

## **PARK SCHOOL - EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Early Years Foundation Stage at Park School applies to children from 3 months to the end of the Reception year. Children usually start school if they have turned 4 between 1<sup>st</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> August. Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday. However, for children who turn 4 years old during the summer term, parents can choose to defer starting school until September of the following year (which is the term after their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday). Key Stage 1 begins for our children at the beginning of Year 1. The Early Years Foundation Stage is important in its own right and in preparing children for later schooling. The learning and development requirements are detailed in The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024) as well as safeguarding and welfare requirements.
- 1.2 The majority of children join our Reception year having already begun their learning journey in an Early years Setting, including, our own Nursery.
- 1.3 The Early Years education we offer our children is based on the following documents and principles:
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024)
  - Childcare Act 2006
  - Birth to 5 Matters including Characteristics of Effective Learning

We strive to achieve this by:

- Getting to know each child
- Developing positive relationships with both children and their parents/carers
- Providing an enabling environment
- High quality interactions with passionate and knowledgeable practitioners
- Early identification of additional needs and appropriate intervention and support
- Opportunities for deep learning by providing a rich and stimulating environment both inside and outside
- Allowing children time and space to develop at their own rate and in their own way
- Aiming to start from the children's interests and build upon them
- Offering a structure for learning and content that matches the needs of young children
- We also, where necessary, liaise with previous settings/ current settings for those attending more than one.

### **2. AIMS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

The EYFS curriculum underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

#### **2.1 Characteristics of Effective Learning**

The EYFS lays out the Characteristics of Effective Learning as follows:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creative and Critical Thinking

#### **2.2 Prime Areas**

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development;
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language

## **2.3 Specific Areas**

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

## **3. TEACHING AND LEARNING STYLE**

3.1 Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

3.2 Play in the Early Years Foundation Stage

3.2.1 Through play, both indoors and outdoors, our children explore, develop and take ownership of their learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise, build up ideas, learn self-regulation and understand the need for boundaries. 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 likes and dislikes and are encouraged to participate in a variety of activities. The Nursery and Reception classes facilitate child initiated learning and follow a child-initiated planning approach that emphasises flexibility and extending children's interests. Staff use their observations with parent partnership to stretch and challenge each child.

3.3 The more general features of excellent practice in our Nursery and Reception that relate to the EYFS are:

- 3.3.1 the strong and positive partnership between teachers, teaching assistants, nursery practitioners and parents and carers. This is so that our children feel secure at school and nursery and develop a sense of well-being and achievement. We recognise that this is essential for children to learn and develop.
- 3.3.2 the understanding that teachers, teaching assistants and nursery practitioners have of how children develop and learn, and how this informs their teaching, interaction with the children and flexibility in delivering the curriculum;
- 3.3.3 the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences. Staff give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play, or use other means of communication, eg. Sign language or visual aids;
- 3.3.4 the curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- 3.3.5 the considered provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their cognitive, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- 3.3.6 the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence, self-regulation and self-management;
- 3.3.7 the importance of outdoor provision and providing a supportive and engaging environment for the children to learn in;
- 3.3.8 the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children from observations. These are regularly shared with parents. In Reception, this consists of 3 parent evenings and half termly reports alongside the Learning Journeys and the use of Blossom. In Nursery this is focussed on Blossom, supported by ongoing communication, and termly Parent/Teacher Evenings. Parents may also share learning and experiences from home.
- 3.3.9 the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience

prior to joining our school; (Refer to our Transition Policy)

- 3.3.10 the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- 3.3.11 the regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- 3.3.12 the mandatory requirement of safeguarding training for all staff.
- 3.3.13 the identification of SEN and support put in place.

#### **4. INCLUSION IN THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

- 4.1 In our school we believe that “Every Child Matters”. 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.
- 4.2 In the Early Years Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage although some children progress beyond this point. 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.
- 4.3 We meet the needs of all our children through:
  - 4.3.1 planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
  - 4.3.2 using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs;
  - 4.3.3 providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
  - 4.3.4 providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
  - 4.3.5 using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
  - 4.3.6 planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of any area of learning;
  - 4.3.7 monitoring children’s progress and taking action to provide support as necessary;
  - 4.3.8 planning and providing opportunities for their next steps in development;
  - 4.3.9 differentiated phonic phase groups in Reception;
  - 4.3.10 the learning environment, both inside and outside, is set out to maximise accessibility for the children;
  - 4.3.11 referring to outside agencies (e.g. Speech Therapy) when appropriate for our children;
  - 4.3.12 Early support – Come Talk With Me or Ready Steadi Chat;
  - 4.3.13 Use of whole school facilities.

#### **5. THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM**

- 5.1 The curriculum for the EYFS in our school reflects the areas of learning identified in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024). The experiences that our children meet enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across the prime and specific areas of learning.
- 5.2 The Early Learning Goals are in line with the objectives in the Statutory Framework, Birth to 5 Matters

and Development Matters. Once the children have been baselined they have daily mathematics and phonic inputs in Reception.

- 5.3 Birth to 5 Matters provides the basis for planning throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. In Reception national schemes of work where appropriate to support the planning for individual children.

## **6. ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1 We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate.
- 6.2 On arrival in Nursery. Parental discussions, settle in sessions and WellComm assessments provide the child's staffing points. Children are observed using the OAP cycle in the EY Framework. We carry out the progress check at 27 months which is shared with parents. We also ask parents to share any HV feedback from any point.
- 6.3 During the first half term in the Reception class, teachers use transfer document information, Face to Face meetings, Blossom entries, observations and Learning Journeys to determine where each child lies within each area of learning. We work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout the year, which are then shared with the Local Authority to provide Profile judgements. We inform progress throughout the Reception year with parents at termly parents evenings and our written reports throughout the year. The child's next teacher uses information to make plans for the year.
- 6.4 In Nursery, each child has an online Portal (Blossom) whereby progress is documented through observations and photographic evidence. In Reception this is presented through Blossom, Reports and their Green Books.
- 6.5 Parents in Reception receive reports that offer comments on each child's progress. They highlight the child's strengths and development needs and give details of the child's general progress. We complete these termly.

## **7. HEALTH**

- 7.1 At Park School and Nursery we recognise the importance of promoting good oral hygiene. It is important we help the children to develop good habits from an early age. We do this through discussing healthy food choices, teeth brushing and the importance of regularly visiting the dentist.

## **8. THE ROLE OF PARENTS**

- 8.1 We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating their child. We do this through:
- 8.1.1 talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school/nursery
  - 8.1.2 giving children the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting Reception at Familiarisation visits during the Summer term before they start, and through settle in sessions in the Nursery;
  - 8.1.3 inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
  - 8.1.4 offering children who start in Reception after the school year has begun the opportunity to have a familiarisation visit at the school to meet their teachers and peers;
  - 8.1.5 offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in both Reception and Nursery;
  - 8.1.6 encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher or key worker if they have any concerns. In the Nursery there are informal parent's evenings. In Reception there is a formal meeting for parents in the School each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's

progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each term, this allows time to discuss each child's circumstances;

- 8.1.7 having flexible admission arrangements and flexible school hours that enable children and parents to become secure;
- 8.1.8 arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children, school and parents;
- 8.1.9 offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents. There is regular communication with home through the Reception Reading Record and Blossom and emails in both Reception and Nursery. In Nursery this is in Blossom and Parent evenings and events. We invite parents to a curriculum evening to discuss the curriculum and ways in which they can support their child through the Reception year. Parents also have the opportunity for short informal chats/information sharing during drop-off and pick-up.

## **9. NURSERY/CLASSROOM ORGANISATION RESOURCES**

- 9.1 We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to life long learning. We provide 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 choices of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

## **10. REPORTING TO ISI AND OFSTED**

- 10.1 We are obliged to report:
  - 10.1.1 Any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises, whether the allegations relate to an incident committed on the premises or elsewhere, and of the action taken, at least within 14 days.
  - 10.1.2 Any food poisoning affecting two or more children cared for on the premises, at least within 14 days.
  - 10.1.3 Any serious accident, illness or injury to, or death of, any child in their care and of the action taken, at least within 14 days.