



Staplehurst School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date

Policy reviewed and ratified by the Learning & Development Committee

14 March 2018

Policy to be next reviewed

Term 4, 2020

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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

The DfE's Single Department Plan for 2015-2020 states: 'Our goal is to provide world-class education and care that allows every child and young person to reach his or her potential, regardless of background.'

At Staplehurst School we value the "unique experience of childhood" (Coe) and are committed to providing the best experience we can.

Aims

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.

The over arching aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage is to help young children achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, and achieving economic well-being.

This happens in Staplehurst School by:

- building on what the children already know and can do
- encouraging an enthusiastic and positive attitude/disposition towards learning
- providing a high quality, safe, caring and happy environment in which to learn
- providing a well planned, well balanced and well organised learning environment
- providing independent learning through purposeful play
- providing opportunities for children's social, moral and spiritual development
- developing and extending attention and perseverance skills
- providing opportunities for the children to explore, enjoy and develop their skills in all areas learning within the Foundation Stage.

Context and Organisation

Intake Arrangements

At Staplehurst School 'Early Years' refers to the single intake of children at the beginning of the academic year. The children start with half days for an initial period and then, they all attend full time.

The children are organised into a class with a full time teacher and full time teaching assistant.

Staff/Child ratio

Early Years is subject to infant class size legislation, which limits the size of the class to 30 pupils per school teacher.

The Setting

The Early Years is organised into adjoining classrooms around a large central area that is specifically for imaginative role play. There is also an outside classroom, which encompasses all the 7 Areas of Learning and Development.

Curriculum Content

The Foundation Stage

This describes the period from birth to the end of the Reception year. It is a distinct stage which prepares children for later schooling.

Early Years settings follow the document Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

There are 3 Prime Areas and 4 Specific Areas of learning.

Prime Areas

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

Specific Areas

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

The Daily Routine

A well planned, regular and structured routine is essential for young children to gain confidence and independence. It is essential that there is a balance between teacher directed and 'child-initiated' learning.

Play

Time is allocated everyday for 'child initiated' activities and play this is an essential part of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. This gives children the time to become fully involved and engaged, explore new activities and enables them to develop particular interests at a deeper level.

Well planned opportunities for learning are provided both inside and outside. The children are first encouraged to 'explore' the resources and then are taught more in-depth about them/how to use them. They are then encouraged to try new activities, this helps them to widen their breadth of experiences.

The adults play a key role in developing and extending children's learning through play. The role of the adult is to model, guide and support activities. It is important however that positive intervention does not turn into interference. Questioning is an essential tool used by adults to elicit children's understanding, challenge their thinking and extend their learning. In addition observing children's play is a key tool used to assess gaps in children's learning and can support future planning.

Each week opportunities are planned to supplement the resources and learning that is occurring. These are usually linked to the theme/topic and the 'Prime' and 'Specific' areas of learning.

Teacher-directed activities

Throughout each week/day, planned teacher directed activities are undertaken. These are linked to clearly defined learning objectives and are designed to reinforce key teaching points.

Resources

Children are taught how to use the resources, where to collect them from and return them to. 'Tidy up time' is an established regular routine in which the children take responsibility for the care and organisation of the equipment they have used.

The resources are stored at child level so that the children can access them independently and safely.

Children's Recording of their Learning

Learning in Early Years is mainly of a practical nature, it takes several forms:-

- Painting
- Co-operation and involvement in wall displays and role play areas.
- Whiteboard recording
- Construction

- 3D box modelling
- Written responses in a variety of forms
- Colouring and drawing
- Printing activities from the computer
- Photographs

Many aspects of early years learning does not result in 'evidence' which can be shared and so 'notes' and photographs from teacher observations are made and recorded when and where appropriate.

Assessments, Record Keeping and Marking

A baseline assessment is completed for each child during their first six weeks at school, this is a statutory requirement introduced in 2015.

Children's progress is regularly tracked and monitored using observation, photographic and recorded evidence, both at school, from home and from the feeder pre-schools.

Recorded learning is annotated showing the amount of support given and when appropriate a comment about what the 'next steps' are for that child.

A reading record is kept for each child and handed on to the child's next teacher.

A written annual report is provided for the parents in the summer term, in which attainment and areas of strength are commented on. 'Next steps' for progress are set and can be discussed at the next parent consultation. In addition the 'characteristics of effective learning' are reported on within this written report.

Equality, Inclusion, Health and Safety

Equality

All children are provided with equal access to the Early Years Foundation Stage. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities in accordance with their protected characteristics.

Through our equal opportunities policy, we work to ensure that all children have fair chances and we avoid fixed beliefs and stereotyping about the characteristics and capabilities of individuals. We recognise and promote, cultural and religious diversity, non-discriminatory practise and promote positive images.

Inclusion

The main aim during Early Years is to identify particular areas of difficulty and strength, and to respond with effective support, learning strategies and teaching styles. Support and strategies are put in place for learning, behavioural, physical and emotional difficulties.

Health and Safety

We aim to provide a safe and supportive environment in which children are taught how to move about safely and to handle equipment in a safe and controlled way. They are encouraged to have consideration for their health and safety and that of their peers and adults around them.

First Aid

At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate must be on the premises at all times when children are present, and must accompany children on outings.

Photographs.

Many forms of the children's learning are kept in the form of photographs.

Staff within the Early Years must only use school cameras to take photographs of the children.

The Role of the Early Years Foundation Coordinator

The Early Years Foundation Coordinator should be responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage through:

- To take the lead in policy development and review.
- To coordinate the teaching and delivery of the Early Years Foundation curriculum, to ensure progression and continuity throughout the school.

- To support and advise colleagues on current thinking and practice, including organising/presenting INSET.
- To liaise with outside agencies and attend subject specialist courses.
- To monitor the Early Years Foundation curriculum by lesson observation, sample of work, teachers' planning and record keeping.
- To coordinate the purchase and organisation of central resources for Early Years Foundation Stage.
- To report to the Head teacher and Governing Body on Early Years Foundation related issues.
- To liaise with the Link Governor for Early Years Foundation Stage.
- To coordinate the organisation of Early Years Foundation events.
- In conjunction with the Inclusions Manager, to liaise with local pre-schools to ensure the smooth transition between pre-school and school environment

The Role of the Support Staff and Parents

Support Staff

- to work positively as part of the Early Years team
- to help supervise the safety and pastoral care of the children
- to assist the teacher in making observations and assessments of the children
- to support the children in planned and 'child initiated' activities
- to prepare resources, classroom materials and activities to support the children's learning
- to interact with the children during their learning and 'play'
- to be involved in planning the curriculum and learning environment
- to act as positive role-models for the children
- to undertake whole-school INSET and other relevant training where appropriate
- to implement behaviour management procedures in line with the school policy

Parents as partners and helpers

Parents are recognised as children's first educators. Parents are made to feel welcome, valued and supported. The school believes that the active support and involvement of parents is crucial to children achieving their potential in all aspects of the Early Years Foundation curriculum. We operate an 'open door' policy where there are daily opportunities for parents to discuss any issues or concerns they may have. To help foster this partnership we encourage parents to attend parent information meetings, stay and play sessions, consultations and 'drop in's'. In addition each child receives a contact book at the start of the year; this is used to send messages between home and school. At the end of the academic school year parents also receive an annual written report.

Parent helpers are actively welcomed and encouraged into school, and can form an important part of the children's' learning. They are informed about 'child confidentiality' and the boundaries of their role.

Interrelated Policies

This policy also needs to be in line with other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Teaching & Learning Policy
- Assessment, Marking & Feedback Policy
- Special Educational Needs & Disability Policy
- Equality Policy
- Health & Safety Policy

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of standards of the pupils work and quality of teaching in Early Years Foundation Stage is the responsibility of the Head teacher supported by the Early Years Foundation Coordinator. This Policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier, if required, in response to changes to legal requirements or school practice.

A named member of the school's Governing Body is briefed to overview the Early Years Foundation Stage. This Link Governor liaises regularly with the Coordinator to review progress. Regular reports are made to the Governors on the progress of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision.