



Early Years Foundation Stage
Policy

Reviewed: March 2017

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Chair of Governors

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Date

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Headteacher

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Date

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from 0-5, and at Featherstone Wood Primary School, covers children from three years of age to the end of the Reception year.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

At Featherstone Wood Primary School, children are admitted once a year, in September. Key Stage 1 begins at the end of the Reception year.

The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and in preparing children for schooling and beyond. We value play and the young child's natural capacity for learning through experience. There is a strong emphasis on the use of language to reinforce learning and make understanding explicit.

Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been to one of a range of settings that exist in our community. The Early Years provision we offer:

- Builds on what our children already know and can do;
- Ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- Offers opportunities for learning, both in and out of doors;
- Uses assessment effectively to tailor learning to meet the needs of all individuals;
- Values children's interests as an integral part of the planning process;
- Provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- Provides seamless continuity between Nursery and Reception.

1. A Unique Child

At Featherstone Wood 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.

The characteristics of effective learning reflect the different ways that children learn. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect on these characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically

(EYFS Statutory Framework, 1.10)

Inclusion

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.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, to enable them to achieve the early learning goals by the end of Reception. Some children will progress beyond this point. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of both 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 by

- Planning opportunities that build and extend children's knowledge, experiences and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Providing 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 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;
- Creating an atmosphere in which children feel supported in taking risks in their learning;
- Monitoring and tracking children's progress to ensure that all children are appropriately challenged and supported.
- Using a termly assessment week to bring together key learning from school and home and use this to inform how to take their learning forward.

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. The safeguarding and welfare requirements... are designed to help providers create high quality settings which are welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence." (EYFS Statutory Framework, 3.1)

The welfare, safeguarding, learning and development requirements are fully implemented at Featherstone Wood.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe and feel 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 should be taught to assess risk and to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well being of all children. (See whole school Safeguarding policy.)

2. Positive Relationships

At Featherstone Wood we aim to promote positive relationships between staff, parents and children.

The Role of Adults in the Classroom

All staff involved with the EYFS develop good relationships with our children, interacting meaningfully with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school, each child has a 'Key Person' who welcomes them each morning and is a consistent adult to help both children and parents feel supported.

We expect that all adults will:

- Listen to children, be sympathetic to their moods and feelings, value and praise them, offer support, and constructive advice.
- Use strategies which show an understanding of young children's needs, characteristics and learning development.
- Acknowledge that children's physical, intellectual, emotional, social development and learning styles are inter-related.
- Understand that children are naturally active and curious and that their learning is highly dependent on first hand experience and play.
- Know that children learn best when they are interested, have their curiosity stimulated and satisfied and are provided with the means to express themselves creatively in a variety of ways.
- Foster talk and offer clear explanations.
- Provide a positive role model for children to imitate.
- Observe individual children and record their observations to form a record of their progress.
- Plan activities which respond to individual and/or group needs.
- Work closely with the child's parents, welcoming them and giving them access to information and support.

The Role of the Parent

At Featherstone Wood we recognise that parents are their children's first educators and their importance for their child's welfare and development is paramount. We aim to build a partnership by:

- Visiting parents and children at home, before starting in Nursery, in order to find out key information about each child and build initial relationships;
- Offering play sessions to aid transition into the EYFS, encouraging parents and children to spend time in the unit together;
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting before their child starts in the unit;
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's key worker if there are any concerns.
- Having flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parents to become secure and by allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;

- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage the collaboration between child, school and parents;
- Encouraging parents to stay for 'Busy Fingers' each morning to help children to settle.
- Asking parents to share 'Wow' moments from home so we can celebrate achievements in school.

3. Enabling Environments

At Featherstone Wood we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development.

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

In addition to ensuring a safe, attractive and stimulating environment it is necessary to create spaces for different kinds of learning and to resource and equip these appropriately. There are areas where the children can be active and be quiet. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where the children are able to locate equipment and resources independently.

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.

4. Learning and Development

The EYFS is made up of 7 areas of learning and development which are interconnected.

The 3 **Prime Areas** of learning are crucial to develop life- long learning and help children to form relationships:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development
Communication and Language
Physical Development

These prime areas are strengthened and applied through the 4 **Specific Areas** of learning:

Literacy
Mathematics
Understanding the World
Expressive Arts and Design

Play

Our curriculum is play based. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and develop ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for social conventions. 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.

The learning opportunities that we provide for our children often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning within one activity.

Active learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

At Featherstone Wood, children are given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. 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 classroom to extend their learning.

Teaching and learning style

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 foundation stage just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2.

The more general features of the 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 knowledge of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- The range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, provide structures and model language to enable children to give clear explanations,
- Make appropriate interventions, extend and develop play through verbal and non verbal 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 the children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents;

- 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 the adults working within the Foundation Stage.

Through adult initiated activities, in small group time, children will have focused input and direct teaching. All children have daily phonics sessions, following the Letters and Sounds or Storytime Phonics programme. The children have a range of adult initiated activities, covering skills in all areas of the curriculum. These sessions increase in complexity and duration as the Reception Year progresses. This provides for a smooth transition into Year 1.

Through Discover and Learn time, children have opportunities to practise skills independently; and for teachers to observe needs and progress, support children's learning and extend children's thinking.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

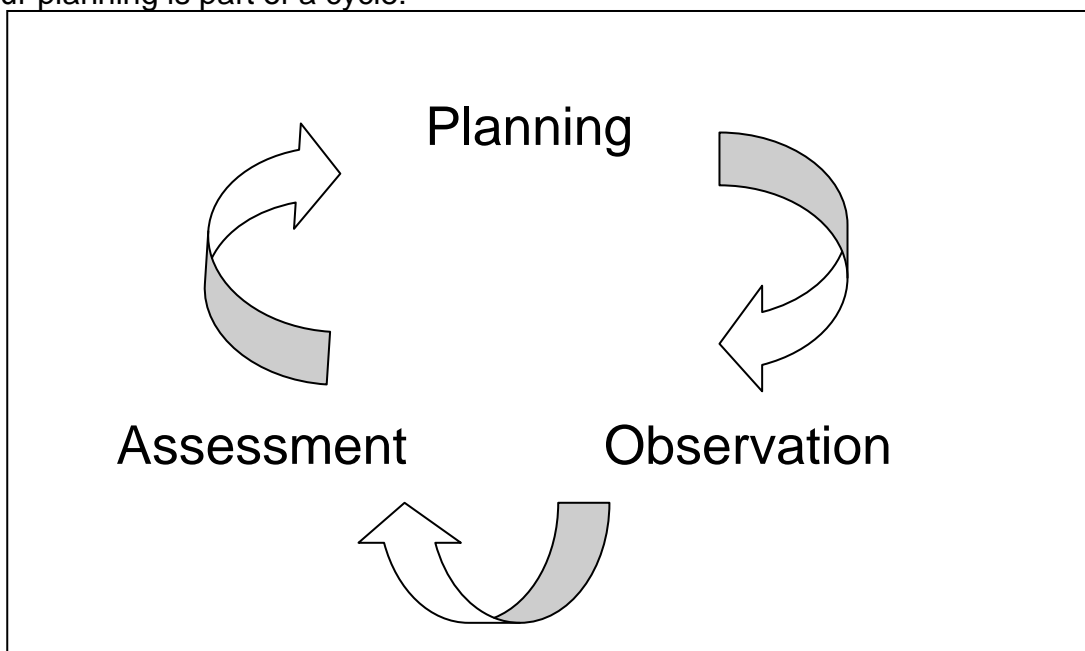
We acknowledge the vital role of planning based on observation and assessment to ensure age-appropriate and differentiated child-appropriate provision.

We use the 'Early Years Outcomes' in the Early Years Foundation Stage and 'What to Expect, When' to help us plan appropriate activities to meet the needs of all children.

Our flexible planning process enables us to engage with the children about what they want to learn and practise our British Values by voting for the most popular theme. We then plan a range of activities based on the decided theme and inform parents of our ideas, to enable them to add their own ideas into our planning. We talk to the children about their prior knowledge of the theme and encourage them to ask questions they would like to find the answers to.

Short term, weekly planning responds to individual / group needs, identified from observations, and involves planning small group sessions and enhancements to the continuous resource provision to support planned purposeful play.

Our planning is part of a cycle:



Featherstone Wood Primary School

We make on-going assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage is based on planned and spontaneous observation recorded through notes and photographs collected in individual learning journals. All staff are involved in collecting information. We use the appropriate Early Years outcome sheets for each child, acknowledging that children may be working within different bands in different areas of the curriculum. We use our observations to highlight statements as children achieve them.

Each term, this data is recorded electronically, so that we can analyse results and track progress of individuals and groups of children.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is used summatively at the end of the Reception class to 'provide parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1.' (Statutory Framework, 2.6)

The Profile shows children's achievement against the Early Learning Goals, and is submitted to the Department for Education via the Local Authority.

Year 1 teachers and parents receive a copy of the profile together with a narrative about each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. We sent these out to parents in July each year.

Linked policies

SEN Policy
Child Protection Policy
Home-School Agreement
Assessment Policy