

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Document Purpose

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.

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to reach 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. 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.” (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. 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.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

A Unique Child:

In line with British Values all children are citizens and have rights and entitlements. Children should be treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. Children need security, familiarity and an interesting and happy place in which to learn well.

At Zetland Foundation Stage 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. Each child is assigned a key person who offers a close, settled relationship, talking to parents to make sure he/she is being cared for appropriately for each family. 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

All children are entitled to enjoy a full life in conditions which will help them take part in society and develop as individuals, with their own cultural and spiritual beliefs.

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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 give our children every opportunity to achieve their 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 education needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, from difference socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, children with ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet these needs through:

- Planned 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.
- Provide learning opportunities which encourage active involvement and motivate children.
- Providing a safe, supportive and stimulating learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Providing challenging activities for children who's 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)

At Zetland Foundation Stage 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 the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
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- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and school to meet the needs of the children.

Positive Relationships:

The early stages of human development are very important. *'We all follow the same learning patterns but we all learn at different rates'* Liz Way (Advisor). Learning is a lifelong experience which we are all involved in. Everyone working with young children has an important contribution to make to their education. Therefore, we cannot work in isolation as effective learning is based on active partnership with all those involved with the child.

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

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:

- Inviting parents and children into the setting, to spend time with practitioners and peers before they begin their placement.
- Providing parent/carer workshops on reading, writing and numeracy in order to share information on how best to support learning at home in these areas.
- Practitioners will observe and complete initial assessments during his/her 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.
- Transition meetings, booklets and activity packs are offered when children begin full-time education.
- There are formal meetings at start and end of Nursery (Autumn and Summer Term) at which time the teacher and parent discuss the child's progress and developmental next steps.
- During the course of the year there are formal meetings in Reception to cover: milestone assessments, meetings to discuss children's progress and information regarding EYFS provision.

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.

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.

Observations, Assessment and Planning

The long term continuous provision planning, medium term plans follow the overall needs of our children and change each term and relate to the 'EYFS' document. 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. Two children are identified per week and observations of evidence, child initiated learning and evidence gathered. 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 Learning Environment and Play

Young children are motivated to learn through their own play and through encouragement offered by children and adults. They are able to practice and build on ideas, concepts and skills which help them to make sense of the world. They can also take risks, make mistakes, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. Through play children have the opportunity to think creatively with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. The enable environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The environment is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Children have access to an outdoor area every day which provides a stimulating environment covering all areas of learning. The outdoors is an ongoing area of development. Staff value the importance of outdoor play and believe it will have a positive effect on children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

Learning and Development:

"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)

These are:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning

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- Creating and thinking critically

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.

ZETLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of three prime areas of learning and four specific areas.
The prime areas are:

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

The specifics are:

- Understanding of the World
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Expressive arts and Design.

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others as they are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities as well as direct teaching.

Date Policy Reviewed	Reviewed By	Position	Next Review
June 2018	M.Coupland	EYFS Lead	July 2020