



EYFS POLICY

Introduction

This policy outlines the provision Abbots Farm Infant School & Pre-School offers to all its pupils aged three to five years. Children within this age range are taught in The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The Foundation Stage has its own framework and is therefore treated as a separate Key Stage. Foundation Stage 1 (FS1) refers to three to four year olds and is formally known as Pre-School. Foundation Stage 2 (FS2) refers to four to five year olds and is formally known as Reception. Early childhood education is valued in itself and should not be seen merely as a preparation for the next stage in learning.

Our aims

Our school is a place where everyone is treated equally, encouraged and respected. We believe that all children should be able to achieve their full potential academically, socially and emotionally. We are committed to our school being a safe and inclusive place where learning is nurtured and encouraged in a happy, caring and fun environment. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

Effective Early Years Education

Effective education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements. Early Years experience should build on what the children already know and can do. No child should be disadvantaged. Parents and practitioners should work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect. To be effective, the early years curriculum should be carefully structured (recognising different starting points; relevant to levels of need). There should be opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that they plan or initiate for themselves. Practitioners must be able to observe and respond appropriately to children informed by knowledge of how children develop and learn. Well planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process. For children to have rich and stimulating experiences, the learning environment should be well planned and well organised. At Abbots Farm Infant school we have two reception teachers each with a teaching assistant & a pre-school teacher with a senior early years educator to ensure that this happens.

The Seven Areas of Learning

The seven areas of learning covered by the framework are:

PRIME AREA: Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

This area has three sub sections. These are Making Relationships, Self-confidence and Self-awareness and Managing Feelings and Behaviour. The outcomes focus on children learning how to work, play, co-operate with others and function in a group beyond the family. They cover important aspects of personal, social, moral and spiritual development including the development of personal values and an understanding of self and others.

PRIME AREA: Communication and Language (C and L)

This is broken down into three sub sections. These cover Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking. These outcomes cover important aspects of language development and provide the foundations for literacy. The Early Years Policy places a strong emphasis on children's developing competence in speaking and listening and Understanding. Other areas of learning also make a vital contribution to the successful development of literacy.

PRIME AREA: Physical Development (PD)

This covers both fine and gross motor development and keeping healthy. Physical development is implicit in all areas of the EYFS framework. Teaching concentrates on children's developing physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulative skills in indoor and outdoor environments. Positive attitudes are encouraged towards a healthy and active way of life.

SPECIFIC AREA: Mathematics (MD)

This is broken down into two sub sections. These are Number and Shape, Space and Measures. These outcomes cover important aspects of mathematical understanding and provide the foundation for Mathematics. They focus on achievement through practical activities and are using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas.

SPECIFIC AREA: Literacy (LD)

This area of learning has two sub sections of Reading and Writing. The objectives ensure success in early reading and writing skills. Phonics plays a big part in this area and the ability to blend for reading and segment for spelling are skills that are promoted daily in the Foundation Stage.

SPECIFIC AREA: Understanding the World (UtW)

This covers the subjects Geography, Science, DT, History, RE and ICT. This is a major area of learning and enquiry focusing on children's developing knowledge and understanding of their environment, other people and features of the natural and made world. It provides a foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning.

SPECIFIC AREA: Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

This covers art, music, and drama. This area of the EYFS framework focuses on the development of children's imagination and their ability to communicate and to express ideas and feelings in creative ways.

These areas are not delivered in isolation but are planned for within topic themes in order to ensure children develop a range of skills & can make links between their learning.

Characteristics of effective learning

The characteristics of effective learning describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner. They are vital elements of support for the transition process from EYFS to Year 1. The characteristics of learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development. Information describing the child's characteristics of effective learning will provide Year 1 teachers with vital background and context when considering the child's next stage of development and future learning needs.

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

Planning is divided into long term, medium term and short term. Long term plans state the topics to be covered for each year & ensure coverage of Development Matters. Medium term plans illustrate the objectives being taught each term. Short term or weekly plans, show specific activities planned to achieve the objectives. All curriculum areas are planned, delivered & assessed in the same way & outdoor learning reflects indoor learning. Reception & pre-school plan to different topics although the themes compliment each other in order to plan for shared learning experiences.

Mixtures of directed and independent activities are planned and children's choices are carefully monitored to ensure a balanced programme. In Reception children will take part in 3 adult directed activities per week, in addition to two guided reading sessions & one guided writing activity. Phonics is planned for & taught systematically. Each child receives at least 1 phonic session daily although children identified as requiring more support with phonics will participate in two sessions in order to close the gap.

Assessment

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways, and contribute to the child's individual 'Learning Journey' profile book. Learning journals are used to moderate children's learning. Each year Reception & Pre-School teachers moderate the three prime areas & reception & KS1 teachers moderate three of the four specific areas. Learning journals are shared with the next teacher & sent home for parents to keep. At the end of the reception year in school, the child's progress is recorded on to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

Special Educational Needs

Continual informal and formal assessments undertaken by staff provided opportunities to identify any special educational needs a child may have. As children all develop differently it is recognised that a significant lack in achievement after the initial settling in period represents initial concern and careful monitoring & possible intervention activities are planned in order to close the gap. Children identified with special educational needs are monitored and initial concerns are discussed with parents, SENCO, and advice may be sought from other agencies e.g. Speech and Language Therapy Service. In the Foundation Stage we give all children the opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of their range of life experiences, and abilities when planning for their learning.

Parents as Partners

We value the involvement of parents in school. Parental involvement with school begins even before children start Pre-School/School with an invitation to parents to attend an information evening. Children joining the school in Reception are invited to two story sessions with their new class as well as a "stay & play" day where they are encouraged to sample a school dinner too. Pre-School children are invited to a play session. All of these allow the child & parent to meet their teacher and visit their classroom.

Children starting pre-school & reception have a home visit by their class teacher prior to them in order to see the child in their most familiar environment.

Parents have access to their child's learning journal and are encouraged to attend regular coffee mornings/afternoons where they can share the journals and make written contributions to their child's journal. Parent consultation meetings are held throughout the year at which parents and teachers discuss their child's progress and next steps.

A report is sent out at the end of the summer term and parents are invited into school to discuss this report if they wish.

The Learning Environment

The Foundation Stage classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet, creative etc. The classroom has defined learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

The Foundation Stage has enclosed outdoor areas, and children are able to free-flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Being outdoors offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. They are able to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

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