

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

March 2019

The reasons for this policy are:

- To reflect on current Early Years Foundation Stage practice in the school and update existing policies.
- This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

Policy review

The Foundation Stage Leader has updated this policy with consultation from the Leadership Team.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

Admission Arrangements

As required by law, and in line with all Essex Infant and Primary Schools, we offer a full-time place to all children from the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in the school year. The law does not require a child to start school until the start of the term following their fifth birthday. Compulsory school age is reached at that point. Where entry is deferred, the school will hold the place for that child and not offer it to another child. The parent would not however be able to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted. Our Foundation Stage provision will take account of the fact that our children with spring and summer birthdays are still very young. When the children start school we operate a phased entry in groups so the children can settle and learn routines with a lot of adult support. By the fourth week of the Autumn Term all the children are in school full time.

The Purpose and Aims of the Foundation Stage.

The Foundation Stage is a distinct phase for younger children entering school. It is in the Foundation years that the children develop a positive attitude to learning, social integration and personal organisation. Children joining John Ray Infants have already learnt a great deal. Many have attended one of the many settings in our community.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- **Quality and consistency** so that every child makes good progress.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between staff and with parents/ carers.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

The early year's education we offer our children is based on the following Early Years Foundation Stage principles:

- **The Unique Child**

Every child is a competent learner. Our commitments to each child are focused around development; inclusion; safety; health and well-being.

- **Positive Relationships**

Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or key person. Our commitments are focused around respect; partnership with parents; supporting learning; and the role of the key person.

- **Enabling Environments**

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's learning. Our commitments are focused around observation, assessment and planning; support for every child; the learning environment; and the wider context – transitions, continuity, and multi-agency working. Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between staff and parents/ carers.

- **Learning and Development**

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. All areas of learning are equally important and inter-connected.

All children are given equal access to the Foundation Stage curriculum, regardless of race, culture, religion, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability. All parents are made to feel welcome and to take an active part in their child's education. We strive to establish an effective partnership between parents by communication and a two-way exchange of information.

Planning

Teachers plan collaboratively weekly, usually using a book or topic as the basis for the week's activities. Planning is creative and flexible taking into account children's ideas and interests. Once assessed, children are grouped according to their ability and needs. Learning objectives are planned for accordingly. Children with special needs and requiring additional support are identified early and referred to the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, so that they receive the appropriate intervention programme and assistance.

For all children to access the curriculum, the work will be presented in a variety of ways allowing the needs of all children to be met. Individuals or groups will be catered for through breaking down the task/ objective into smaller achievable goals, or extending the children by using additional, more complex, objectives. The actual tasks set may be different, as would the support and expectation. The use of questioning, including open-ended questions, is also a valuable tool when tailoring the learning to individual needs. Within the Foundation Stage the tasks/ activities planned for will provide opportunities using the whole range of teaching and learning strategies as laid down in the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff will reflect on the different ways that children learn and transfer these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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.

The Curriculum

The Foundation Stage curriculum at John Ray Infants provides a high quality teaching programme which promotes children's learning. During their time in Foundation Stage each child is working towards achieving and where appropriate exceeding the "early learning goals" which are organised into seven 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
- 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
- Expressive Arts and Design

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences which help them make sense of the world. Planning encourages creative first hand experiences, through the exciting topics linked to the children's interests. We aim to encourage a positive attitude to learning so that children are ready to cope confidently with the National Curriculum as they move to Years 1 and 2.

Communication and Language

- Good listening and speaking skills are encouraged through talk partners, role-play, circle time, class assemblies, listening to story tapes and through the sharing of books.
- Giving children opportunities to experience rich language environments.
- Speak and listen in a range of situations.
- Develop confidence and skills in expressing themselves.

Physical Development

- Children have access to activities in the inside and outside classroom that develop both gross and fine motor skills.
- Creative activities such as finger gym, sand trays, construction toys and cutting within the classroom encourage the development of the fine motor skills needed before the child is ready to write.
- In the outside classroom children have access to our purpose built Pirate ship complete with a climbing wall, scooters, space hoppers, balls and big construction which help to develop gross motor and coordination skills.
- Children have a PE lesson once a week and opportunities to develop their physical skills with small group games interventions.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Children are encouraged to become independent by taking an active role in organising activities and by accepting responsibility for their own possessions.
- Interaction between children during activities in the classroom, the outside area and in small groups is encouraged to aid social development.
- Children are given opportunities to express their feelings individually in a relaxed atmosphere.
- Children attend Forest School which has been proven to develop children's self esteem.
- A caring and sensitive attitude towards others is nurtured by example and stories.
- Children are taught the school's core values within the curriculum.
- A sense of right and wrong is introduced by the use of our School code of conduct.

Literacy

- Sounds are introduced through our systematic phonics program linked to Letters and Sounds and Jolly Phonics.
- Children develop a good understanding of phonics through visual aids and active games.
- Reading is introduced through the hearing and seeing of familiar words in and around the classroom, reading in large and small groups, as well having experience of a rich variety of

stories, poetry and non-fiction books. Children are encouraged to value books by sharing and enjoying reading.

- Hand control is developed initially through drawing and writing patterns, and through activities to develop fine motor skills including finger gym. The children then progress to correct letter formation.
- Independent writing is encouraged through all areas of learning by the use of a range of mark making tools and resources.

Maths

- Mathematical understanding is developed through stories, songs, games and imaginative play. Practical activities take place within the inside and outside classrooms so that children enjoy experimenting and so become curious about numbers, shape patterns and measures.
- Daily activities/routines are used as opportunities for children to problem solve and develop mathematical vocabulary and thinking, e.g. counting the lunch boxes.
- Responses can take place orally, practically and written according to the activity and individual child's ability.
- Children are encouraged to develop and talk about their own strategies for solving problems.

Understanding the World

- The natural environment of the school grounds and visits to the Forest School are used to attract the children's curiosity and interest in the world around them.
- We have our own chickens which we have to care for daily as well as collect eggs that we use in class for snack or cooking.
- Scientific language and vocabulary is developed by the use of exciting investigative materials and experiments.
- Visits are arranged to places of interest to stimulate the children and increase their knowledge.
- Children record their work and thoughts orally and pictorially.
- ICT skills are introduced through computers, Ipads and an Interactive Whiteboard in each classroom, Beebot (programmable toy) and weekly lessons in the ICT Suite.

Expressive Arts and Design

- Children have access to a large range of materials. Children are able to design and make for themselves encouraging self-expression and imagination.
- Free access to various media is encouraged to allow the children to try different techniques for themselves.
- Resources (natural, man made, and from different cultures) are used to stimulate and extend the children's knowledge.
- Plant life is used for observational work.
- Children are introduced to musical instruments, through music sessions and singing sessions as well as having access to them in the outside classroom.

The Learning Environment

The Foundation Stage consists of 4 classes. The Foundation Stage is well resourced; the children are encouraged to select activities from the storage units and to return them when finished. Each classroom is bright and welcoming with a range of different areas and activities for the children to select. Displays are interactive to develop the children's curiosity. Children are able to choose when to eat their snack by selecting fruit as well as other foods bought with the voluntary parental donations. The children have access to a well resourced, secure outside area throughout the day. All seven of the areas of learning are planned for in the outside classroom. A variety of resources are available to the children in the outdoor area. Children are able to explore independently and also take part in adult led activities.

Assessment & Reporting

Children are assessed on entry to school and throughout the Foundation Stage, as part of the learning and teaching process. Children's development is assessed in relation to the Development Matters statements and Early Learning Goals. These assessments are made on the basis of our knowledge of the whole child through continuing observations. Evidence of each child's learning is recorded through photos and notes on Tapestry which is an online Learning Journal. Parents can access this throughout the year and add their own observations and comments which forms a valuable dialogue between school and home. Teachers also keep assessment notes of activities completed with the children during adult directed activities. Development Matters statements are assessed and completed throughout the year so individual achievements and future next steps can be set in the Autumn, Spring and Summer Terms. At the end of the year children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals as to whether they are emerging, expected or exceeding. This data is submitted to the LA.

It is hoped by the end of the year Foundation Stage, Children will reach a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). Children will be defined as having reached a GLD at the end of the EYFS if they achieve at least the expected level in the Early Learning Goals in the prime areas of learning (PSED, PD and CAL) and the Early Learning Goals in the specific areas of Mathematics and Literacy.

Parental Involvement

In the term before their child starts school parents are invited to bring their child to a class visit where the child can play while we chat informally to the parents. We will then have a series of transition visits for the children and during these visits the parents will be able to attend an Induction meeting led by the Head teacher and Foundation Stage Leader where the Head teacher describes the ethos of the school and clarifies general information for parents. The Foundation Stage Leader will talk about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents may tour the school and meet the Foundation staff and other parents. The Home School Liaison Worker and Special Needs Co-ordinator attends the meeting, informing parents of their role and parents are able to discuss any problems they may have at this early stage.

Once the baseline is complete parents will be invited into school during the Autumn Term to discuss these and to set learning next steps. Further learning review meetings with the teacher, parent and child takes place in the Spring Term and Summer Term.

Parents may wish to make a private appointment with the class teacher at any time or the teacher may themselves request a discussion with the parents. We also make ourselves available after school to speak with parents if the need arises. We aim to make ourselves as approachable as possible so that parents feel able to discuss any problem, however small, with us.

Parents are encouraged to take part in 'Stay and Play' one morning a term where the children share games and toys with their parents and younger siblings. Regular tea and chat sessions take place on a variety of subjects, e.g. Head lice, reading workshops, behavioural problems.

Tea and Chat mornings take place for FS parents at the beginning of the year for parents to ask questions about anything they are unsure about and find out about what is happening in school. This is also a good opportunity for parents to get to know each other.

Parents can share their child's achievements from home by filling in a 'Wow!' star. This is shared in school and then put on display in each class before being made into a book.

Staffing

Early Years teaching Staff are supported by qualified Nursery Nurses (N.N.E.B.) and experienced Learning Support Assistants (LSA). We aim to keep adult/child ratios as high as possible to give the pupils the individual attention and care they deserve.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) are assigned to individual children with specific special needs and who require 1:1 support.

Monitoring and Review

The Foundation Stage Leader is responsible for the day-to-day organisation of the department. The Leader liaises with Pre-School and Nursery Units. We are a member of the Braintree Foundation Stage Cluster Group. Regular meetings are held with the Leadership Team and the Head Teacher. The Foundation Stage leader monitors the standards and progress of the children and the effectiveness of the policy by;

- Observing lessons
- Moderating assessments
- Working alongside and planning with colleagues
- Talking to children.

Transition

The children who start school come from a variety of settings. The Foundation Stage Leader visits as many children as possible in their settings during the Summer Term. Those settings that we are unable to visit, the Foundation Stage Leader will contact them to find out about individual children. Children starting in September have an opportunity to visit the school for play sessions during the Summer Term. Any children that we are made aware of with Special Educational Needs are visited in their setting by the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and the Foundation Stage Leader.

We also arrange for the Class Teacher and LSA to make a Home visit for all the children in their class before the children start school so that we are familiar to both the children and parents. This will give parents a chance to discuss their child with us, as well as reassure them if they feel anxious about starting school.

Transition from Foundation Stage to Year 1:

Foundation Stage and Year One staff meet in the Summer Term to discuss individual children's abilities and needs. Children visit their new class and teacher during the Summer Term. Parents have an opportunity to meet their child's new class teacher and see the classroom that they will be moving to.

Approved by Governors.....

Date.....

Review Date: 3 YEARS

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according the EYFS statutory framework.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy