

PARK WOOD SCHOOLS FEDERATION



Foundation Stage Policy

October 2016

“Learning for Young Children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create (and) practice... their developing knowledge (and) skills...During the Foundation Stage, many aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.”

Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage

DfEE 2000

Aims

- To provide quality care in an environment where the individual child feels safe and secure.
- To provide an environment in which we can foster the physical and emotional wellbeing of every child.
- To promote independence through a stimulating and exciting environment, in which children are encouraged to play and explore.
- To ensure that all children have equal access to quality experiences through purposeful and enjoyable activities which focus on individual learning styles and requirements.
- To provide high quality teaching which allows every child reaches their full potential.
- To ensure that the partnerships between home and school continue to enrich the children’s experiences.
- To value children’s thoughts and opinions and give them the opportunities to be heard.
- To ensure a smooth transition into and out of the Foundation Stage.

Admissions Policy

Pupils are admitted to school in accordance with Medway local authority admissions policy. Prior to admission tours of the school are offered to enable parents to make an informed choice.

Starting School and Settling In

The school has strong links with the main feeder pre-school groups to promote a smooth transition to the school. Prior to starting school, staff from Foundation Stage visit the children in their pre-school setting before inviting them to come and play in the Foundation Stage classrooms. Transition meetings with each child’s key person are held to discuss the individual needs of children.

For the first full week, the children attend a morning or an afternoon session. This is to ensure their emotional needs are met, giving them the opportunity to learn their new environment, the teaching staff and all of the the new routines. After the first week, all children attend the morning session and lunch time as a whole class, before attending full days. Individual parent interviews are held within the first few weeks of term, but parents are encouraged to talk to staff as and when needed.

The Curriculum

All children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance. We closely adhere to the principals of Early Years Education. Transition documents from feeder pre-schools enable practitioners to ensure continuity for children on entry.

The “Early Years Foundation Stage” document (DfEE 2008) forms the basis of planning and assessment in the Foundation Stage. The themes 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.

Learning and Development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

Within Learning and Development we focus on the characteristics of effective learning:

“The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically underpin learning development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.”

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical development
- Communication and language
- Literacy
- Mathematics development
- Understanding the world
- Expressive Arts and Design

Planning is adapted to enable the children to input their own interests and ideas.

Importance of Play

The EYFS advocates that there should be a balance of adult-directed and child-initiated activities and stresses that well-planned play is a key way in which children learn. It enables children to learn independence, social skills, self-discipline and positive self-esteem. Zones have been created across the three classrooms to provide opportunities to learn through play, such as:

- Role play area e.g. shop, home corner
- Small world play e.g. farm, train set, dolls house
- Sand/water
- Construction and 'junk' modelling
- Hand and eye coordination activities e.g. peg boards, jigsaws and threading
- Reading, writing and number opportunities in all areas
- Art/creative activities on a large and small scale, individually and in groups
- Music
- Large outdoor play e.g. wheeled toys, large construction kits
- Small outdoor play e.g. balls, skipping ropes, chalk

Children work independently to secure skills and ideas they have previously developed with adult support. All activities are offered both indoors and outside. Children are encouraged to access the outdoors on a regular basis.

Assessment

Teachers carry out 'On Entry' assessments of each child during their first few weeks at school and hold informal parent interviews. This provides a starting point against which to measure achievement. Records passed on through the Foundation Stage from pre-school groups are also referred to. Expectations are that the majority of children will be able to achieve an Early Learning Goal in every area by the end of the FS 2 year.

Staff plan observations of the children on a regular basis which inform future planning and formative and summative assessments are made throughout the FS2 year.

The Foundation Stage profile is an ongoing assessment of achievement in the Foundation year. It refers specifically to progress measured against the Early Learning Goals and will be reported to parents at a summer term open evening and passed on to the next teacher. All Foundation Stage Teachers must attend inter-school moderation annually. Information gathered from the profiles on both individual children and the cohort are used to inform planning in Key Stage 1 and are reported to the council.

Reporting to Parents

Consultations are held every other term when progress is reported to parents. We operate an open door policy where parents can talk with us at the beginning and end of the school day whenever possible. Children are encouraged to bring adults and siblings into the classrooms after school to celebrate their achievements.

Parents in Partnership

We aim to work in partnership with parents and carers to support each individual child and to ensure no child is disadvantaged or excluded.

Every term, parents are invited in to "stay and play" sessions with a particular focus, such as phonics, the arts, number etc. We actively encourage parental help in all class and school activities such as trips to the local area and cooking activities.

Information about how to help at home is given to parents at the initial interviews. We also hold a curriculum meeting in September to explain how children learn through play and provide parents with ideas for supporting their child's development of key skills. Throughout the year, parents are provided with additional information about how they can help at home through the use of Learning Journeys and "Talking Homework", as well as our termly newsletters.

All children have a home/school contact book, which is used to transfer information and provide weekly phonics activities to try at home.

We encourage parents to share their children's 'WOW' moments with us via a text message to Foundation Stage mobile phone, emailed to our Foundation Stage email account, or written on our 'wow' windows.

Equal Opportunities

At Park Wood Infant School we believe it is the right of all children to have access to a broad and balanced curriculum regardless of gender, race, class or special educational need or disability.

Health and Safety

The school's guidelines on health and safety issues are followed.

Children will only be dismissed to a parent or carer at the end of the day unless staff have been notified of any change. Every child has a password, should somebody else need to pick a child up.