



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Federation	Yes
Statutory	Yes
Frequency	Reviewed annually
Staff member	Polly Calvert and Janine Roberts
Governor	Sema Aydin
Committee	
Full Governing Body	

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Rationale

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. All children should be given the opportunity to experience the best possible start to their education and to develop solid foundations, which will ensure that they flourish throughout their school years and on into adulthood.

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, Early Years Outcomes and Early Learning Goals refer to the development of children from birth to the end of Reception. It sets a series of learning goals for children to work towards by the time they reach the end of EYFS at the age of 5+.

For most children, the end of the Reception year will be the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, when the expectation is that most children will achieve the Early Learning Goals. Although the Early Learning Goals are intended for children at the end of the Reception year, younger children will be provided with experiences that will support them in reaching the goals at the appropriate time.

In Foundation Stage classes, a high quality, well-resourced, integrated early education should make a positive contribution to this distinct stage in a child's development with the key learning skills of listening, speaking, physical development, concentration, persistence, co-operation, emotional self-regulation, literacy and numeracy. The Fox Ashburnham Federation value the impact that rich, stimulating experiences together with high quality adult interactions and support have on providing each child with opportunities to develop the skills, competencies and thinking to best support their development across all areas of learning.

Purposes of the EYFS

- To make the child's first experience of school happy, positive and fun.
- To ensure that all children feel valued and secure in the Foundation Stage setting with positive relationships between children, carers and staff.
- To ensure breadth, depth and balance in the curriculum through carefully planned adult input and sensitive interaction using the age-related Early Years Outcomes statements as well as the Early Learning Goals, while having regard for the skills and attitudes the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum will demand.
- To encourage parents to become partners with the school in the education of their children.

- To provide a curriculum firmly based on Active Learning, Creating and Thinking Critically, and Playing and Exploring to meet the needs of the individual child.
- To further love of learning, enquiring minds and the ability to discuss, adapt, solve problems and negotiate. Well planned play and purposeful activity with challenge and enjoyment, both in and out of doors, will provide opportunity for teaching and learning. Within a well-planned and organised environment, children should be able to explore, question, test, observe, experiment, plan, make decisions for themselves and participate in activities that are planned by adults as well as those which they plan and start themselves.
- To provide the children time to become engrossed in what they are doing, to work in depth and to complete activities in order to develop positive attitudes to learning while staff need to understand how young children learn and develop, in order to observe and respond to them. Appropriate intervention helps children to become more involved in the learning process and provide opportunities for new learning and development, so that they can make progress.
- To monitor progress throughout the Early Years Foundation stage, while taking action to identify areas of concern and provide necessary support.
- To help children develop self-control and to respect the feelings, needs, culture and the abilities of others.
- Within any Early Years Foundation Stage cohort there will be wide variations in terms of development and maturity as well as family, religion, cultural background and special needs. Children will have differing experiences, interests, skills and knowledge, which affect both their learning pace and styles. This diversity must be catered for within planning that has a flexible approach, using a wide range of strategies and teaching styles to address the particular needs of the children, families and the community. No child should be disadvantaged but each encouraged to develop self-esteem and confidence in their ability to learn.

This policy is written in conjunction with the government documents:

“Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage”

“Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Handbook 2017”

“Assessment and Reporting Arrangements Handbook”

“Development Matters”

“Early Years Outcomes”

Curriculum

The Early Years Curriculum is divided into 7 different areas of learning and development, which underpin a child's development and progress throughout the early years and beyond:

3 'prime' areas of learning:

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

These prime curricular areas are the main focus in the very early years of a child's life and are developmentally linked. By Reception, the children should be exposed to a more balanced curriculum, including all seven areas. However, the prime areas are still of particular importance as the bedrock on which all other learning rests and should be prioritised if a child is struggling in any one of them.

4 'specific' areas of learning:

- Literacy;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding of the World, and
- Expressive Arts and Design

Prime Areas of Learning

PSED (Personal, Social and Emotional Development)

Self-Confidence and Self-Awareness – development of the child's ability to approach a range of tasks with confidence, asking for help when they need it, and to share their needs and ideas in familiar groups.

Managing Feelings and Behaviour – supporting children to explain and assess the feelings and behaviours of themselves and others, their understanding of the consequences of different behaviours and how not all behaviours are acceptable, take changes of routine in their stride, and to work collaboratively with adults and peers and follow rules.

Making Relationships – supporting children in playing cooperatively and taking turns, taking into account one another’s ideas and developing their sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others, meaning they form positive relationships with adults and peers.

Physical Development

Moving and Handling – to provide opportunities for all children to develop and practise their fine and gross motor skills, coordination and confidence in negotiating space, as well as using a range of tools – including pencils for writing – effectively.

Health and Self-Care – to increase children’s understanding of how their bodies work and what they need to do to be healthy and safe.

Communication and Language

Listening and Attention – to develop children’s ability to listen attentively in a range of situations, respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions, and listen and respond appropriately whilst being engaged in an activity.

Understanding – help children to learn to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions and answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions.

Speaking – support children to express themselves appropriately showing awareness of the listener, use a range of vocabulary and tense appropriately in verbal communication and develop their own narratives, connecting thoughts and events.

Specific areas of learning

Literacy

Reading and writing – provide opportunities for all children to explore, enjoy, learn about and use words and text in a broad range of contexts and to experience and express their understanding of a rich variety of books.

Mathematics

This offers the children opportunities for all children to develop their understanding of number, measurement, pattern, shape and space by providing a broad range of contexts in which they can explore, enjoy, learn, practise and talk about them.

UW (Understanding of the World)

To create opportunities for all children to solve problems, make decisions, experiment, predict, plan and question in a variety of contexts, use a range of technology for particular purposes, and to explore and find out about their environment, the wider world and people and places that have significance in their lives, as well as develop their understanding of and sensitivity to the similarities and differences between people and places.

EA&D (Expressive Arts and Design)

To provide opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design and technology, music, movement, dance and imaginative and role play activities, as well as develop their imagination.

Early Learning Goals

There are 17 Early Learning Goals across the above 7 areas of learning. The ELGs outline the skills, knowledge and concepts that most children are expected to achieve by the end of the Foundation Stage. Practitioners also make use of guidance on age-related expectations, in the form of the Development Matters Statements and the Early Years Outcomes. Both these documents are non-statutory but are of great use when assessing ongoing progress and planning. The organisation of teaching and learning at Fox and Ashburnham supports the attainment of the Early Learning Goals and excellent progress, through provision, planning and assessment.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

The Characteristics of Effective Learning are a crucial aspect of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. Teachers are expected to write a narrative describing each child’s learning characteristics at the end of the EYFS, in addition to assessing them against the Early Learning Goals. The characteristics are detailed in the table below:

<p>Playing and Exploring</p> <p>ENGAGEMENT</p>	<p><u>Finding out and exploring</u> is concerned with the child’s open-ended hands-on experiences which result from innate curiosity and provide raw sensory material from which the child builds concepts, tests ideas and finds out.</p>
	<p><u>Using what they know in their play</u> describes how children use play to bring together their current understandings, combining, refining and exploring their ideas in imaginative ways.</p>
	<p><u>Representing experiences through imaginative play</u> supports the development of narrative thought, the ability to see from other perspectives, and symbolic thinking.</p>

	<u>Being willing to have a go</u> refers to the child finding an interest, initiating activities, seeking challenge, having a 'can do' orientation, being willing to take a risk in new experiences , and developing the view of failures as opportunities to learn .
Active Learning MOTIVATION	<u>Being involved and concentrating</u> describes the intensity of attention that arises from children concentrating on following a line of interest in their activities.
	<u>Keeping on trying</u> refers to the importance of persistence even in the face of challenge an element of purposeful control which supports resilience.
	<u>Enjoying achieving what they set out to do</u> refers to the reward of meeting one's own goals, building on the intrinsic motivation which supports long-term success , rather than relying on the approval of others.
Creating and Thinking Critically THINKING	<u>Having their own ideas</u> covers the critical area of creativity - generating new ideas and approaches in all areas of endeavour . Being inventive allows children to find new problems as they seek challenge, and to explore ways of solving these.
	<u>Using what they already know to learn new things</u> refers to the way in which children develop and link concepts, find meaning in sequence, cause and effect and in the intentions of others through both narrative and scientific modes of thought .
	<u>Choosing ways to do things and finding new ways</u> involves approaching goal-directed activity in organised ways making choices and decisions about how to approach tasks, planning and monitoring what to do and being able to change strategies .

The Characteristics describe the way in which children learn. Early Years Practitioners have a responsibility to ensure that children develop as independent, self-regulated learners who are curious, motivated and able to think for themselves. In order for this to happen, children need enough time and space to play and explore, make decisions about their learning, set their own goals, and come up with their own ideas and hypotheses. Learning that is too structured or formal will not allow children to flourish as independent learners, meaning that child-centred learning and 'choosing' feature strongly in the day of a child in the EYFS.

Teaching and Learning

The Fox Ashburnham Federation policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our schools. The more features of good practice in our schools that relate specifically to the Foundation Stage are:

- The partnership between teachers, classroom based support staff, external agencies 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 effects 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, communicative, 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.

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 to 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. Learning through play and playful adult interaction are crucial elements of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Learning in the Nursery is predominately based on play, with adult interaction introducing children to new skills, knowledge and understanding as well as extending their existing skills, knowledge and understanding. This approach continues into Reception with a more formal approach to teaching gradually adopted towards the end of the Reception Year, in preparation for the beginning of Key Stage 1 in Year 1.

A Unique Child - Equal opportunities

Children in the Foundation Stage reflect the multicultural nature of our school. We are committed to ensuring that every individual, at every stage of learning, regardless of gender, ethnic origin, religion, family circumstances or class has access to and participates in the full curriculum in order to reach their full personal, creative and intellectual potential.

At Fox and Ashburnham, we build on pupils' interests and previous experience. We learn about the children through observation, discussions with parents and carers, and conversations with the children themselves. We seek to nurture children's innate curiosity and personal interests. The children provide their own ideas for planning in daily and weekly reflections, which are then incorporated into daily plans. At least one week a half term is dedicated to planning based on the children's interests and/or needs.

All children develop at different rates and stages, and planning takes into account the varied needs in our Foundation Stage classrooms. Along with the school SENDCO and designated adult for LAC and post-LAC children, class teachers plan for an inclusive environment and the careful allocation of staff to support children appropriately with tasks. Children's achievements and support needs are shared with parents.

Positive Relationships

Excellent Early Years settings are defined by the quality of the relationships between adults and pupils. Children need adults who listen to them, care about them, support them appropriately and develop their confidence to become independent learners. At Fox and Ashburnham, the Early Years Foundation stage value a play-based, communication centred approach to teaching and learning. Staff new to the EYFS receive training from the EYFS lead teacher when they first join our school, and are supported to develop their practice through performance management, peer observation and external training where appropriate. As far as possible, teaching assistants and learning support assistants stay in the EYFS for more than a year at a time, so that they can develop their pedagogical skills and Early Years practice. Good relationships and communication with parents/carers are crucial to support the well-being of children, and there are regular opportunities throughout the school year for teachers to liaise with parents and include them in the learning of their children at school – including parent workshops, profile mornings, parent reading, parent show and tell, parent consultations and special whole-school events.

Provision – Enabling Environments

At Fox and Ashburnham provision is organised to promote active, confident and independent learners. Through creating stimulating displays and areas in which resources are clearly labelled and accessible, children can make decisions and extend their own learning. Children in the Foundation Stage are encouraged to value and take responsibility for their own learning and the environment.

Classrooms are well-organised and all areas of the curriculum are represented. Continuous provision is available in terms of resources that children choose (various forms of construction for example), and in specified areas of the classroom. Every classroom has a maths carpet area, writing table, role play area, book corner, creative area, UW area and movement space. Children are given plenty of opportunities to work on the floor and space to move, supporting their physical development.

Classroom displays should reflect and celebrate children's work, achievements and Characteristics of Learning across the curriculum. They should represent a range of teaching and learning methods, be interactive and act as an aid to children's learning in the class. Spaces should be calm and orderly.

Outdoor learning

Outdoor learning is an essential part of a child's experiences across the Foundation Stage. Children develop skills in all seven areas of the curriculum linked to termly topics through outdoor activities. The outdoor area is used on a daily basis. A range of stimulating and carefully chosen resources are available for use in the outdoor area. The outdoor area is particularly important for the development of physical literacy, and ensuring that children get their 3 hours a day entitlement to physical activity.

Planning

- Planning takes place collaboratively between the teachers and other staff in the EYFS. Plans describe teaching and learning activities and opportunities linked to objectives and assessment opportunities.
- **Termly planning** is organised through a variety of topics incorporating the ELGs across all 7 areas. Teachers refer to the detailed curriculum overview when planning for the coming term, ensuring that the children have access to a wide range of learning opportunities and that progress in terms of skills and knowledge is catered for.
- **Weekly planning** is taken from the termly plans with opportunities for both child and adult led learning. These are adapted according to observations and also taking into account current needs and interests of the children. There will be times when an EAL or SEN teacher is working within the classes, or targeting small groups of children. Teaching Assistants and Student Teachers also lead intervention groups, focusing on the three prime areas of the curriculum. Weekly planning will include specific planning for those targeted children and outline these additional interventions – what they will involve, when they are to take place, and who will lead them.
- **Daily Planning** is the way in which planning changes in response to the needs and interests of the children. The class teacher and support staff work together to decide on how to adapt the on-going provision day by day and ensure that independent learning opportunities are meaningful, engaging and provide opportunities for children to extend themselves. Independent learning opportunities are adapted daily, making use of ideas from the children, adult observations and prepared activities linking to the weekly theme or topic.
- Each member of staff has their own copy of the weekly planning and has time once a week to discuss planning with the class teacher.
- The children will be given opportunities to explore and develop learning experiences that help them make sense of the world through structured play. They will practise 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. The children make their own selection of the activities on offer as this encourages independent learning.

Please see also the **Foundation Stage Curriculum Overview** for more details.

Assessment

In the Foundation Stage, observations of children's learning form a large part of assessment evidence. These, together with work samples, photographs, video and the input of a range of adults contribute to each child's profile.

Ongoing Assessments

Ongoing progress is measured using the Development Matters Statements and Early Years Outcomes. **Ongoing assessments** inform future planning as well as tracking the progress and attainment of each child. Ongoing assessment is taken from observations, samples of work and professional dialogue. All assessment takes into account the views of everybody who works with the child – teachers, teaching assistants, parents/carers, specialist teachers and outside agencies. The majority of assessment evidence needs to be taken from what children can do independently, spontaneously and in a range of contexts.

Targeting children – observations

Children are focussed upon during weekly planned observations. Planned observations take place during playful adult-directed learning, as well as when the children are working independently. These observations are used to inform future planning and the EYFS Profile.

Observations may be incidental or planned, long or short, individual or whole class. There are a variety of proformas to support adults who write observations of the children, as well as prompt sheets made by the EYFS coordinator. Adults also use the online 2BuildAProfile system to record children's learning using photographs and written observations. Parents have access to their child's profile during termly profile mornings.

The Foundation Stage Profile

The **EYFS Profile** was introduced in March 2003 and modified in 2012, and is used nationally in the Reception Year. The Profile is a summative judgement at the end of the Reception year, matching children's attainment to assessment statements across the seven areas of the curriculum.

At the end of the Reception Year, children are assessed in each curriculum area, and are judged to be at the 'expected' level, 'emerging' towards the expected level, or 'exceeding' expectations. These judgements are made by class teachers using the Early Learning Goals and based on ongoing assessment from the whole year. These judgements are moderated by the school, across the Federation and by the Local Authority.

Results of EYFS profile are shared with parents/carers at the end of the children's Reception year through a written summary of a child's attainment against the ELGs as a written narrative of the children's progress and learning styles with reference to the three Characteristics of Learning: Active Learning, Creating and Thinking Critically and Playing and Exploring. Judgements in relation to the Early Learning Goals and the narrative on the Characteristics of Learning are passed onto Year 1 Teachers and form the basis of the transition conversation.

Please read the Foundation Stage Assessment Overview for further details.

Roles

The role of the staff

In the Foundation Stage there are professionals who together contribute to the teaching and extension of learning for all children.

THE FOUNDATION STAGE LEADERS are qualified, experienced teachers who are responsible for managing the EYFS curriculum and assessment, as well as developing the skills of all FS staff through mentoring, training, co-planning and monitoring.

THE FOUNDATION STAGE TEACHERS are qualified primary school teachers.

TEACHING ASSISTANTS AND SUPPORT STAFF work with individuals or groups of children in line with class planning and cohort.

THE EAL TEACHER (English as an Additional Language) is a qualified teacher working within the class, targeting children with EAL at key points in the year.

THE SENDCO (School Special Needs and Disabilities Coordinator) is a qualified teacher who advises class teachers on best supporting those with special educational needs, supports the work of 1:1 teaching assistants and targets groups of children needing additional input.

STUDENT TEACHERS In line with the rest of the school, PGCE and Teach Direct teaching students often carry out their placements in the Reception classes. The class teacher is responsible for the overall support of the student, with monitoring and guidance from the Student mentor.

OUTSIDE AGENCIES are sometimes involved with individual children i.e Pupil Support, Early Years consultants, the Early Years Behaviour and Autism Intervention Team, school nurse, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Educational Psychologists, Educational Welfare and Social Services.

The role of the parent/guardians

The involvement of family and friends is highly valued. Parents and guardians are the first educators of their children and provide essential information about their children's development.

Parents and carers are close partners in the transition process from home to nursery or nursery to school. Induction meetings are held prior to the children starting school to share general information, with an additional 'Meet the Teacher' session after the children have been in attendance for a couple of weeks. Children who are new to nursery or reception at Ashburnham will receive a home visit from their teacher, and parents of children joining reception at Fox are invited in for 1:1 parent meetings lasting 20 minutes prior to their child starting school. Fox teachers also visit children in their pre-school settings. In the Autumn term, workshops are held to share information about the teaching of maths and literacy, as well as detailing the EYFS curriculum and the ways in which parents can foster the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Across the Foundation Stage, families are encouraged to become involved with their children's learning in school. This can be done through supporting activities and completing observations outside of school, helping on school visits, attending our stay and play/profile mornings and bi-weekly parent reading. Parents with particular expertise or interests are invited to share their talents providing new experiences for children – for example during our music and sports week activities. Parents are invited to attend 3 parent consultation meetings a year, and are always welcome to arrange a meeting to discuss any queries or concerns about their child's learning and experiences in school.

Parents are also invited to attend workshops led by the EYFS lead teacher to further develop their understanding of the EYFS curriculum, the teaching of Literacy and Mathematics in the school and to enable them to best support their child at home. All parents receive a booklet in the first term explaining the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and how it is delivered in the Federation. Parents are sent half-termly letters by class teachers explaining topics, upcoming trips and expectations for the term. Weekly information is displayed outside the classroom doors for parents.

Intake Guidelines

We have one annual intake in September.

As far as possible, classes are composed of a fair spread of ages, gender, ethnicities, children learning with English as an Additional Language and those with Special Educational Needs. All children are offered the option of attending the morning session only for the first term of nursery/reception. This is to enable a smoother transition into school from pre-school settings for children and their families. The parents/carers of children who are Spring and Summer born are strongly encouraged to consider the option of attending for the morning session only in the first term.

Settling in – home and pre-school visits - Transitions – year 1

In order to support children's transition into Nursery or Reception:

- The Early Years Foundation Stage teachers at Fox visit children in their pre-school setting before starting school.
- At Ashburnham, Nursery and Reception class teachers meet the children during home visits.
- The children make a morning visit in July before starting school.
- Two detailed and comprehensive meet the teacher presentations given to parents and carers - one before their child starts school and one at the end of their child's first full week of attendance.
- Each parent/carer and their child will meet with class teacher for 20 minutes before starting school.
- The children build up to full-time attendance over the first two-three weeks of term.
- A gradual, well supported introduction to the various aspects of school life and its members is catered for. The children are introduced to the routines of school which require more conforming, socialising and directed learning situations than will have been experienced before.

In order to support children's transition from Reception into year 1, we plan for the following in Summer 2:

- Circle times and stories with the Y1 class teachers in the reception classrooms
- Time in their new classrooms with their new class groups
- A detailed handover with Y1 class teachers
- Y1 participation in moderation of the Profile judgements at the end of Reception, helping them to understand the curriculum and the attainment levels of the children
- Year 1 Autumn term planning adjusted to reflect an Early Years approach to teaching and learning
- Planned activities to support children with the idea of Y1 – i.e. 'My perfect day in Y1' little books
- A Reception graduation ceremony, to which parents/carers are invited

Safeguarding

- As of July 2016 via the government response to the PFA consultation, all newly qualified entrants to the early years workforce with a level 2 or 3 qualification must also have either a full or emergency PFA certificate within 3 months of starting work.
- See Child Protection Policy
- See Intimate Care Policy
- Regular staff training
- Weekly planning and assessment meetings involve discussing how children are with reference to the whole child
- Going Home boards/books
- Circle time – incidental and planned
- Visits from Police, Fire Officers, Dentist and Nurse
- Allergies and medical needs – displayed in classroom, staff room and kitchen

- Healthy Early Years and nut-free school