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## Holywell Primary School

### Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

**Status:** Non-Statutory

**Approval Body:** Governing Body

**Review Frequency:** 2 years

**Last Review:** May 2019

**Next Review:** Summer 2021



# Holywell Primary School

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and enter Nursery and continues until the end of the Reception year. Entry into our primary school is in September.
- 1.2 The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and also in preparing children for later schooling. The National Curriculum does not formally begin until Year 1.
- 1.3 The early years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:
  - It builds on what our children already know and can do;
  - It 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 environment.

### **2. Aims of the Foundation Stage**

- 2.1 The Curriculum of the Foundation Stage covers 7 key areas of learning, 3 Prime areas and 4 Specific areas:

#### Prime Areas

- Personal, Social and Emotional development (PSED)
- Communication, Language (CL)
- Physical development (PD)

#### Specific Areas

- Maths (M)
- Literacy (L)
- Understanding the world (UW)
- Expressive Art and Design (EAD)

- 2.2 The Foundation Stage prepares all children for future learning through the 6 R's:
  - Responsibility for their own learning
  - Reasoning to expand their thinking skills
  - Reflecting on their learning and actions
  - Respect for adults and peers
  - Resourcefulness
  - Resilience and independence

### **3. Teaching and learning style**

3.1 The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 or 2.

3.2 Good practices in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- The range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, 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 space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- The identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents;
- The good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school;
- The clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- The regular identification of training needs for all adults working in the Foundation Stage.

### **4. Play at the Foundation Stage**

Through play our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems in controlled and safe situations. Children learn to develop their own independence in a rich and stimulating environment both indoors and outdoors, that reflects individual interests.

### **5. Inclusion at the Foundation Stage**

5.1 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 we are planning for their learning (see our policy on Inclusion).

5.2 In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that they can achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We help them do 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 from different ethnic groups, and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

5.3 We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build on and extend the children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children’s learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of real life opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children’s progress, and providing support (such as speech therapy) as and when necessary.
- Ensuring all children are keen and motivated learners who strive to achieve their full potential.

## **6. The Foundation Stage Curriculum**

6.1 Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Year Foundation Stage framework. Our childrens’ learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.

6.2 The Early Learning Goals provide a basis for the National Curriculum. Throughout their time in Reception, children are exposed to a range of Literacy and Maths skills for them to build on throughout their education.

6.3 The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Our medium-term planning is completed half-termly, and identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals and also for those working towards the Exceeding Level.

## **7. Assessment**

7.1 The Foundation Stage Profile Good Level of Development is the national summative assessment of pupils at the end of the Foundation Stage, summarising pupils’ progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the areas of learning contained in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We make regular assessments of children’s learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observation, and this involves both

the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

- 7.2 During the first term in the Reception class the teacher assesses the ability of each child, using the Development Matters Statements and through the Reception Baseline Assessment. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.
- 7.3 Each teacher keeps an e-journal for each child to which all adults in the setting and the individual's child's parents can add information and observations. The learning journals form a dialogue between the child's parents and the school and are referred to when discussing progress at each parental consultation. The e-journal is printed and given to parents at the end of Reception year and shared with the child's Year 1 teacher.

## **8. The role of parents**

- 8.1 We recognise the important role that parents have played and will continue to play in the education of their children. We do this through:
- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
  - Opportunities given to the children to spend time with their teacher before starting school through play mornings;
  - Each family receiving a home visit from the child's class teacher and Early Years Practitioner, meeting in an environment in which the child is comfortable;
  - Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
  - Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress and encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
  - Arranging for children to gradually start school over the first two weeks of term, so that the teacher can welcome each child individually into our school;
  - Offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents including Festivals of Learning;
  - Providing workshops for parents focusing on different areas of the curriculum and how to support their child's learning at home;
  - Providing various activities that involve parents, i.e. regular communication with home through the child's school diary, and inviting parents to curriculum evenings, in order to discuss the kind of work that the children are undertaking.
  - An open door policy at the beginning and end of the day for parents to communicate with early years staff.
- 8.2 There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the parents 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 school year.

## 9. Transitions

- 9.1 During their year in Nursery the children will become familiar with the environment and the foundation stage staff. Before moving into Reception, the children will have the opportunity to visit their new class and meet their new teacher through a range of play mornings. Parents will be invited to Stay and Play sessions where they can explore the Reception environment alongside their child. Each child that joins the school will be offered a home visit.
- 9.2 Nursery and Reception staff work closely and discuss the individual needs of each child, to enable smooth learning transitions.
- 9.3 At the end of Reception, transition into KS1 starts much earlier to ensure a smooth transition into Year 1. From the Spring term the children begin joining the main school for activities such as assemblies. Towards the summer term the children have opportunity to spend time in their new classroom and meet their class teacher. A workshop is also held to inform parents of requirements in Key Stage 1.

## 10. 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.

## 11. Equality

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 we seek to;

- a) **eliminate discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the act
- b) **advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- c) **foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

## 12. Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the Governing Body, and will be reviewed every two years or earlier if necessary.