



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Committee	Curriculum & Attainment
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'Celebrate Learning, Achievement and Friendship in God's Love'
Core Christian Values: Love, Trust, Hope, Respect

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full 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.

Introduction

The Foundation Stage makes a positive contribution to children's early learning and here at Waterhouses we are committed to providing a safe, secure and exciting environment, in which our Nursery and Reception children can thrive and prosper. Children develop rapidly during this time - they grow and improve physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. Our Foundation Stage is about your child developing key skills such as listening, speaking, concentration and persistence. They learn to work and play together and cooperate with each other in activities. It is also about the development of communication, literacy and numeracy skills which will help to prepare your children for the transition from the Foundation Stage into Key Stage 1 and the rest of their school lives.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four principles

- **A Unique Child:** We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can become resilient, capable, confident and self-assured, we recognize that all children develop in individual ways and over varying periods of time. Children's attitudes towards learning are influenced by others both at home and at school.
At school we use praise and encouragement as well as celebrating all children's learning which promotes a positive attitude towards learning.
- **Positive Relationships:** We recognise that young children learn to become strong and independent from secure and positive relationships with our staff. We aim to develop caring, respectful children within the Foundation Stage and build positive relationships with all children and their families.
- **Enabling Environments:** The environment in which children grow and mature plays a key role in supporting and extending their development. The adults in the Foundation Stage observe and assess children's interests and development and plan challenging and achievable experiences to extend their learning.

- **Learning and Development:** The Foundation Stage is organised to allow children to explore and learn within a safe environment, there are areas where children can be active and move freely and other areas where children can be quiet and reflective. Children are encouraged to find resources independently to support their learning.

The Early Years is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Waterhouses CE Primary Academy we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for children's future learning and development, we also view the EYFS as preparing young children as citizens of the future focusing on skills involving personal and social skills.

The Foundation Stage is for children aged from birth to five years of age. Children start our Nursery at the beginning of the school year, in which they are four years old. Reception children start school at the beginning of the school year in which they become five years old - our school year starts in September.

Aims of the Foundation Stage

The children joining our school come from a variety of backgrounds and have already learnt a great deal. The education we offer our children in the Foundation Stage aims to:

- Build on what children already know and can do.
- Ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged.
- Ensure that all children feel valued, included and secure.
- Offer a carefully structured curriculum which includes a range of starting points to develop and extend children's learning and activities which match the individual needs of our young children.

We aim to provide a well-planned, organised, rich and stimulating learning environment, which provides opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by the adults in our Foundation Stage and those initiated by themselves.

We plan purposeful activities which provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors.

The Foundation Stage curriculum underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

- personal, social and emotional well-being;
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning;
- social skills;
- attention skills and persistence;
- language and communication;
- reading and writing;
- mathematics;
- understanding the world;
- physical development;

- creative development.

The Foundation Stage curriculum is organised into three prime areas of learning, these are:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication and language
- Physical development

Additionally there are four specific areas of learning:

- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design.

Achieving of these prime and specific areas of learning is underpinned by the Characteristics of Effective Learning:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Play in the Foundation Stage

Play is a key way in which young children learn. Whether it is planned by a practitioner, or initiated by the child, it should still be supported by the practitioner to develop and extend the children's learning, and language and communication skills.

Through play children can:

- explore;
- develop;
- represent learning experiences that help them to make sense of the world;
- practice and build up ideas, concepts and skills;
- learn how to behave themselves and to understand the need for rules.
- learn to be alone or work alongside others;
- learn to communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems;
- begin to think creatively and with imagination;
- take risks and make mistakes;
- express fears and relive various experiences in controlled and safe situations.

The Learning Environment

The learning environment both indoor and outdoor which we provide, aims to stimulate and extend the natural curiosity and desire to learn. Practitioners will take on the roles of listener, advisor, observer and organiser. It is planned to encourage discussion, reflection and development. This gives the children the opportunity to reflect on their learning from past experiences and to store information for future development. We provide an

environment that is rich in language, one that builds firm foundations for children to develop their vocabulary and a structure for their thinking.

Resources

The materials, equipment, role - play and displays will be chosen to reflect the children's interests. Our environment will be free from stereotypical images and discriminatory practice, children will be encouraged to make choices and develop their independence by having equipment and materials readily available which inspire to initiate their own learning.

Observation, Assessment and Recording

Regular assessments of your children's learning are made and used to inform future planning to ensure that identified needs are addressed. Most assessment takes place through observation which can be formal and informal.

The assessments made are collated and recorded at the end of the Foundation Stage in each child's Foundation Stage Profile. The Profile summarises a child's achievements in relation to the Early Learning Goals and provides important information for parents and Year One teachers.

Each child also has a memory book containing photographs and pieces of work to demonstrate the children's progress and abilities.

Contributions to the assessments

Accurate assessment will depend on contributions from a range of perspectives, including the child's. Practitioners should involve children fully in their own assessment by encouraging them to communicate about and review their own learning. Assessment should build on the insights of all adults who have significant interactions with the child. Adults with different roles will be able to make different contributions. Accurate assessment requires a two-way flow of information between school and home. A review of a child's achievements should include those demonstrated at home. Assessments which don't include the parents' contribution give an incomplete picture of a child's learning and development'. *'Early Years Foundation Stage Profile 2018 Handbook' December 2017.*

There are meetings for parents in the autumn and spring term where discussions about the child's progress take place.

Parents receive a report at the end of each school term that offers comments on their child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and areas for development and gives details of the child's general progress.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first educators and we aim for the school and parents to work closely in our Foundation Stage.

All parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We actively encourage partnership with parents and carers and develop their involvement by:

- Inviting parents to a welcome evening prior to their child starting school, where we encourage parents to talk to us about their child starting school.
- Having a strong and positive Open Door policy and approach for our children where at the beginning of each new day an opportunity is made available for staff and parents to be able to discuss any issues involving their children. This brings our parents into the setting and helps them to feel secure and valued.
- Providing access to information about the curriculum and routines, and keeping parents informed about their child's progress and achievements.
- Arrange activities and visits throughout the school year which encourages positive collaboration between children, school and parents.

Inclusion in the Foundation Stage

At Waterhouses School we have a positive approach to the inclusion of all children as stated in all of our school policies. All children are valued and given the opportunity to achieve their full potential regardless of gender, ability, disability, special educational needs (SEN), ethnicity and cultural or social background. We aim to overcome any barriers that might exist and provide for particular needs and disabilities.

We also believe that early identification and early interaction are vitally important for children with SEN. This will enable the school staff and parents to provide the support children need during the Foundation Stage, which could minimise or prevent difficulties that may be experienced in Key Stage One and Two.