



**WEST
ST LEONARDS**
PRIMARY ACADEMY

Early Years
Foundation Stage
Policy

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage extends from 0-5 years. Entry into our Foundation Stage is in the term after the child becomes 4 and ends at the end of the Reception year. Entry into our primary school is at the beginning of the school year in which the children are 5 (although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday).

The foundation stage is important in its own right, and also in preparing children for later schooling. It is the Early Learning Goals that set out what is expected of children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been learning in one of the various educational settings that exist in our community. The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers

Aims of the EYFS

The curriculum of the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by promoting and developing the prime areas of:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical development
- Language and communication

and the specific areas of:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

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Teaching and Learning Styles

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 or 2.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, carers and other settings that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in the teaching.
- The range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication.
- The carefully planned curriculum that ensures children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interest, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities.
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management.
- The support or learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors.
- The identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents.
- The good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school.
- The clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it.
- The regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the Foundation Stage.

Play in EYFS

Through play our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and 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.

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Inclusion in EYFS

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 we are planning for their learning.

At the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to 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 help them do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively.
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Employing resources that reflect diversity and that avoid 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 providing support (such as referrals to speech therapy) as necessary.

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The EYFS Curriculum

Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals. Our children's learning experiences when we are planning for their learning.

Reception classes have regular phonics sessions, following the guidance in the 'Letters and Sounds' document and in line with school policy.

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers use the national schemes of work, where appropriate, to support their planning for individual children. Our medium-term planning identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals, and also for those working towards National Curriculum levels.

Assessment

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarize their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. We record each child's level of development against the 17 Early Learning Goals as Emerging, Expected or Exceeding. We make regular assessments of children's learning. 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 both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

During the first term in Reception the teacher assesses the ability of each child. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

The teacher completes an assessment regularly, and then updates the tracking sheets. This provides a summary sheet for each child which feeds into the whole-school assessment and tracking process. We record each child's level of development to be just working towards, comfortably working within or securely working within the Development Matters age-bands. At the end of the final term in Reception we send a summary of these assessments to the LA for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information too at parental consultation meetings and in the ne-of-year report.

Each teacher keeps progress records and learning journals and records examples of each child's work. These progress books contain a wide range of

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evidence that we share with parents at each parental consultation meeting.

Parents receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strength and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June, and send them to parents in early July each year.

The Role of Parents

We believe that all parents and carers have an important role to play in the education of their child. We therefore recognize the role that parents have played, and their future role, in education the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.
- Visits by the teacher to all children in their home setting or childcare provision prior to their starting school.
- Opportunities given to the children to spend time with their teacher before starting school.
- Providing a pack of resources to support learning.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress through stay and read sessions etc and parent consultations.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- Arranging for a staggered start to Reception over the first week of term, so that the teacher can welcome each child individually into our school.
- Offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaborations between child, school and parents.
- Providing various activities that involve parents, through regular communication with home (including newsletters and home-school books) and inviting parents to curriculum evenings or stay-and-play sessions, in order to discuss the kind of work that the children are undertaking.

There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the parents discuss the child's progress with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment at the end of the year.

Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

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Approved: March 2015

Review: March 2017