

# Zetland Primary School

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them 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 foundations for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance."

Source: DfE - Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2012

### Introduction

This policy reflects the values and philosophy in relation to the teaching and learning experiences of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It gives a framework within which staff work and gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment.

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. Entry into our Foundation Stage (Nursery) is in the term after the child turns 3 where children join us for 15 hours per week. Entry into our Reception year is at the beginning of the school year in which the children are 5.

The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, as children develop and absorb more in their first five years of life than at any other time. It prepares children for later schooling.

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years settings. These are:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- 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/or carers.
- Children **develop and learn** in different ways and at different rates. "

Source: DfE - Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

## Aims of the Foundation Stage

Our curriculum in the EYFS aims to:

### The Four Key themes, as implemented by Zetland Primary School

#### 1. A Unique Child

At Zetland Primary School we believe that each child is unique and we give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. Each child's individual contribution is recognised, valued and encouraged in an atmosphere of acceptance and trust. We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebrations, circle time and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

#### Inclusion

We believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their very best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences and varied interests when planning for their learning opportunities. We therefore, set realistic and challenging targets that meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, from difference socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Zetland Foundation Stage are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests to develop their self-esteem and confidence:
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs and interests.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- Providing a safe, supportive and stimulating learning environment in which the contributions of all children are valued.
- Develop challenging independent learning through a carefully planned and well-resourced indoor and outdoor environment.
- Employing resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid discrimination and stereotyping.
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.

- Monitoring children's progress and take action to provide support as necessary e.g. language support therapy.
- Liaising with specialist agencies as appropriate to meet individual needs.

It is important to us that all children are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. In addition at Zetland we aim to enable children to become good young citizens by helping them to respect and build good relationships with others.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See our Safeguarding Children Policy)

### Welfare

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them". (EYFS document 2007)

It is important that children in our school are safe and happy. We ensure that all children have clear boundaries and we help children to understand why these boundaries are important. We provide children with choices and with an element of responsibility to their actions. Children should be allowed to take risks, but our role is to teach children how to recognise and avoid hazards.

At Zetland we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2007. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Promote healthy eating and promote good dental hygiene both at home and in school supported in our daily tooth brushing session.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure that all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so. All adults working with our children are DBS checked.
- Ensure that the both the indoor and outdoor working environments are safe and suitably equipped for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs. Staff regularly discuss

observations of children and parents and carers are invited to contribute to learning journeys. This then helps to us to play appropriate next steps in learning.

- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and school to meet the needs of the children.

## 2. Positive relationships

At Zetland we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent learners when in secure relationships. We are passionate about developing caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and about helping children build secure and caring relationships with each other.

### Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we highly value the contribution that parents make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Meeting with and talking to parents before their child starts at our school.
- Inviting parents and children into the setting, to spend time in the Foundation Stage during a 'stay and play' to give the children time to explore our setting and to give parents and carers opportunity to ask any questions.
- We offer parents and carers the opportunity to share their child's 'Learning Journey' and encourage contributions from parents.
- Providing parent/carer workshops on reading, writing and maths in order to share information on how best to support learning at home in these areas.
- Practitioners will observe and complete initial assessments during the child's first two weeks in the setting and then share this with parents. Parents are encouraged to contribute to and support their child's next steps.
- We hold two parent/teacher consultations during the year in both Nursery and Reception where parents can discuss their child's progress, their targets and next steps in learning. A report outlining their child's progress is given at the end of Nursery and Reception followed by a drop in session for parents to view their child's learning journey.
- Parents are given the opportunity to attend a transition meeting before their child begins full time education. Resources to support reading, writing and maths are given to children in preparation for starting Reception.

### Partnerships with external agencies.

At Zetland Primary we work closely with agencies such as childminders, day care providers, speech and language therapists, Educational Psychologists, etc. to ensure that, with parental consent, information is shared, as appropriate, to support the development of the child.

### 3. Enabling environments

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. It is important that the environment is stimulating and engaging, with resources that enrich learning opportunities and challenge our children. We ensure that both the indoor and outdoor environment reflects the needs, interests, culture and ability of all children as well as promoting play, exploration and collaboration.

### 4. Learning and Developing

The EYFS Curriculum, which proceeds the National Curriculum consists of seven areas of learning. This is made up of three prime areas of learning and four specific areas.

**The prime areas are fundamental, work together, and are key to supporting development in all other areas. They are:**

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
  - Self-Regulation
  - Managing Self
  - Building Relationships
- Communication and Language
  - Listening, Attention and Understanding
  - Speaking
- Physical Development
  - Gross Motor Skills
  - Fine Motor Skills

**The specific areas are:**

- Literacy
  - Comprehension
  - Word Reading
  - Writing
- Mathematics
  - Number
  - Numerical Patterns
- Understanding of the World

- Past and Present
- People, Culture and Communities
- The Natural World
- Expressive Arts and Design
  - Creating with Materials
  - Being Imaginative and Expressive

### Characteristics of Effective Learning

"The unique child reaches out to relate to people and things through the characteristics of effective learning, which move through all the areas of learning" (Development matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012)

The characteristics of effective learning are a key element throughout EYFS. Every day, children are learning these vital skills through the environment, experiences and activities. Staff observe children in the different ways of learning, and then plan activities appropriately.

The characteristics of effective learning are:

- Playing and exploring - being engaged
  - Finding out and exploring
  - Playing with what they know
  - Being willing to have a go
- Active learning - being motivated
  - Being involved and concentrating
  - Keeping trying
  - Enjoying achieving what they set out to do
- Creating and thinking critically - being thinkers
  - Having their own ideas
  - Making links
  - Choosing to do things

### Key Person

Children are assigned a key person. The key person will ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. They will help to support the child to settle in the environment and ensure they feel safe and cared for. They will support the child's physical needs. The key person will also build a relationship with the child and their parents/ carers and be accessible for parents/ carers.

### Observations, Assessment and Planning

EYFS staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and the next steps for learning. Along with the children's interests, these observations lead our planning. Short term plans are updated on a daily basis, and are based around individual children's needs and interests. These plans are a working document and highlight the role of each practitioner. The long term continuous provision planning and medium term plans follow the overall needs of our children and change each term and relate to the 'EYFS' document.

Assessment in our Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations and build up a picture of the individual child's learning journey. We observe the children as they play engaging in our continuous provision. Photographic evidence of children's learning experiences is collected. This information is reviewed to inform the future weeks planning and the child's developmental progress record.

The early stages of human development are very important. The Early Years education we offer the child is based on the learning and development matters and the following principles.

- It builds on what children already know and can do
- It encourages the whole person to be valued
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors.
- It provides a stimulating, language rich environment which is fun to be a part of.

Learning and development matters need to be a continuous and dynamic process. We provide features of good practice in the foundation Stage to take the children's learning forward and to provide opportunities for children to succeed in an atmosphere of care and of feeling valued, these are:



- The relationship between parents, children, teachers and other agencies working in harmony to create a partnership, which supports and values all children. Each child's individual contribution is recognised, valued and encouraged in an atmosphere of acceptance and trust. Children develop a good sense of well-being.
- The understanding of the early stages of human development, how children develop and learn and how this affects the style of teaching. Good practice incorporates both the welfare requirements and aspects from the Early Years Foundation Stage document.
- A 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.
- A carefully planned learning environment which promotes autonomy and ensures that each individual child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience.
- To provide opportunities for children to participate in activities that build on what they already know, extend their interests and develop their intellectual, social and emotional abilities.
- To plan visits and visitors to create a shared experience and extend their knowledge of the world around them.
- To communicate; listening, sharing ideas, deciding and talking about their learning, to develop independence and self-management.
- To support the learning experiences with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.
- To carry out observations, monitor and assess to identify progress and future learning needs of each child or groups of children and evaluate and improve practice.
- The regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

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Next Review: September 24