

Vision

To provide a rich a varied learning community where all children reach their potential.

Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

- “Early Years Foundation Stage Profile”
Department for Education 2014

Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **A unique child.** We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement as well as celebration and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning.
- **Positive relationships.** We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.
- **Enabling environments.** We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children’s development. Through observations we assess the children’s interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.
- **Learning and development.** The Reception classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. We greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS for children is from birth to five years of age. All children begin school with a wide variety of experiences and learning and it is the privilege of the adults working in the foundation stage to accept the task of building upon that prior learning experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning ensuring that

parents and guardians and staff work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children in their care.

Aims

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic wellbeing. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these five outcomes.

We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

At Grewelthorpe & Fountains Schools Federation, we aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child including children with additional needs.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Work in partnership with parents and guardians and value their contributions ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability.
- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.
- Provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs, which are inclusive rather than parallel.

PLANNING - STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The Foundation Stage Curriculum

The foundation stage curriculum is organised into three Prime areas and four Specific areas of learning:

Prime areas:

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Specific areas:

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Playing and Exploring

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.

POLICY INTO PRACTICE

Whole class teaching focuses on teacher modelling and demonstrating strategies for learning including discussion and exploration. These are an important and integral part of the teaching process. Scaffolded activities enable pupils to experience success in their learning and give them the confidence to progress independently.

Collaborative learning is encouraged through work in pairs, small and large groups. Independent learning is encouraged through differentiated tasks including independent tasks and collaborative talk.

Children are given opportunity to develop skills in child initiated activity and shown new skills and learning through the adult focused activity.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive.

Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and

consider their current interests, development and learning needs. All staff who work in the Foundation Stage are involved in this process.

The planning within the EYFS is based around the children's interests. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of long, short and recorded observations and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded and used to inform parents and guardians. We provide a weekly written summary in relation to the children's early learning goals to parents and guardians.

Learning Through Play

The federation does not make a distinction between work and play. Children learn through planned play activities and staff will decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities.

The Induction Process

During the Summer Term prior to starting school the following September the following visits are conducted:

- Reception Teacher will visit pre-school settings from which September's intake will be taken
- Each child and their parents and carers will be invited to spend some time at school in order to familiarise themselves with both the staff and the classroom environment.

Home and School Links

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we aim for the schools and parents and carers to work closely. This can have a very positive impact on a child's development but relies on a two-way flow of information and knowledge.

We will develop this working relationship between the school and parents and carers as follows:

- We will outline the school's expectations in a Learning Contract.
- We will hold a parent consultation early in the year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- We will publish a theme topic leaflet detailing the areas of learning and the overarching theme of the term or half-term.
- We will operate an "open door" policy that will allow parents and carers to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner. Conversely, if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- We will conduct workshops for parents and carers to enable them to be familiar with the teaching methods used in school to make it easier to emulate them at home.
- There will be opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning by assisting with guided reading.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Children with special educational needs will be supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Individual Provision Maps

identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support. The school's SEN Co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to staff and parents and for arranging external intervention and support as necessary.

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

Foundation Stage Profile

A judgement on the seven areas of learning must be completed for each child in the final term of the Foundation Stage. These results are reported to parents formally through parents meetings and the results sent to the LEA for analysis. If the children are meeting the Early Learning Goal they are awarded 'Expected', for those who work beyond the ELG they are given 'Exceeded' and those children who do not show they are working at the expected level they are 'Emerging'.

Teachers complete a baseline assessment at the end of the first half term, from which children's progress can be measured. Ongoing assessments are made using the Development Matters document to ensure the children are meeting the criteria to reach the expected level at the end of the Reception year. Children's progress through the Foundation Stage is reported to parents during termly parents meetings.

CONCLUSION

This policy also needs to be in line with other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

Teaching and Learning Policy

Responding to pupils' work / Feedback / Marking policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

Assessment Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Health and Safety Policy

APPENDICES

RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

Statutory Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Development Matters

Stepping Ahead file

Grewelthorpe & Fountains CE Primary Schools Federation

Policy:	Early Years Policy
Signed Chair of Governors:	
Date Signed:	
Governors Meeting Ratified:	8th February 2017
Review Date:	Spring 2018
Review schedule	Yearly