

Cottesbrooke Infant & Nursery School Foundation Stage Policy

What is the aim of the Foundation Stage?

The Foundation Stage covers the ages of birth to 5 years and includes both the year in Nursery and the year in Reception. The children who attend our school will already have an acquired a range of experiences, skills and interests, therefore a well-planned and resourced curriculum is essential if their learning is to be moved forward.

The EYFS has principles which guide the work of all Early Years practitioners.

They can be grouped into four distinct but complimentary themes

1. Every child is a '**A Unique Child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
3. 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 or carers.
4. Children **develop and learn** in different ways and at different rates.

Together these principles provide a context for the requirements and describe how best to support the development, learning and care of young children.

The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children to achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well being.

The Foundation Stage Curriculum

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning. The curriculum is everything the children do, see, hear and feel, planned and unplanned both indoors and outdoors.

There are seven areas of learning which are all important and interconnected. 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, the **prime areas are,**

Communication and language

Physical development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

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

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

Teacher's planning will reflect opportunities in all seven areas as follows:

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children should be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

The role of play

Play underpins the delivery of all the EYFS. Children need the opportunity to play indoors and outdoors. Opportunities for indoor and outdoor play are planned and the pupils are encouraged to develop their own learning by exploring play opportunities that interest them. Thus the play becomes child centered.

Through play the children learn to explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world.

- Play helps them to practice and build up ideas, concepts and skills.
- Play enables them to see a need for rules.
- Play enables them to take risks and make mistakes.
- Play allows them to think creatively and imaginatively.
- Play helps them to communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Characteristics of learning

The Characteristics of Effective learning support the development of the Unique Child in **how** children are learning.

Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to ‘have a go’

Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

Planning of the curriculum

Teachers plan where possible from children’s interests rather than topics, in the belief that children’s engagement will be higher. Throughout the year, children will also have the opportunity to learn about various events such as Eid, Christmas, Diwali, Easter and the changing of the seasons. On occasions topics themed planning will occur if there is a specific curriculum need or special school themed week such as health week.

In Reception, children will take part in a daily phonics session, catered to their specific stage of learning. In nursery, children will take part in early reading and phonic activities, which are based on the DFE’s publication of Letters and Sounds and RWI.

In nursery and reception, each day, the children take part in a direct teaching session. There will also be the opportunity to explore a wide range of activities based around the seven areas of learning through ‘Continuous provision’ inside and outside. Reception children will take part in a daily focused activity and adults in both Reception and nursery will support, extend and challenge learning through ‘child initiated’ play. Outdoor provision is planned on a weekly basis, with a weekly focused activity and support of ‘child initiated play’ by adults. A range of resources reflecting all areas of the curriculum are provided to encourage exploration and investigation.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage

The monitoring of each child’s progress is essential throughout the Foundation Stage to ensure that children are making progress and that any difficulties in any of the areas of learning can be identified and addressed.

The curriculum is organised in such a way that assessment runs alongside what the children are doing. The children have the opportunity to work independently and at adult led activities and in both ability groups and mixed ability groups. The assessment that is used during these learning opportunities then informs future planning.

Assessment in the Nursery

When children enter Nursery they are observed in a range of situations. Over time electronic and paper observations of the children's achievements are recorded. This then provides a baseline for planning a range of differentiated activities that will meet the needs, interests and development of all the children. In most cases children's observations will show what they can achieve independently and what their next step is to be. Observation notes are then cross-referenced with the Foundation stage profile and relevant areas of achievement are highlighted, either electronically in 'Tapestry' or in a child's learning journal. Particular areas of strength and areas for development are identified and included in future planning.

All of the evidence gathered during each half term is reviewed and helps the class teacher complete individual profiles. For each strand of learning children are assessed against month's bands in the document 'Early Years outcomes'. This information is submitted at least 3 times a year onto the school assessment program 'Target tracker' which will show if children are beginning to work, are working within, or are secure within a certain age band.

Assessment in Reception

When the children start Reception they are observed over their first few weeks in a variety of situations and the observations/judgments are recorded to determine their starting points. (From 2016 a statutory baseline assessment will be used to assess the children on entry.) The class teachers will also use the data and information sent from children's preschools, including nursery, to support their judgments.

Teachers and teaching assistants then over time make observations of the children's achievements and, like nursery, plan a differentiated curriculum that reflects the children's interest, needs and wants. They will add observations to an electronic learning journal, called 'Tapestry' or the child's learning journal book.

Over the year, at least 3 times a year, teachers make a summative assessment of where the children are, which is entered into the school's assessment system and shows where children are in a particular age band.

In June teachers submit data to the authority detailing the children's achievements against the Early Learning Goals. Teachers assess whether children are working at an **emerging, expected** or **exceeding** level.

Moderation

Staff in Foundation Stage meet regularly to moderate their judgments. They also attend local consortium and LA moderation meetings to ensure consistency and accuracy.

Links with Parents

Home visits in September are offered to Nursery parents and to Reception children who haven't attended the school's nursery, in order to begin building the relationship between school and home.

Before children start Nursery and Reception the parents are invited to an induction meeting. The meeting gives the parents

- general information about what to expect when their children start
- their children's start date
- information about the curriculum
- information about their children is checked

They are also given a copy of the Home/School Agreement which lists the responsibilities of the school, parents and the children themselves.

Children are also invited to spend time in their classroom with their new teacher in July.

Parents are also invited to a reading meeting before the end of the first term which provides them with guidance about supporting their children at home in phonics.

Further workshops may be held throughout the year to which parents are invited.

There is also the opportunity of daily contact with the class teacher at the end of school to discuss any concerns and ask questions.

Three times a year they are invited into school for an individual meeting with the class teacher about their children. Parents also have access to their child's online learning journal 'Tapestry', via a password system, with which they too can add photos and comments on their child's achievements.

In the summer term the parents receive a written report about their child's development and achievement during the year.

Transition

Meeting the individual needs of all children lies at the heart of the EYFS.

We ensure that we deliver personalised learning opportunities that provide development, and give each child the best possible start.

We also make sure that we tackle underachievement where this has been identified through a variety of means, including target groups and differentiated work and support the special needs of pupils so children can succeed at every possible level.

One way we ensure this is by having clear procedures for transition between year groups (Nursery to Reception, Foundation Stage to KS1). The curriculum is designed in such a way that all of the children's needs are met. This means that if children are still working towards the Early Learning Goals at the end of their Reception year their activities and learning reflect this in Year One. This is also the case for children who are ready for the National Curriculum.

We also ensure that we promote positive attitudes towards the diversity and differences between our children and by doing this we help them to understand and value aspects of others people's lives.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All pupils, irrespective of ability, gender or background are fully involved in all aspects of the EYFS curriculum. Playing and learning together helps them to develop respect for the ability of other children and encourages them to collaborate and co-operate across a range of activities and experiences.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

We fully include SEN pupils in the EYFS curriculum at a level to suit their needs. At Cottesbrooke Infant School we do not make the assumption that a child with special educational needs in one curriculum area will necessarily have a particular difficulty or talent in another.

As with any pupil it is the teacher's task to help a child with special needs in the Foundation curriculum to experience success. The teacher will therefore need to consider:-

- * differentiating to meet the needs of the pupil
- * offering additional experiences
- * adapting tools or equipment to meet needs
- * take account of any IEPs if these are relevant to their learning

Pupils who are particularly gifted or talented in any area of the Foundation curriculum will be noted in the record of More Able Children (MAC) and their learning will be suitably differentiated.

Fundamental British Values and Universal Virtues

Cottesbrooke Infant & Nursery School promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We also promote the universal virtues of courage, compassion, self-discipline, justice and humility. Where relevant, these values and virtues should form part of the teaching of EYFS

Actively promoting these values and virtues means challenging opinions or behaviours in school that are contrary to fundamental British values.

It is not necessary for staff to 'promote' teachings, beliefs or opinions that conflict with their own, but it is unacceptable for staff to promote discrimination against people or groups on the basis of their belief, opinion or background.

Reviewed: April 2015 by S.Boobyer

Shared with governors April 2015

Next review date: April 2017