



Forest Hall Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Introduction

“All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.”

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework
Department for Education
January 2024

Aim

At Forest Hall Primary School our children join us in Nursery at the beginning of the academic year in which they turn four years old. If we have spaces we offer places to children who have turned three by January or April. The children will make the transition to our Reception class for the last stages of the EYFS at the beginning of the academic year in which they turn five years old.

In EYFS we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children and their families and carers, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At Forest Hall Primary School the Nursery and Reception teachers act as ‘Key Person’ to all the children in their class, supported by the Teaching Assistants/ Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA).

At Forest Hall Primary School the large majority of our children starting Reception have previously attended our Nursery. The Nursery teacher and Teaching Assistant(s)/ HLTA meet with the Reception teacher and Teaching Assistant(s)/ HLTA to discuss the new intake of children.

The EYFS is based upon four guiding principles:

- every child is **a unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

At Forest Hall Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Learning and development is categorised into three **prime** areas of learning:

- Communication and language
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical development

We must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Four **specific** areas of learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS follows the format of the rest of school in terms of Long Term Planning and Medium Term Planning which are based around half termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS practitioners as a guide for weekly planning. However, the EYFS practitioners may alter these plans in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children when planning cooperatively on a weekly basis. Any alterations and reasons for alterations will be indicated on medium term and/or weekly planning.

Active Learning through Play

We organise the day to provide a balance between the following:-

- **Child Initiated Activities** - children make choices from within the learning environment to meet his/her outcome for learning.
- **Scaffolded Activities**- practitioners provide the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning.
- **Adult Led Activities** – children engage in planned activities to meet specific learning outcomes.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEN)

All children and their families are valued in our school. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage.

Assessment

We make regular assessments of children's learning and development and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. We assess using the Early Learning Goals and Development Matters 2023 to decide whether children are working at the expected level in Nursery and Reception. Assessment in the EYFS is not formal and takes place in the form of play during adult led activities, children are unlikely to know they are being assessed. We keep 'wow

moments' that children have achieved in the class to add to their Learning Journey, which is a collection of some of the activities and learning moments that have taken place in school.

Nursery

Within the Nursery of Forest Hall Primary School the Nursery teacher uses teacher judgement derived from getting to know each child through play activities, talk and informal assessments. The Nursery teacher will use Development Matters 2023 to inform whether children are working at the expected level for Nursery in each of the 7 areas of learning and development. The Nursery teacher carries out this procedure on entry to Nursery as a baseline and then on a termly basis over the academic year (end of each term).

At the end of the academic year parents/carers receive a written report outlining their child's achievements and progress. This report makes reference to the Development Matters. We provide parents/carers the opportunity to discuss this report with the Nursery teacher.

Reception

Within the Reception class at Forest Hall Primary School, the Reception teacher uses teacher judgement derived from getting to know each child through play activities, talk, children's work and informal assessments. The Reception teacher will use Development Matters 2023 and the Early Learning Goals to inform whether children are working at the expected level for Reception in each of the 7 areas of learning and development. The Reception teacher carries out this procedure on entry to Reception (completed during the first half term) and then on a termly basis over the academic year (end of each term).

Within the first few weeks of the Reception year the Reception teacher will carry out the compulsory Standards and Testing Agency's Reception Baseline Assessment. This is completed with the Reception teacher one to one, and results are inputted electronically which is sent to the Department for Education. This is a progress measure for schools to see how children progress from Reception to Year 6. We are not informed how children perform.

Within the final term of the EYFS (end of Reception) each child's progress against the ELGs is sent electronically to the Local Authority (LA) in order for a LA wide analysis of data to be carried out.

At the end of the academic year parents receive a written report outlining their child's achievements and progress. This report makes reference to Development Matters and the ELGs. We provide parents the opportunity to discuss this report with the Reception teacher.

Role of the Head Teacher

The Head Teacher overlooks both Nursery and Reception. The Head Teacher carries out learning walks and observes teaching and learning at least once a term.

Role of the EYFS Lead

The Early Years Phase Lead teaches in Nursery and Reception and overlooks both Nursery and Reception. The EYFS Phase Lead will spend time observing learning and teaching in Reception once a term.

Role of the EYFS Teaching Staff and Teaching Assistants

The Teaching Staff and Teaching Assistants are responsible for the safe guarding and wellbeing of the children in their class. They work with groups of children directed by the class teacher and inform the class teacher of children's learning.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Children having the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school (Reception and Nursery) during 'Transition' mornings

- All parents/carers being invited to an induction meeting/open morning/ afternoon before their child starts Nursery/Reception
- Offering parents/carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress
- Allowing free access to Home/School Learning Journey books and access to Learning Journey books
- Encouraging parents/carers to contribute to Home/School Learning Journey books
- Encouraging parents/carers to talk to EYFS practitioners if they have any concerns or issues they would like to discuss
- Encouraging parents/carers to attend formal consultation meetings which are held each term during which the teacher and the parents/carers discuss the child's progress in private
- Parents/carers receiving a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each academic year
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the academic year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers. E.g. 'lunch with your child', reading and other information meetings, 'Stay and Plays' class assemblies, performances, local trips/visits, sports day, fundraising events and open morning

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in our school are '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 allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all our children.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS practitioners to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head teacher and subject coordinator will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

*Hannah Ridley
Early Years Foundation Stage Lead
June 2024*