

# Greens Norton C. of E. Primary School



## Policy for The Foundation Stage

'In our school everyone can join in with all we offer'

Approved by

R J Jones, Chair of Governors

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## Policy for the Foundation Stage

### Background to the Policy

The Foundation Stage applies to children from three years of age to the end of the reception year. At Greens Norton CE Primary School, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday.) Key Stage 1 begins for our children at the beginning of Year 1. The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and in preparing children for further schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

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 education

- builds on what our children already know and can do;
- ensures that each child is included;
- offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activities which provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- provides a rich and stimulating environment.

### Aims and objectives

The curriculum of the Foundation Stage provides a basis for all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

- personal, social and emotional well-being;
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning;
- social skills;
- attention skills and persistence;
- independence;
- language and communication;
- reading and writing;
- mathematics;
- knowledge and understanding of the world;
- physical development;
- creative development.

### Implementation

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 through observations, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our 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.

## **Foundation Stage Curriculum Planning**

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals. The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

The Early Learning Goals are in line with the objectives in the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. By the end of the reception year in our school, children will have a regular mathematics lesson and a literacy lesson. Teachers initially address the requirements in a flexible way but, as part of the smooth transition to Key Stage 1, they put the regular literacy and mathematics lessons into operation by the end of the Foundation Stage.

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers use the national schemes of work where appropriate to support the planning for individual children. Our medium term planning is completed half-termly and identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals, and for those working towards Levels 1 and possibly 2 of the National Curriculum.

## **Play in the Foundation Stage**

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves 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.

## **Inclusion in the Foundation Stage**

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 (see our policy on school inclusion).

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 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. This involves speech therapy for some of our children.

### **Assessment and recording**

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 the teacher and other adults as appropriate.

During the children's first half-term in the reception class, the teacher assesses the ability of each child in basic mathematics and English. We use this information to modify the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. We share this initial assessment information with parents at the parental consultation meeting in October. During the reception year ongoing assessment will take place in the form of observation, these will be shared again with parents in the February parental consultation meeting.

Each teacher keeps a progress file for each pupil and uses these to record examples of each child's work and any observation feedback. These contain a wide range of evidence that we share with parents at each parental consultation meeting.

The teacher will use the initial and ongoing assessment to sum up the child's progress during the year. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. Parents receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June and send them to parents in early July each year.

### **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:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- the teacher visits all children in their home setting prior to their starting school;
- the children have opportunities to spend time with their teacher before starting school on a regular basis;
- 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 in our reception class;

- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents in the autumn and spring term where the teacher and the parent can 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;
- children start school gradually each child spending half days in school for the first week
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents. There is regular communication with home through the child's reading record and in special circumstances a home school book.

## 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.

## Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the Foundation Stage Co-ordinator to:

- write and update the curriculum policy for the Foundation Stage;
- produce and monitor the long-term curriculum map to ensure coverage of the scheme of work for the Foundation Stage;
- monitor and review medium-term plans for the Foundation Stage to ensure progression;
- aid colleagues with the planning and delivery of lessons when required;
- maintain a portfolio of children's work and use these to demonstrate what the expected level of achievement is in the Foundation Stage units of study.
- monitor and review standards of Foundation Stage teaching through e.g. lesson observations, coaching techniques;
- produce an annual report reflecting on the standards of provision for the Foundation Stage and to set targets accordingly;
- review and order resources to enable the delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

## Health and Safety

It is the role of the Foundation Stage Practitioners to ensure that the learning environment is both safe and secure. Regular checks are made of equipment and of the indoor and outdoor facilities to ensure the children's safety. Any issues relating to health and safety are duly reported to the appointed person. See Health and Safety Policy. A risk assessment is undertaken whenever an off site visit is planned.

**Date ratified:** 11<sup>th</sup> July 2007

**Due for review:** July 2011