



FIR TREE PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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SIGNED:
On behalf of the Governing Body

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

1. Introduction

Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is used to describe children who are in our Nursery and Reception Class. The EYFS applies to children from three years to five years of age.

2. Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

We aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

As outlined in the EYFS 'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.'

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- 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**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**

3. Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Have a key person approach to develop close relationships with individual children
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out

4. Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on observations of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable children to achieve and exceed the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Foundation Stage. All seven 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. These three areas are **prime** areas:

- **Communication and Language**
- **Physical Development**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Children are also supported through four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The four **specific** areas are:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in Nursery will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years at Fir Tree and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS including teaching aspects of Mathematics, Literacy, shared reading and writing. All children have a daily phonics session using 'Letters and Sounds'.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS. 'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'. We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out.

5. Observation and Assessment

- During the first term in reception and nursery the teacher assess the ability of each child, using the Early Years Outcomes document. The assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme from individual children.
- The teacher completes an assessment every half term on the children. From this a class overview, yearly tracker, and case notes are produced. The Reception teacher also produces a summary of data which shows the percentage of children below, in line and above typical development in each aspect of the EYFS.
- Each child's personal assessment grid is in the back of their learning journey which shows their assessment for each half term.
- At the end of the Summer Term we send a summary of the Reception assessment to the LEA for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead.
- As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways such as photographs and comments; short snap shot observations and learning stories. Each child will have a learning story produced on them once a long term. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey.
- Parents are invited to attend parents meetings during the Autumn and Summer Terms. Parents are able to look at their child's learning journey. Parents are also encouraged to complete 'wow slips' to document children's achievements outside of school.
- During the Spring Term we provide parents with a report based of their child's development across the EYFS curriculum. It highlights children's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress.
- At the end of the year children in Reception are assessed against each of the Early Learning Goals and this information is sent home to parents. The parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the Reception teacher.

6. The role of parents

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We therefore 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
- Visiting the child and parent at home
- Opportunities given to the children to spend time with their teacher before starting school
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns
- Having flexible arrangements and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances
- Encouraging parents to stay initially if there are problems with the child's admission

- Offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between the child, school and parents
- Providing various activities that involve parents, i.e. home tasks, rhyme challenge

7. Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident. All staff in the unit are required to keep any personal recording devices in their own bag and shut away in a secure place.

8. Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals at Fir Tree, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

9. Organisation (Nursery)

The induction and entry arrangements for the nursery are:

- Children may start Nursery the term after their third birthday.
- Information pack (with relevant and updated details) given to all new intake.
- Visits to nursery for new parents/carers and children
- Home visits are offered to all new parent/carers
- Maximum of 26 children in each Nursery session
- If Nursery is at full capacity, children will be placed on a waiting list in order of age
- A staggered entry for all the children starting nursery (not more than two new children per session)
- Options for entry are:
 - a. Child brought to nursery and settled by parent/carer and collected at home time.
 - b. Child brought to nursery and settled by parent/carer, then left for an agreed amount of time before being collected.

The nursery times are:

Morning session: 8.45 to 11.45

Afternoon session: 12.30 to 3.30

10. Organisation (Reception)

The induction and entry arrangements for the Reception are:

- An information evening offered to all parents/carers with children starting Reception in September
- Information pack (with relevant and updated details) given to all new intake
- Visits to Reception for new parents/carers and children
- Home visits offered to all new parent/carers
- Reception staff will visit pre-school children have attended to gain educational information about them
- Staggered entry is provided for all children.
 - a. Day 1, 2 and 3 - children stay for morning only. (8.50 – 12.00)
 - b. Day 3 and 4 – children stay for morning session and lunch. All go home after afternoon registration. (8.50 – 1.15)
 - c. Week 2 – full days begin (8.50 – 3.15)