directed and child initiated activities
- minimising routines etc. which interrupt concentrated involvement in activities
- encouraging positive dispositions towards learning
- using assessments based on observation in order to inform planning and the provision of work differentiated to individual needs

Strategies

At Kew Woods Primary School we employ a wide range of strategies and styles that create an effective teaching and learning environment. The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

1. the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
2. the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
3. 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;
4. the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the 'development matters' and Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
5. 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;
6. the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
7. the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
8. the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents;
9. the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school, including our Nursery;
10. the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
11. the identification of training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

Play in the Foundation Stage

Play and talk are seen as the major means of learning for young children. It is seen as progressive with, for young learners, clearly marked stages of development from sensory to the exploratory, representational, symbolic and imaginative stages.

The hallmarks of successful play are that it is:

- pleasurable and fun with no pre-determined end
- intrinsically motivating
- freely chosen
- involving pretence and the use of imagination
- actively engaging
- engrossing to the player/s

Role play is an essential part of play and provides opportunities for children to:

- engage in play at the stage appropriate to their own development
- create environments which are their own but which relate to their real life experiences
- reveal their own knowledge of real life experiences
- learn more about these experiences from other children and adults
- use both imagination and factual knowledge
- use and develop a wide range of vocabulary

Mark making is an essential part of play and provides opportunities for children to:

- Develop concepts relating to literacy, mathematics or knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Improve their physical coordination
- Explore and experiment with their senses, developing confidence and dexterity through the process (there does not have to be a finished product).

Therefore it is important that we allow children to make marks independently, this is encouraged through Squiggle While You Wiggle and a whole Foundation Stage approach where children do not write over adults writing but are free to make marks that they ascribe meaning to.

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.

Foundation Stage Curriculum Planning

Young children learn in a holistic way, and we are committed to the education of the whole child. Our concern is therefore with the physical, social, emotional, intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual development of each child in our care.

Young children learn best when they are engaged in purposeful activities which involve their whole being and we will therefore plan an environment and a curriculum which supports them in exploratory learning and addresses individual need.

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage in our school reflects the seven areas of learning as well as the four main themes of the EYFS. The experiences that our children meet enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

The EYFS provides the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers complete a Medium Term Plan that has a list of possible opportunities related to a topic for that half term; A two-weekly plan that takes into account observations and interests of the children and a daily plan. Where appropriate PLODs (Possible lines of development) will be completed which allow us to explore children's interests in more depth. The planning, which is flexible and responds to the interests of the pupils, identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals. The curriculum is planned

carefully so that there is coherence and full coverage of the development matters, and there is planned progression in all seven areas of learning.

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.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most 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 and working alongside other agencies for some of our children.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

We make regular informal assessments of children's learning through observation, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate.

Observation, assessment and recording is an on-going process that takes place all of the time. After an initial settling in period, judgements will be made about the child's stage of development, and this information will be used to track children throughout the Foundation Stage, determining whether they are working at a level which is as expected, exceeding or below expectations for their age. Observations, photographs and video footage that document individual children's learning and achievements are documented using the app 2buildaprofile and are saved into children's individual Learning Journals. All assessments in Foundation Stage are discussed at planning meetings and used to inform further planning, paying particular attention to individual interests. It is also a requirement that children's progress is formally reported to parents at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (end of Reception Class). This assessment data is then used by the Year One Teacher to inform the first term's planning.

In accordance with school policy, pupil assessments are kept and a written report is presented to parents at the end of the academic year on the child's progress and attainment and a short paragraph is written about each area of the characteristics of learning at the end of the Foundation Stage. Parents' meetings are arranged to allow parents to have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress with the teacher.

When we observe, we:

- watch children's actions;

- listen to children talking;
- focus on their interactions with other children and adults;
- are aware of children's body language and non verbal expressions of their levels of engagement;
- value their individual efforts and achievements.

We focus upon:

- dispositions and attitudes to learning;
- levels of engagement and concentration;
- social skills and relationships with others;
- preferences for particular activities/materials;
- communication skills for different purposes and audiences;
- physical skills;
- creativity, critical thinking, skills of enquiry and investigation.

Assessments based on observation help us to:

- gather information about how a child is settling in to the Nursery/ Reception class;
- monitor how a child is using their time;
- look closely at inter relationships;
- monitor provision within areas;
- evaluate a special focus for learning;
- compare a child's responses when involved in a directed activity and one which is self initiated.

Observing children helps us to understand:

- what the child knows, can do and understands;
- the child's preferred learning style e.g. supported, independent, in a peer group;
- what the child's interests are;
- what the next steps for individuals and groups of children might be.

We can also evaluate:

- the learning environment and planned provision;
- whether we are supporting all children effectively to help them to progress towards their next stage of development.

The Role of Parents

Early years education is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives. This policy therefore acknowledges the role of parents and carers as the child's first educators and affirms the value of continuing parental involvement in education.

Relationships with parents and carers will be promoted by:

- sensitive induction procedures and the provision of a variety of opportunities for contact between home and school both formally and informally.
- sharing insights about a child's development, progress, attainments and needs
- sharing information relating to schemes of work/planning
- appropriate and effective means of communication
- opportunities to participate in school life in a variety of ways
- delivering phonics workshops for parents
- inviting parents to a special Reception Welcome Assembly, delivered by our Year 6 pupils
- Providing all parents with Little Star Vouchers and a learning selfie email address so they can share their child's achievements with their class teacher and peers.
- Giving the opportunity for Stay and Play days and encouraging parents to support with projects
- Providing opportunities for parents to attend Parent and Child After school clubs.

- Providing opportunities for Parents to make comments on their child's class learning on the Class blog.
- Providing opportunities for parents to access their child's class dojos so they can support with behaviour.

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 their children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts within our Foundation Stage.
- ensuring that the children and their parents 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 nursery, and again before entry to the reception class.
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Foundation Stage;
- ensuring that parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the Foundation Stage;
- 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 nursery during the first half 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.

Key Person/ Family Worker

Each child is assigned a 'key person' by the end of their first week of Nursery/ Reception. Parents/ carers will be informed of the key person's name and their role explained. The key person or as we call it 'family worker' helps ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person will seek to engage and support parents/ carers in guiding their child's development at home. They will help families engage with more specialist support. However there will be an overarching ethos where parents feel welcomed and able to speak with any member of staff that they deem appropriate. Key persons will spend time with their family worker group each day in order to ensure they know their children well.

Wider Links

In order to fully support each child within our Foundation Stage and their families, wider links are established with other agencies. We work closely alongside other agencies including SAIS, speech therapists, paediatricians, health visitors and occupational therapists where further support for children has been identified.

The EYFS team along with Senior Leadership are part of EYFS networks. The CORE and CONNECT groups, where teaching staff from outstanding provisions share good practice and ideas. Kew Woods Primary School is also a member of the Southport Learning Partnership EYFS cluster. Practitioners meet and share good practice on a termly basis.

Outdoors

We aim to provide a safe, stimulating outdoor environment where space is used effectively to enable children to use the school grounds as a context for learning throughout the year, exploring a broad and balanced curriculum and using a range of interesting resources suitable to their individual needs.

Objectives

1. use the school grounds as a context and a natural resource for learning

2. include the school grounds when planning for learning
3. enable children to access the school grounds on a daily basis whatever the weather
4. ensure that the school grounds offer children the opportunity to investigate and explore, problem solve, use their imagination and creativity
5. ensure the outdoors offers children opportunities to develop their large motor skills
6. ensure that children enjoy energetic activity outdoors and the feeling of wellbeing that it brings
7. observe and assess and record the learning that happens in the garden areas/ outdoor classroom.
8. give children opportunity to plan and have ownership for their learning in the garden areas/ outdoor classroom
9. help children to care for the outside environment through the context of the garden/ outdoor classroom
10. enable children to work on their own and with others
11. enable children to develop an appreciation of natural beauty and a sense of wonder about the world
12. respect the outdoor environment and to care for living things
13. enable children to manage and use the space and freedom afforded by the garden/ outdoor classroom
14. give children the opportunity to relax, enjoy themselves and have fun outdoors
15. use tools safely and effectively and to follow safety rules.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Foundation Stage Leader will collect in assessment at four points during the year (December, March and June) and the on entry data (October). Planning and evidence will be monitored on a half termly basis in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team. Monitoring and analysis of results against the 'development matters' take place each term, as does tracking of phonics (Read Write Inc scheme) progress in EYFS classes. Observations of teaching in the Foundation Stage will be carried out by both the Foundation Stage Leader and the Senior Leadership Team. Pupil Progress meetings take place on a termly basis with the class teacher and Senior Leadership Team.

Review and Continuing Professional Development

Information is collected annually to inform the school's development plan. The Foundation Stage Leader and Curriculum Manager monitor staff training needs and ensure that there is a balance in the courses provided, both in terms of the school development plan and professional requirements as manifested through the performance management process and informal staff discussions.

Reviewed: Annually