



Foundation Stage Policy

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Responsibility for this policy lies with (Headteacher, Full Governing Body, Curriculum Committee or Finance & Resources Committee)	Curriculum Committee
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Our Vision for our Foundation Stage

At Edward Pauling Primary School the Foundation Stage covers the development of children from the start of Nursery to the end of Reception year. It recognises early childhood as an important stage of life and has its own particular strengths and needs. The Foundation Stage acknowledges the wealth of experiences and skills that children bring with them as they begin their early years of education and aims to build upon this whilst extending their social, emotional, intellectual and physical development. We recognise the important role parents and carers play in their child's early development and value their continued support in developing the children's full potential.

Philosophy and Aims

Planning in Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available to download at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/299391/DFE-00337-2014.pdf .

This clearly defines what we teach. The following policy details the specifics of our setting.

The Foundation Stage sets out to:

- provide a secure, stimulating and challenging learning environment which encourages children to work and play independently
- develop each child's knowledge, skills and enjoyment in all areas of experience, building on prior learning
- challenge children and set high expectations for learning
- offer the children a structured programme of learning opportunities that are responsive to the needs of individuals, fostering learning across all areas of children's development
- develop concepts, attitudes, processes and skills which provide the foundation for lifelong learning
- provide a learning environment and curriculum that takes into consideration each child's social and emotional needs, ability and special needs, gender, cultural identity and race
- establish good partnerships with parents and carers, where they feel valued and able to contribute to and participate in school life

We support our aims by (please note that this list is not extensive):

- During home visits staff capture key information, such as: key medical/health information, language(s) spoken, EAL level, known triggers, toileting/intimate care needs, preferred comfort strategies, family/carer contact and access constraints, cultural/religious needs, preferred pronouns, known strengths and interests, and any SEND/EHCP or external involvement.
- Add any reasonable adjustments (differentiation, additional adult support, resources such as visual timetables, sensory tools) to the termly class Provision Map and the weekly/focus group plans.
- Curriculum adaptations to meet individual needs, such as: adapting vocabulary and prior knowledge checklists for unit starters (pre-teach for EAL) Ensure texts and examples reflect pupils' cultural identities.
- Environment adjustment to meet individual needs, such as: visual timetables, labelled resources, quiet zones and culturally responsive displays
- Keep parents/carers updated after each significant intervention review (termly or sooner for high need).

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (DfE 2014: 1.3), they support children's learning in all other areas, they are known as the prime areas.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The Nursery and Reception teachers plan activities within the Nursery and Reception classrooms with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. An end of year report is written linked to the characteristics of effective learning for parents.

The three characteristics are;

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things

Characteristics of School Readiness

School readiness can be broken down into multiple characteristics. Each characteristic plays into the social, physical, and intellectual elements we mentioned before. Understanding where a child is at in terms of these characteristics will determine how 'school ready' they are:

The various characteristics of school readiness are:

- Self-Regulation
- Sensory Processing
- Receptive Language (Understanding)
- Expressive Language (Talking)
- Articulation
- Executive Functioning
- Emotional Development/Regulation
- Social Skills
- Planning/Sequencing

Self-Regulation

This relates to the ability to obtain, maintain, and change emotion, behaviour, attention and activity levels in line with a certain task or situation. In other words, how a child can adapt to various situations, be it playing outside or learning inside the classroom.

Sensory Processing

Sensory processing is a form of stimulation that occurs in various environments, as well as in one's own body that influences attention and learning. This would affect things like how a child might sit, hold a pencil, and listen to others.

Receptive Language (Understanding)

Receptive language refers to how children understand language that is passed to them. They need to be able to understand questions that are posed to them in order to respond accordingly.

Expressive Language (Talking)

Expressive language links with receptive language, a child will need to be able to communicate with others for them to function and get the most out of their education.

Articulation

Articulation refers to how a child pronounces individual sounds in words.

Executive Functioning

Executive functioning relates to a higher order of reasoning and thinking skills. For example, a child that demonstrates executive functioning will have a pretty good idea of what they need to pack to take to school (i.e. completed homework).

Emotional Development/Regulation

Emotional development is how a child perceives and responds to their emotions. Children go through a wave of emotions at a young age, so it's important for them to understand why they're feeling this way and how to process it in line with school.

Social Skills

A child's ability to engage in reciprocal interactions with others either verbally or non-verbally. School is a very social environment, meaning children will need to be prepared to speak with teachers, fellow children, and others without worry.

Planning/Sequencing

When it comes to school readiness, planning and sequencing are key. For example, how a child performs a multi-step task, or activity performance, will determine how effective they are at developing integral skills. Skills that will help them later in life.

A child may not achieve all the characteristics on entry, on entry assessment will support practitioners and parents/carers to ensure that appropriate next steps are in place to provide the right level of assistance.

Children's Induction in the Foundation Stage

It is important to have a comprehensive and secure induction programme to ensure all children, parents and carers have a successful and enjoyable start to school life.

Home Visits

Nursery staff visit all children at home during the first weeks of the Autumn Term and Reception staff visit those children who are new to the school. Teachers and families complete a form detailing information relating to their children's:

- previous learning experiences, such as playgroups and other Nursery settings
- individual interest, preferences and strengths
- home language, ethnicity and faith traditions
- general social and emotional well-being
- health matters and dietary preferences
- emergency contact numbers

School Induction

All children in Foundation Stage have a gradual induction to their classes, so that they are able to settle into their new environment and make new friends. During the induction period staff have the opportunity to develop relationships quickly with the children and provides ample opportunity to assess their abilities and identify any needs which will form the basis of a carefully planned individual programme of study.

The typical induction period in Nursery lasts for a period of about three to four weeks, depending on the needs of the children. Nursery children start the year attending either a morning or afternoon session before all the children are introduced to each other and attend shorter sessions.

The typical induction period in Reception lasts for a period of about a week, depending on the needs of the children. Reception children start with shorter sessions and this is quickly extended to their full entitlement. Staff will work alongside parents if there are some children who would benefit from a longer induction period.

Parents and Carers as Partners

Children's parents and carers have a central role in supporting their child's well-being and learning. Staff are committed to developing a positive partnership with parents and carers with a shared sense of purpose, mutual respect and a willingness to co-operate.

We aim to do this by:

- Inviting parents to an open morning during the term before their child starts school
- Encouraging parents to talk to Early Years staff if there are any concerns
- Offering a range of activities which support the involvement of parents, such as weekly letters, curriculum evenings, workshops based on key areas of need (e.g. reading/phonics) and parents evenings
- Actively encourage and welcome parental involvement in a range of classroom activities, utilising their strengths and expertise

Supporting Parents and Carers to prepare children for Nursery or Reception who have SEND

At Edward Pauling Primary we support parents to prepare children with SEND for Nursery/Reception through a planned, person-centred transition process (Plan- Do- Review) that begins during the home visit. The information collected supports to generate an active plan or a short Transition Plan that sets 2–3 SMART targets for the first 6–8 weeks, names the key adult, lists required equipment/supplies and records reasonable adjustments (seating, visual timetable, sensory aids, intimate-care needs). Copies are then shared with any staff in the environment before the child's first day.

Daily teacher observations, TA notes and any baseline assessments feed into the first reviews. Any ongoing concerns are shared either at an half termly Every Child Matters meeting, with the DSL or SENDCo to follow up so provision is timely, monitored and adapted. The SENDCo and Pastoral Lead co-ordinate multi-agency input (SALT, health visitor, Early Help) with parental consent, signpost to the Local Offer.

We offer phased or bespoke entry (extra home visits, shorter days, familiar adult accompaniment) where helpful, provide an agreed communication schedule with parents (2-week and 6–8 week reviews as a minimum), and share simple, practical home-activities to reinforce targets (language, routines, toileting).

Learning and Teaching in the Foundation Stage

Foundation Stage staff aim to provide children with the social and emotional support they need during their first years at school. They help children adjust to the new social context in which they find themselves and to a range of challenges, fostering confidence in learning. All staff aim to create successful and stimulating learning situations for individuals and groups and every opportunity is taken to support our children's learning through meaningful contexts including play.

Play

Play is a very important feature of children's early learning, through play children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, develop social skills and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. Children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems and play allows the children to explore feelings and fears in controlled and safe situations.

The Role of the Adult

In order for play to become a powerful vehicle for learning, the quality of adult support must be varied but significant. To create an appropriate and stimulating learning environment for meaningful play to take place, the adult must:

- facilitate learning opportunities through observation and discussion of and with children
- plan for resources and materials to be accessible to foster spontaneous and structured play
- motivate children through interaction, encouragement and making provision for next steps
- enable children to process and develop their knowledge and skills by communicating their thoughts and ideas, and by listening to what they are saying
- assess children's play through ongoing observation and record keeping which, in turn, will inform future planning

The Learning Context

We aim to encourage independence and develop a sense of responsibility in the children by creating a welcoming, well-organised learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that also provides children with opportunities for discovery across the curriculum.

We ensure the physical layout of the classroom remains constant to encourage familiarity and independence, although we appreciate the need for flexibility in order to challenge and stimulate.

Outdoors

All children have free flow access to the outside learning environment in all weathers and all children and staff have access to wet weather clothing to enable this.

Planning

Successful planning involves clear perceptions about the objectives of the Early Years Curriculum, and how different activities can contribute towards their achievement.

Curriculum planning will be related to:

- The children's stage of development
- Individual needs and interests
- Relevant development matter statements
- Teachers assessment and progression notes

Planning is a continuous process and learning intentions helps to identify key learning points and supports the planning of experiences or activities. Adults observe children's responses to these activities and use this knowledge to promote and extend learning. There is a continuous cycle involving planning, observing and assessing.

Observation and Assessment

As children enter Nursery staff complete an on entry assessment within the first half term assessing any barriers to their learning and reflecting on their ability to have quickly settled into the learning environment. All Reception children within the first six weeks of starting school partake in the national baseline assessments, devised by government. Similarly, on entry assessments are completed within the first half term as children enter Reception assessing any barriers to their learning relating to their communication, physical and PSED abilities- all key components of the EYFS curriculum.

Pupil Progress

Staff have been supported by referring to Development Matters and Birth to Five documents to devise assessment criteria. These assessment criteria's will be used across the Early Years and will be reported according to whether a child is *on track* or *not on track* as being age appropriate for that point in the year by staff. Staff will update assessment records once per term and share them with school leaders during pupil progress meetings.

Early Learning Goals

The Early Learning Goals are completed at the end of the year as a summative assessment and shared with the year one team in school, reported to the Local Authority and Reception Parent

Roles and Responsibilities

The Early Years Leader will:

- Monitor the quality and the appropriateness of provision
- Ensure resources are appropriate allocated and be responsible for the foundation stage budget
- Ensure all staff are aware of the Foundation Stage policy and induction procedures
- Attend local authority courses for Early Years co-ordinators
- Identify staff training needs
- Monitor planning and practice within the Foundation team
- Monitor assessment procedures within the Foundation Stage
- Meet regularly with the Early Years team to share information and discuss provision
- Oversee trainees, students and work placements
- Communicate with the Senior Leadership Team on Early Years issues
- Ensure that Early Years considerations are addressed in school policies

All foundation Stage Teachers will:

- Plan and provide an appropriate curriculum
- Work with the SENCO in the early identification of children with special needs
- Complete records and reports for each child
- Establish and maintain a positive relationship with parents and carers
- Communicate with parents on their child's progress through regular discussions
- Monitor and record progress of those children with special educational and welfare needs and record observations

All Early Years Practitioners will:

- Work in close co-operation with and under the supervision of teachers to provide and maintain an environment where all children are secure and learning may take place
- Have full involvement in and initiate, where appropriate, a range of activities and play situations
- Assist with planning, observations and assessment
- Liaise with other staff regarding I.E.P's for children with special needs