



FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

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Rationale

‘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 Statutory Framework for EYFS, The Standards Site).

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the area of education upon which young children build the rest of their lives. It is a single framework for care, learning and development that is linked directly to “Development Matters” framework. As cited on The Department for Education Standards Site; ***‘Every Child Matters is the government agenda which focuses on bringing together services to support children and families. It sets out five major outcomes for children:***

- ***being healthy;***
- ***staying safe;***
- ***enjoying and achieving;***
- ***making a positive contribution;***
- ***economic well-being.’***

‘The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage’ was therefore developed to link to development matters framework. If the framework is implemented effectively within an Early Years setting, the Early Learning Goals (ELG) will be fulfilled. All children should be given the opportunity to experience the best possible start to their education to develop solid foundations which will ensure that they flourish throughout their school years and on into adulthood.

The Principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is designed to track the learning and development of children from birth to the end of their Reception year, aged 5. It sets out a series of Development Matters for children to work towards throughout their Early Years development and outlines Early Learning Goals (ELGs) for children to attain by the time they reach the end of EYFS. For most children, the end of Foundation (also known as the Reception year) will be the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, when the expectation is that most children will have achieved the Early Learning Goals. Although the Early Learning Goals are intended for children at the end of the Foundation Stage, younger children are also provided with rich learning experiences to support them in achieving the age-appropriate Development Matters.

In the Foundation classes a high quality, well facilitated, multisensory approach to education should make a positive contribution to this vital stage in a child’s development with the development of perseverance, co-operation and independence, speaking and listening skills, gross and fine motor skills, and basic literacy and numeracy skills. Rich, stimulating and personalised experiences will provide each child with opportunities to develop these skills, their competencies and their thinking to the best of their ability across all the areas of learning.

The EYFS Curriculum

The EYFS is divided into seven areas of learning and offers a carefully structured curriculum taken from the EYFS '*Practice Guidance*'. The areas of learning are split into two groups known as the Prime Areas and Specific Areas.

The Three Prime Areas are:

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development:** Enables the growth of vital life skills in order for children to achieve the development matters outcomes. Each child is encouraged to develop their dispositions and attitudes, self-confidence and self-esteem, making relationships, behaviour and self-control, self-care and begin to develop a sense of community.
- **Communication, Language:** Teaches and facilitates key skills to cultivate confidence in a variety of contexts, such as language for communication and thinking, developing skills to listen and maintain attention and understand language
- **Physical Development:** Improves children's gross and fine motor skills by exploring movement and space, health and bodily awareness and using equipment and materials. It helps children to gain confidence and feel positive about being healthy and active, thus promoting a positive feeling of well being.

The Specific Areas are:

- **Literacy:** Teaches key skills for reading, linking sounds and letters, taught by the Letters and Sounds phonics programme and teaching children to write following the schools writing policy.
- **Maths:** Develops confidence and competence in the using and application of number. This includes counting, adding and subtracting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns, making connections, recognising relationships and working with shape, space and measure.
- **Understanding the World:** Extends thinking, explorative and investigative skills to help children make sense of the world. Foundations are developed for Science, Design and Technology, History, Geography and I.C.T. Children also explore time, places and communities.
- **Expressive Arts and Design :** Allows children to express themselves by responding to experiences, expressing and communicating ideas, exploring media and materials, creating music and dance and develops imagination and imaginative play. It enables children to make creative connections and extend their thoughts, feelings and understanding.

Provision, Teaching and Learning

Long, Medium and Short term planning takes place collaboratively between the teachers and other staff involved in the Foundation Stage. These describe teaching and learning activities linked to the EYFS Development Matters and incorporates assessment opportunities. The continuous provision for all of the different activity areas is displayed at all times. Short term plans are decided on a weekly basis from the Learning Journey. Half termly narrative observations also take place and are then used as a tool to plan for the 'next steps' in the children's learning. Anecdotal observations of children will also provide additional information for assessment and evidence purposes. There will also be a timetable showing the activities taking place each day which will be displayed for all staff concerned. The children will be given opportunities to explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world through a range of structured and free-flow activities. They will practice and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They will have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They will communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

The learning environment is planned for both indoors and outdoors to encourage a positive attitude to learning. When not engaging in adult led activities the children make their own selection of the activities on offer as this encourages independent learning. We adhere to relevant whole school policies such as Safe Guarding Children, Equal Opportunities, Behaviour, Health and Safety and Marking Policies.

Assessment

Monitoring the progress of each child takes place through regular observations, discussions, photographs, record keeping and planned assessments. On-going informal assessments also contribute to the judgments made by the Early Years staff in relation to the Early Learning Goals. The children are assessed against the seventeen areas within the Development Matters Framework. By the end of June each child will be identified as either “Emerging” towards the ELG, or “Expected” (working at the ELG) or “Exceeding” the ELG which means that these children are working above age related expectations.

If a child is assessed at an “Emerging” level they will be awarded 1 mark

If a child is assessed at an “Expected” level they will be awarded 2 marks

If a child is assessed at an “Exceeding” level they will be awarded 3 marks

It is proposed that 50.2% of children will be working at an “Expected” level in the prime areas by the end of the academic year.

The “2Build a Profile” program is used to document achievement and attainment across all seventeen areas of learning throughout the entire academic year. The “2Build a Profile” program produces a report of the child’s attainment at the end of the school year which includes photographs, observations and achievements; this is shared with all parents.

Data is quality assured and evidence is moderated termly by the Foundation team via Pupil Progress meetings with the Headteacher. The Foundation Teachers also attend yearly moderation meetings and moderation network meetings in order to liaise with other schools. The end of year data is also discussed with the Year 1 teachers so that they can continue to help the children to achieve the Early Learning Goals if they have not done so.

Parents as Partners

There is an information evening for parents where they receive the School Prospectus which highlights school start and finish times, uniform and informs the parents of the schools vision and aims. In this meeting they will have an opportunity to talk to the Early Years team and representatives from other areas of school life, e.g. SLT, family worker and Scotties After School Play Leader, and also sign up for a home visit. Parents are asked to complete an admissions form and a medical form and also make staff aware of any important information. Parents are required to sign permission slips for visits or spontaneous walks out of school, and photographs of their child for assessment purposes. Parents are readily encouraged to talk to the Foundation team if they have any concerns. There is also an opportunity for parents to meet the teacher formally each term. Parents are also invited to attend informal meetings providing information about other areas of the curriculum via termly curriculum afternoons and ‘Stay and Play’ mornings.

Transitions

The Foundation team visit most children in their pre-school setting before starting school. The children are invited to make morning visits in groups during July before starting school. The Foundation Team visit the children in their homes in early September. The beginning of the school term is delayed for this purpose. Children start on a full time basis in Reception from the September after their fourth birthday. The children are introduced to the routine of school which requires some focused learning situations mixed with a free-flow learning environment in which they have opportunities to discover, explore and learn independently. The children have playtimes in the main playground without older children to begin with. Only when the children are confident are they fully integrated with the older children and other members of staff. The routine of the school day is introduced slowly, especially those aspects which take the children away from their environment, for example, P.E. and Assembly. We offer children “a rolling snack” which includes fruit, vegetables, milk and water, which the children are encouraged to access independently. All Reception children stay for either hot school dinners or a packed lunch from September.

In the Spring Term we also have an intake of Nursery children. We then have another intake of Nursery children at the beginning of the Summer Term. Both classes are encouraged to socialise via our free-flow class set up, but register separately.

Equal Opportunities

Scott Lower School is committed to working towards equality of opportunity for all children regardless of age, ability, gender, race and social circumstances. All pupils are of equal value and have the same right to take part in the varied activities and opportunities wherever possible. All opportunities for learning should be offered in a way which allows all children access and the ability to progress at their stage of understanding.

Disability Discrimination Act

Scott Lower School is committed to having due regard to the following

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 has been amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 so that it now places a duty on all public authorities, including schools, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.