

# Strike Lane Primary School Foundation Stage Policy

## Introduction

At Strike Lane Primary School our aim is to create a learning environment and build relationships which support, enhance and invite a child's curiosity, confidence and individual competency to flourish regardless of backgrounds, circumstances or needs. We aim to work collaboratively with parents and carers to encourage independent, enthusiastic learners who thrive and reach their full potential. It is our intent that children who enter our EYFS begin their lifelong learning journey by developing physically, verbally, cognitively and emotionally whilst also embedding a positive attitude to school and a love of learning.

It is our intent to take into consideration the starting points of each child and their needs as they begin their learning journey. Every child has access to a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum which prepares them for now and for the future in terms of opportunities and experiences. Following personal interests and individual needs, allows us to plan and provide opportunities throughout our EYFS curriculum to support learning and development and achieve their next steps.

Our EYFS curriculum aims to enable our children to be:

- **Competent and creative learners**; who are curious about the world around them.
- **Secure and confident learners** ; who enjoy coming to school and learning new skills and knowledge building on their existing learning.
- **Critical thinkers**: who are given the opportunity to lead their own learning and test, execute and develop their own ideas.
- **Skilful communicators**; who connect with others through language and play, ensuring that they play in a vocabulary rich environment. It is our intent to ensure that all children will receive the teaching of early reading through systematic, synthetic phonics to learn to read words and simple sentences accurately by the end of Reception.

The Foundation Stage applies to children in Reception/Oak Class. Our Published Admission Number is 30 however, each year the intakes vary, depending on the birth rate and the number of applications the Local Authority receive for the school. Children attend Strike Lane Primary School full time in the year they will turn five.

The Foundation Stage is important as it prepares children for the Key Stage One Curriculum. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Reception year in Foundation Stage.

The Early Years education we offer our children is based on the following principles, adopted from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS):

- it builds on what our children already know and can do;
- it recognises that each child is unique and 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 learning environment;
- it values the importance of parents and practitioners working together in an atmosphere of mutual respect;
- it is grounded in our school ethos.

## Aims of the Foundation Stage

The principles from the Early Years Foundation Stage framework are embedded within our practice at Strike Lane Primary School. These are:

- A Unique Child – every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Positive Relationships – children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.
- Enabling Environments – the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children’s development and learning.

When these 3 principles are in place it ensures that the children learn and develop in the way that best meets their needs and their rate of development.

The curriculum of the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children’s learning and development in the seven areas of learning. 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: Listening, Attention and Understanding & Communication
- Physical Development: Gross Motor Skills and Fine Motor Skills
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Self-Regulation; Managing Self and Building Relationships

### **Curriculum**

Our Curriculum supports children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- Literacy: Reading Comprehensions and Word Reading; Writing
- Maths: Number; Numerical Patterns
- Understanding the World; Past and Present; People and Cultures; The Natural World
- Art and Design: Creating with Materials; Being Imaginative and Expressive

Our curriculum involves activities and experiences for children, as follows:

- Communication and Language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- Physical Development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co- ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.
- Literacy Development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

- Understanding the World involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- Expressive Arts and Design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

We consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in our care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.

### **Teaching and Learning Style**

Our policy on teaching and learning describes the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching throughout the school.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage 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 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 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, which are regularly shared with parents
- the relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school (this includes play sessions, home visits and visits to pre-school)
- the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do
- the regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

### **Continuous Provision / Play in the Foundation Stage**

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play opportunities and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. We understand how important play is for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. We encourage children to learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. We use our professional judgement to ensure there is a balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. We respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. 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.

## **Inclusion in the Foundation Stage**

In our school we believe that all our children are special. 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 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. Some children progress beyond this point. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with additional educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups, those from diverse linguistic backgrounds, age (eg. Autumn/Spring/Summer born) and those who joined us throughout the Reception year.

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
- planning activities that take account of gender differences and children's individual needs (GAT, EAL and SEN children)
- 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. External support agencies are involved as necessary.

## **Assessment**

Assessment, recording and reporting in the Foundation Stage at Strike Lane Primary School is based on the aims and principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

All children will be assessed during the first six weeks of starting school in line with the requirements of the statutory Baseline Assessment for EYFS. These assessments are carried out individually with the class teacher using activities on an iPad. The assessment information is reported to the DfE and will be used to analyse progress across school based on where the children were at when they started school in Reception.

Towards the end of the school year, in June, the children are formally assessed against all areas of the end of Reception year Early Learning Goals and will be given a judgement of (1) Emerging or (2) Expected for each area of learning. These results are reported to the DfE and to parents at the end of the school year.

Throughout the children's learning we make regular informal assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning and activities are relevant to the needs of the children. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observations and conversations about learning (planned and 'catch as you can' noting significant incidental learning) using the formative assessment cycle of observation – plan – assess. Evidence comes in a variety of forms including children's recording, photographs, videos, focused meetings with all key workers, talking with children and parents. This involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate and informs our end of term assessments.

At the end of each term we use the non-statutory Development Matters Curriculum Guidance to assess progress of the children against the age-appropriate criteria to establish whether they are reaching expected

standards of learning for Reception children or whether they are emerging towards this point. As the guidance gives expected statements for the end of Reception, the staff at Strike Lane have further broken down the elements of each end of Reception expectation to create end of term 'Checkpoints' which ensures that we can measure against our expected development of children across the year. This assessment is completed at the end of each term and culminates in the final statutory Early Years Profile Assessment in June.

Throughout the year, we also collect evidence on each child against the effective characteristics of learning. This is a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities and links to the whole school focus on the 6R's – Learning to learn skills: Readiness; Resourcefulness; Reasoning; Reflectiveness; Resilience; Respect; This information is shared with parents and the Year One teacher, ready for transition into Year One.

The child's next teacher uses assessment information to make plans for the year ahead. Children who have not achieved the Early Learning Goals will have the opportunity to work towards them in Year One.

Moderation of our assessment takes place, both with staff in our own school particularly EYFS and KS1 staff and also, externally with other local schools and Local Authority Advisors. EYFS staff use the government exemplification materials to help them to reach agreed decisions about specific children.

### **The Role of Parents**

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 the children. We do this through:

- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school, where parents are given welcome booklets and school information
- the children having the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during our 4 Induction Sessions prior to starting school
- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school in our Home Visit appointments in September to create a wider view of the child: their likes; dislikes; home environment.
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is an opportunity for parents to meet the teacher each term.
- using Tapestry to share teaching and learning within the classroom and experiences and key learning outside of school
- arranging workshops (phonics and maths) over the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents
- inviting parents to curriculum and other special assemblies to share and celebrate the work that the children undertake
- having an open door policy - parents confident to come into class at any time to talk to any member of the FS Team.
- curriculum notes which are sent out each term to inform parents about the parts of the curriculum being taught.
- Additional Educational Needs (AEN) review meeting on transition with parents and Pre-School to discuss targets and IEPs.

### **Resources**

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. 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.

### **Welfare and Safeguarding Requirements**

All welfare and safeguarding requirements are covered in our whole school policies. These are available to parents on our school website or a paper copy is available by request.

All staff members in Foundation Stage have up to date paediatric first aid training.

### **Transition to Foundation Stage Induction into school**

- Open Day in October prior to applying for a school place – Parents have opportunity to be shown around school by the Headteacher and relevant staff
- Induction information meeting in May with Head teacher and EYFS staff, Induction information is given at this meeting
- New Parents are added to the school communication system and begin to receive newsletters
- Class Teacher visits all children in their settings or discusses children with Key Worker at the current setting
- All Staff involved attend any transitional Meetings for pupils with SEN. Discuss pupils with preschool settings.
- Children attend 4 stay and play sessions with some of the current Reception children in June/July
- School receives transitional document from all pre schools.
- Home visits in first week of September
- Parents and child complete a 'All about me' booklet and a wish for FS before they start school
- Parent access to Tapestry
- Parent training on Phonics, Maths to support their child at home
- All children individually assessed on EYFS Baseline Assessment

### **Transition into Year One**

The principles that underpin our transition are:

- Approaches to teaching and learning should be harmonised at the point of transition
- Planning should be based upon assessment information from the previous class/group/setting
- Styles of teaching and learning should meet the needs of children and not pre-conceived notions of what is or is not appropriate for the next phase/Key Stage
- There is professional regard for the information from the previous teacher due to the shared moderation of judgements
- Children's emotional welfare, wellbeing and involvement should be assessed before and after transition.
- Children should enjoy the transition process
- The transition should motivate and challenge children
- Staff allocation for a period prior to, during and after initial transition should be made to maximise the comfort and welfare of the children.
- Effective transition takes time, and is a process rather than an event.
- Parents and carers need to feel well informed about and comfortable with all transitions in their child's life.
- Children, parents/carers and staff need to be involved on an equal basis.
- Transition is about the setting fitting the child, not the child fitting the setting.
- Transitions are not overlooked or left to chance, but thought about and planned in advance.

During the EYFS transition sessions the current Reception children spend 4 sessions working in the Year 1 classroom, working and playing alongside the current Year 1 class and staff.

Time is planned for an end of year meeting between Reception and Year One for teachers to discuss on going assessment information (Pupil Progress Meetings) and any specific curriculum areas that may need a particular focus. The appropriateness of continuous provision is discussed and any individual needs of children. The staff also meet informally during the new school year to discuss how the children have settled.

Meet the Teacher sessions are available at the beginning of September for Years 1-6 throughout the school.

Where appropriate individual transition meetings are held with parents of children who may have additional needs. In these cases, the next class teacher is invited to join in the meetings

Signed: Mrs R Kershaw

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