



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Spooner Row Primary School **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

“ 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. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.” (*Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012*)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year and sets the standards that must be met to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

A Unique Child

At Spooner Row Primary 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, 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/ sharing, circle times and reward stickers, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children at Spooner Row Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within 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 of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic but 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.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- 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 and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from 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 taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in the class 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 are encouraged to take risks and are taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well being of all 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 Spooner Row Primary 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 (revised 2017). 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.

Positive Relationships

At Spooner Row Primary 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 highly value the contribution that parents make.

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

- making home visits and talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- providing children with the opportunity to spend time with their teacher prior to starting school during our "Induction Sessions";
- offering an 'open door policy' to allow parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress;
- encouraging parents to talk to the reception staff about any concerns they may have;
- early morning and 'Stay and Play' sessions to encourage parents to come into the classroom, observe a teacher led session and work alongside their child on a range of activities;
- arranging a variety of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents. For example, open mornings, sports day, curriculum evenings, Christmas play and special assemblies to which all family members are invited;
- encouraging parents to contribute to their child's learning story at any time they choose and particularly through the Home/School Diary;
- two formal meetings per year (Autumn and Spring terms) to discuss the child's progress and development.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the class teacher acts as 'Key Person' to all children in their class.

We have good links with the local pre-school. The Reception teacher and Pre-school manager work closely together to share ideas, attend courses and run joint meetings. The Reception teacher is on the pre-school committee and attends meetings every half term. Informal visits are made by the Reception teacher throughout the year and more formal visits are undertaken in the summer term to meet with the children prior to them starting at their new school. These visits provide the opportunity to discuss individual needs and to meet the children within their nursery environment. The class TA accompanies the pre-school children on their annual trip in the Summer term.

Enabling Environments

At Spooner Row Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS is loosely topic based but guided by the individual children's needs and 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 observations of predominantly child-initiated activities, but also activities initiated by an adult. These observations are carried out by all adults who work with the children and provide evidence for the end of year assessment against the Early Learning Goals. They are kept digitally as part of the child's learning journey file.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS learning environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely both inside and outside. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. Where possible, the environment is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The classroom has a large outdoor area, which has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help them to develop in all areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At Spooner Row Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

Teaching and Learning Style

We recognize that effective teaching and learning in our school is as a result of:

- the partnership between staff and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that staff 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 and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- 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, which are shared with parents;

Play

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and pre-occupations. 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 help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, and learn how to self-regulate 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.

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 and we actively encourage this. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions and start to 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 are given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults 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 setting to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning and development that are interconnected. 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. The areas are known as the *prime* areas and consist of:

- communication and language;
- physical development;
- personal, social and emotional development.

Children are also supported in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy;
- mathematics;
- understanding the world; and
- 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.

“The flowers of all our tomorrows are in the seeds of today”
Chinese Proverb

Policy written by Lisa Newbery
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