

The Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Aim of the Trust

One Community. Many ideas. Everyone's future.

We aim to provide an exceptional education for every child in the Trust through an ethos of collaboration and high aspirations and through the principles of quality learning using curiosity, Exploration and discovery.

Introduction

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right.

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile - Department for Education, March 2014

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Parlaunt Park Primary Academy School children are admitted to reception in the September of the school year in which they will turn five.

Aims

We aim to support all children to become curious, independent learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

Key Principles

We view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education, therefore at Parlaunt Park Primary Academy School, we will:

- give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning
- provide a broad and balanced curriculum which embraces the themes, principles and commitments of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- ensure we are aware of children's involvement and readiness to learn
- provide opportunities for children to make choices which will facilitate Curiosity, Exploration and Discovery, thus developing independent, creative and confident learners
- provide opportunities for children to develop their communication, linguistic, investigative and problem-solving skills through interaction with adults and other children
- promote children's imagination in play through stimulating resources and activities within the inside and outside classrooms
- develop a partnership with parents/carers based on a shared understanding of the learning needs of the children
 - provide quality first hand, play based learning experiences that are well planned and contain an appropriate balance between different types of play, permeating all aspects of the curriculum
 - provide a range and balance of child initiated, adult initiated and adult focused activities indoors

and outdoors

Structure of EYFS:

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on 4 overarching principles:

- Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

Unique Child

At Parlaunt Park Primary Academy School, we recognise that every child is unique, constantly learning and 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.

Positive Relationships

At Parlaunt Park Primary Academy School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Enabling Environments

At Parlaunt Park Primary Academy School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development. Our environment enables children to feel confident, secure and challenged. Children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning alongside planned opportunities provided by staff.

Learning and Developing

The three afore mentioned principles help to promote learning and development. Practitioners teach children by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas of the curriculum.

The EYFS Curriculum

Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals.

Prime Areas:

Personal Social and Emotional Development:

PSED underpins much of children's overall learning and development. It focusses on the way in which children experience and manage their own emotions, which underpins how they behave. Children gain increasing control of their emotions as they develop.

Parlaunt Park Primary Academy fosters and develops relationships between home and school, and wherever possible seeks to make links with the community as a whole. Children are encouraged to learn to work, share, take turns and co-operate with others. They are encouraged to be independent and make choices for themselves. They are also encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of others and to respect other cultures and beliefs. Children are enabled to become confident and develop a positive self-image.

Physical Development

Our curriculum is arranged to help children acquire skills to support their gross and fine motor skills. We recognise that physical development supports the other prime areas. Children are given opportunities to, use equipment, develop and practise their fine and gross motor skills. Children develop an increasing understanding of how their body works and what is needed to be healthy. Opportunities are provided both indoors and outdoors, and by working with a wide range of resources and equipment.

Communication and Language

The ability to communicate enables children to do so much. If a child cannot understand and/or be understood, overall development is affected. Therefore, we provide a language rich environment and focus on developing children's competence in speaking and listening. We aim to extend and enrich children's vocabulary through Talk for Writing, story time, rhymes, role-play and group discussions. Children are encouraged to share their own experiences through speaking and acting out events in imaginative play and talking about their own ideas during group work. They are encouraged to take part in class activities such as music sessions, show and tell and circle games.

Specific Areas:

Literacy

We have a variety of resources for the children to use to help them develop early literacy skills. Writing is a huge area of focus for Early Years and every opportunity must be taken to encourage the children to mark make. Writing opportunities will be taken to the child. Initially the adult will scribe what the child wants to say but as the child becomes more confident they will contribute an increasing amount to the written work.

Scribing with the child:

- Sit beside the child.
- Make sure the child watches you write.
- Use teacher knowledge of child to decide which teaching is appropriate.
- Say the words as you write them.
- Sometimes stop and read what have written and then let child carry on.
- Sound out some words as you write them.
- Point out finger spaces, capitals and full stops.
- Exaggerate some letter formation.
- Ask the child to sound out some words.
- Ask the child to write a few letters or words – as appropriate to to the individual child.
- Use terms such as 'characters', 'author' etc.
- The story is the important part – keep up momentum – the teaching should not slow down the scribing too much.

Children will be encouraged at every opportunity to mark make. Opportunities to write will arise naturally through play and mark making resources are accessible to children in all areas of the classroom both indoors and outdoors.

Children will receive daily phonics. This initially will be whole class and then as the children are assessed this will take the form of differentiated phonics groups.

Maths

Developing mathematical understanding and concepts can be a very abstract. At Parlaunt Park Primary Academy, we aim for children to achieve mathematical understanding and a firm foundation for numeracy through practical activities. Children are given the opportunity to learn about number,

shape, space, position, pattern, measurement, simple calculations, problem solving and how to tell the time.

Understanding of the World

We aim to guide children to make sense of their physical world and their community. All children are given opportunities to solve problems, investigate, make decisions and experiment. They will learn about living things, their environment, the world around them and the people who are important in their lives. Children are also given opportunities to develop computing skills, and to work with, and use modern technology.

Expressive Arts and Design

We provide opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design, technology, music, drama, movement, dance and imaginative play activities. Children are given opportunities to make paintings, drawings, collages, models and use basic musical instruments. Children also learn new songs and rhymes and enjoy singing them with each other. Through various times during the year children are given the opportunity to participate in school productions and assemblies.

Not one of these seven curriculum 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 child-initiated activities and daily adult led input. Through play and practical experiences children learn about the world and their place in it.

We set realistic, yet challenging, expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Outside

“Outdoor learning makes a major contribution to children’s development. Young children will be missing out on important learning opportunities if quality outdoor provision is not available to them regularly.”

The Great Outdoors, Margaret Edgington

We recognise the importance of outside play and we aim to create an outdoor area which is stimulating, exciting, takes account of the children’s interests and is used throughout the year. The outside area is the fourth classroom and there are a variety of resources to facilitate learning.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. Reception teachers plan activities within the setting with these in mind. These characteristics highlight the importance of a child’s attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

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.

Teaching and Learning

We include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood and taken on.

Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered together on the carpet as a class. In these slots we focus on maths, talk for writing, phonics, stories, PE and topic work. These whole-class sessions help to develop a range of learning behaviours: learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, sitting still and so on.

We ensure there is a balance of adult-led, adult-initiated and child-initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role varies, they need to listen, observe and intervene at timely points as well as model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing.

In some cases, the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible.

Child-Initiated Activities (Play)

“Play is freely chosen by the child and is under the control of the child. The child decides how to play, how long to sustain the play, what the play is about, and what to play with. There are many forms of play, but it is usually highly creative, open-ended and imaginative. It requires active engagement of the players and can be deeply satisfying.”

National Strategies, 'Learning, playing and interacting'. DCSF, 2009.

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years provision. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions.

Planning

We use three stages of planning to consider how to meet the needs of the children.

●Long term

This is informed by the EYFS Outcomes and Early Learning Goals the children need to meet in their development.

●Medium term Plans

These plans cover the half term topic work that will be delivered, in EYFS it is recorded as a curriculum web. Medium term plans include the details of possible learning activities and opportunities in each of the areas of learning indoors and out.

●Short term

The weekly and daily plans identify the learning intentions/outcomes to be taught along with evaluations linked to the activities provided. The needs of individual learners, based on observations, are catered for in short term plans.

Inclusion

Our whole school ethos, as well as that of the foundation stage, embraces inclusion. We recognise and respect the abilities and strengths of our children at all levels of development and the wealth of knowledge and experience that they bring from their differing backgrounds and cultures.

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 planning for their learning and we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of individual children, so that children are able to reach their full potential. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We aim to 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.

We will provide: a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively; a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued; resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping; challenging activities for all children and for those whose ability and understanding are advanced. We will monitor children's progress and take action to provide support as necessary. Where a specific need is suspected we will liaise with the Special Educational Needs co-ordinator and seek advice from outside agencies, such as the speech and language service and the educational psychologist amongst others. We adhere to the Equal Opportunity and Inclusion policies of the school.

Early Years Pupil Premium – we will endeavour to identify our least advantaged pupils and inform parents or carers of their opportunity to apply for their child's entitlement to extra funding in school. All extra funding we receive will be used to support areas in which we identify that the child will best benefit. We will track children's progress to ensure that they are making good progress and to ensure that support is adjusted to target specific areas as the child develops

Assessment of Children

Throughout nursery and reception children's knowledge, understanding, skills and achievements are assessed and tracked using the developmental stages set out in the 'Early Excellence Assessment Tracker'.

Our assessment depends on us getting to know our children very well and to this end we gather information from a range of sources; observations of the children in play, in adult led activities, through discussions with parents and carers and through talking to the children. We keep written and photographic evidence to help us build up a picture of children's strengths and achievements and to help us to plan for children's next steps in learning.

At the start of both Nursery and Reception children are assessed to determine a baseline, or starting point, for their future learning. Judgements will be based on the adults' observations of children during activities and play. There will not be any form of testing and parent's/carer's views on their

child as a learner will be taken into account. Parents/carers will be given information of these starting points and information about next steps in a meeting during the Autumn term.

The Foundation Stage Profile, the end of year assessment of children's achievements in all areas of learning, is a statutory report. Observational evidence and samples of children's work throughout the school year will be used to assess children as 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding' based on their understanding and achievement of the Early Learning Goals set out in the EYFS curriculum. Parents/carers will be given information of their child's achievements in a written report at the end of the Summer term.

Partnership with parents and carers

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first educator, therefore we work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time.

We have an open-door policy, therefore teachers are available most mornings and afternoons to talk and to discuss matters. Parents meetings are held regularly to discuss individual progress and workshops are arranged throughout the year to provide information to support parents.

Transition

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children and their families, therefore we aim to make this transition as smooth as possible for each child, to enable them to settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

We offer a welcome meeting and teddy bears picnic event in June.

Home visits will also be undertaken, additionally EYFS staff will visit local day nurseries/playgroups that children will transfer from.

September Intake – To help children settle into Parlaunt Park Primary Academy in September, during the first week, children will have a staggered start. At the beginning of the week, children will stay for the morning session only. Towards the end of the week, children will stay for the whole day, before commencing full-time from the following week, unless staff and parents/carers agree that it is not in the best interests of an individual child to delay the start date.

At the end of reception children have the opportunity to meet with their new teachers in their classrooms on three occasions prior to starting Year one. At the end of each school year teachers have the opportunity to share their knowledge of each child's knowledge, understanding and achievements, including end of year assessment data, with their next class teacher to ensure that all teachers have a well-rounded picture of the children prior to the new school year.

Health & safety and safeguarding

We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2014).

We are a healthy school and our children under 5 receive free milk and all children have access to fresh water and free fruit from a Government scheme. Reception children who stay for lunch are eligible for free school meals or can choose to bring in a healthy packed lunch.

The foundation stage classrooms have access to their own toileting facilities and we teach the children the importance of hygiene, hand washing techniques and throughout the year we plan cooking activities to give children experiences of a range of healthy food.

Safeguarding

We follow school procedures for safeguarding. Visitors have to be pre-booked and all supporting documentation checked. Where the visit is a one-off, DBS checks will not be undertaken and staff will ensure the adult is not left alone with the children.

Accidents

We take all accidents seriously and always log and phone home immediately if a child bangs their head. We have cold compresses stored in the freezer.

Devices

Members of staff do not use their mobile phones, tablets, cameras or similar devices in the classroom or other areas occupied by children and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal devices. All personal devices, are to be locked away in staff lockers during the school day.

Members of staff do, however use school iPads or cameras to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children's portfolios, in class displays and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher and EYFS lead will ensure staff are adhering to the policy.

The Headteacher will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. Members of The Langley Academy Trust and The Parlaunt Park Primary Academy Local Governing Body will also undertake impact visits to assess and monitor effectiveness of EYFS.

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