



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY:-

EVERY CHILD, EVERY CHANCE

This policy supports our aim to assess and develop pupils' communication, ensuring all pupils are maximising their communicative potential, through communication supportive practice.

This policy was adopted on:- _____ Date

Chair of Governing Body:- _____ Signature

_____ Date

Reviewed _____ Date

To Review:- _____ Date

THE FOREST SCHOOL
EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full 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. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.”

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

A Unique Child

At The Forest School 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 children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children at The Forest School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. 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 our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- careful observation of their self - initiated and adult led activities, which provides a foundation for our planning
- 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, supportive and stimulating learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- monitoring children’s progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

It is important to us that all children in the school are ‘safe’. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all our children.

Welfare

“Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.”

At The Forest School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

At The Forest School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children’s first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this by:

- We talk to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- We give the children the opportunity to spend time in class, before they begin school.
- We give all parents the opportunity to visit school as often as needed before their child begins school.
- We encourage parents to talk to the child’s teacher if there are any concerns.
- We encourage parents to contribute to the individual “learning journey” records kept for their child
- There are formal meetings for parents in the autumn and spring terms at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child’s progress with the teacher.
- Parents receive a report on their child’s attainment and progress at the end of the EYFS. There is also an opportunity to come to a meeting after these reports have been sent home if the parents wish it.
- All staff involved with the EYFS class aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.
- At The Forest School the EYFS teacher is the ‘Key Person’ to all children in EYFS, supported by the teaching assistants.

- Staff in the EYFS class meet with the feeder pre-school settings to share good practice and discuss current issues. Where children attend other settings, we aim to ensure continuity and coherence by sharing information about the children.

Enabling Environments

At The Forest School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS is based around termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly and daily planning, however the teacher alters these in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on the daily planning.

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 observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways and used to inform the EYFS Profile. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's and assessment scales. The parents are given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the teacher.

The Learning Environment

The 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 EYFS class is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS class has its own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At The Forest School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often linked.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our schools. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in the rest of our school. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- 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 work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- 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 about their learning (in their own individual way) and to develop independence;
- 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;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.

Play

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.”

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which helps them make sense of the world. They have the opportunity to practise skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually. The children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations; using their preferred communication method.

Active Learning

“Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.”

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. 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.

Providers 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

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor has the opportunity to discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. The Head teacher and subject coordinators carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

All quotations included in this document are taken from the Early Years Foundation Stage Handbook May 2008 or the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012.