

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

December 2019

Federation of Boldmere Schools



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Early Years Policy

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile - Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012

Our Intent and Aims

Within Early Years at Boldmere Infant and Nursery School we aim to;

- give each child a happy, positive and enjoyable start to their school life
- establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning
- enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually
- offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development
- encourage children to develop independence within a nurturing, secure and friendly atmosphere
- support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing
- help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Implementation

Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. Our Early Years Foundation Stage accommodates children from the age of 3 to 5 years.

In our school we have two part-time Nursery classes and three full-time Reception classes. Each nursery class has 26 places and children are offered a place in the September following their third birthday. In Nursery there is a teacher and nursery nurse. Children attend our Nursery on a part time basis for 3 hours each day, either mornings or afternoons. Each child starting Nursery in September is guaranteed a minimum of three terms attendance before they enter full time school.

Each Reception class has a teacher and a teaching assistant.

To ensure best practice and continuity, our foundation stage classes work closely together and share planning, activities and an outdoor learning environment.

The Curriculum

Our Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document. This framework defines what we teach. The following policy details the specifics of our setting.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (DFE 2017 1:3), they support children's learning in all areas, they are known as the prime areas.

The prime areas are;

- **Communication and language**- Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking
- **Physical Development**- Moving and Handling, Health and Self- Care

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development-** Making Relationships, Managing Feelings and Behaviour and Self-confidence and Self-awareness

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. The specific areas are;

- **Literacy-** Reading and Writing
- **Mathematics-** Numbers and Shape, Space and Measures
- **Understanding the World-** People and Communities, The World and Technology
- **Expressive Arts and Design-** Exploring and Using Media and Materials and Being Imaginative

We enrich the Early Years framework with our 'Boldmere Blue' curriculum to enhance the experience and opportunities available to children. This includes special events and celebrations, memorable experiences, themes selected to drive the curriculum and the PSHE Jigsaw scheme.

'It is the role of the setting to help children experience the awe and wonder of the world in which they live, through the seven areas of learning.' Ofsted Early Years Inspection Handbook, May 2019

Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the foundation stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. Therefore, we follow the Early Excellence pedagogy and we have environments that provide continuous provision. Continuous provision starts in our Nursery where the classroom and outdoors are set up with learning areas. Each learning area has cross-curricular resources, which children can access independently throughout the day. Reception classrooms and outdoor area are also set up with areas of learning, offering continuous provision to build upon and deepen experiences and learning from Nursery. Continuous provision provides children with stimulating, active play to think creatively and critically alongside other children, as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interest, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling and questioning. They teach and extend play whilst developing skills and language.

We understand that outdoor play is of equal importance as indoor play and that the outdoor classroom offers children 'bigger', 'louder' and 'messier' experiences. We therefore aim to offer free flow access to our outdoor learning areas throughout the school day.

Characteristic of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' which help practitioners identify a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them

The three characteristics;

- **Playing and Exploring-** children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'
- **Active Learning-** children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements
- **Creating and Thinking Critically-** children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things

Teaching

We ensure there is a balance of child- initiated learning via continuous provision, and adult led activities, across the school day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential. The adults respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the

child is doing. In some cases, the adult will ask a child to complete a task with them; at other times they will participate in the child's play, extending it where possible. We see our Early Years as co-adventurers.

There are set routines that we follow each day. There are designated times when the children come together to be taught and we focus on maths, literacy, phonics, stories and topic work. These times provide the opportunity for children to develop their ability to work as a group, listen, take turns to answer and concentrate.

Reading and story play are important parts of the day. We want to make sure our children have a love of books and will leave the EYFS with a bank of stories, both traditional and modern that they know well. We make sure there is always time for a whole class story during the day as well as opportunities to enjoy books at other times.

In Reception every child is provided with their own book bag and receive a 'reading' book at least once a week. In school they will share this book with an adult either on a one to one basis or in a group.

Planning

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum provides the basis for planning in our Nursery and Reception (Foundation Stage). The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. Our planning is based upon themes with discrete lessons in phonics, reading, writing and maths.

Practitioners select themes according to children's interests, experiences and prior learning. Progress and curriculum coverage are monitored half-termly. Each learning area in the classrooms and outdoor areas have provision plans, which identify learning opportunities and suggested enhancements. Staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. They also respond to children's social and emotional needs as well as their academic achievement.

Assessment

At Boldmere Infant and Nursery School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Practitioners observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are then used to inform future planning. Observations and assessments are recorded on children's online learning journeys which parents have access to.

At the end of the EYFS (end of Reception), practitioners complete the EYFS profile (Statutory requirement) for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are;

- 'Expected' - meeting expected levels of development
- 'Exceeding' - exceeding expected levels of development
- 'Emerging' - not yet reaching the expected levels of development

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, practitioners will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Parent Partnership

We believe that education is a shared responsibility between school and home. We therefore work very closely to ensure that parents/carers are involved in their child's education, and provide them with a weekly newsletter detailing what we are learning and how they can support their child at home.

We ensure that parents/ carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through online learning journeys and parents evenings.

We offer workshops throughout the year to provide parents with an insight into how we teach specific areas of the Early Years Curriculum, detailing ways in which they can support their child's learning at home. These sessions also give parents/carers the opportunity to work with their child in the school environment.

Safeguarding

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. 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.

We educate children on the importance of boundaries, rules and limits and we encourage them to become responsible for their own behaviour by supporting them to make the right choices. We teach the children how to recognise and manage risks in a supervised learning environment, please refer to the school Wellbeing and Behaviour policy for further information. We aim to protect the physical and mental well-being of all children.

Please refer to our school's policies: Safeguarding and Wellbeing and Behaviour for further information.

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Education and Standards Committee, every two years. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Federation of Boldmere Schools Governing Board.

Impact

We recognise that every child is unique and that they develop and learn in different ways and at varying rates. We want all of our children to develop a positive attitude to learning and therefore we strive for our children to become curious, resilient and self-assured in order to prepare them for the next stage of education, laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

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