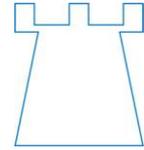


Sheriff Hutton Primary School

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Early Years Policy 2013

Introduction

Early Years education is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives, both within the school setting and the wider world. It is important for developing the positive attitudes and respect necessary for effective learning throughout the children's school years and beyond. In the Foundation Stage children learn best through play based activities and first-hand experience. Children become independent learners through the provision of a balance of child initiated and adult led experiences. We aim to build upon and extend the children's knowledge and understanding and are concerned with the development of the whole child.

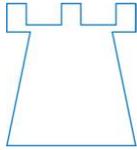
The Foundation Stage is delivered in a stimulating, structured and exciting learning environment within which children can explore, practise and develop their skills. Each child is viewed individually, special needs are met in an appropriate way and individual interests and needs are encouraged and addressed. The experiences offered provide opportunities for each individual to reach their full potential, with all children provided with equal opportunities in line with our school's equal opportunities policy.

The aims of the early years

- To provide a happy, caring, safe and secure environment for learning, which meets the individual needs of the children.
- To provide a high quality curriculum in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage document and Every Child Matters.
- To provide all children with opportunities to fully experience the different activities and stages within the early years goals.
- To foster a love of learning, to develop enquiring minds and the ability to discuss, adapt, negotiate and be able to work both collaboratively and individually.
- To ensure that children learn through purposeful, well-planned and structured play opportunities that build on what they already know and can do.
- To create happy, confident, self-motivated and inquiring children.
- Learning should be a positive and enjoyable experience that provides opportunities for each child to achieve their own potential.
- To foster positive home school links and share a common sense of purpose with parents and carers.
- To encourage parents and carers to take an active role in their child's education by helping in whatever way they feel appropriate.
- To address any concerns a parent or carer may have sympathetically.
- That all staff should co-operate and work purposefully together; planning what the children are going to know, do and understand, assessing, recording and reporting and striving to provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment.

Transitions

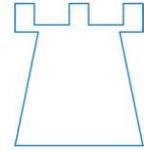
The majority of children starting school will have experienced coming to the school setting as members of the village playgroup. This familiarity with the setting, the other children and staff ensure a smooth transition for children starting school. Whilst Reception children may start school full time in September of their Reception year, careful discussions take place on a regular basis



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between staff and parents during the first term to ensure that children do not become too tired and if necessary a child may not attend five full days in the first half term.

Home visits

Each child is visited at their pre-school setting or home by the Foundation Stage teacher a term before they are due to start at the setting. The visit is a valuable opportunity for children, parents and staff to meet each other in an environment that is secure, informal and comfortable. Before the child starts it is an opportunity to discuss the school day, the curriculum and how parents can help their child with their learning. The 'I am Special' leaflet is given to parents and there is ample opportunity for parents to ask questions or allay any fears they might have. It is an invaluable time for initiating the relationship between teacher and child and provides an excellent insight into his/her interests and abilities as well as forming links with his/her home environment. Pre-schools and parents are also invited to spend some time in the setting with their children before they start school if they so wish.

Working with Parents

Children learn through all of their experience and not just those of school. In recognition of this, together with the fact that parents are the primary educators of their children, we seek to work closely with parents to provide an all encompassing learning experience for children and to ensure that parents feel part of their child's education and progress. A regular newsletter is produced, which outlines what the children have been learning and the next steps in their learning journey. A planning web about the curriculum is sent home to parents once a term to encourage them to help their child to develop their learning outside the school setting. Links are made between home and school by encouraging them to share relevant experiences and resources. Each child's learning journey, containing observations and assessments, is kept available to parents at all times so that they can both check the progress of their child and find out about the activities that their child has been engaged in. Practitioners are also available at the beginning and end of every session to talk to parents if they so wish and parents are always welcome to attend sessions.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

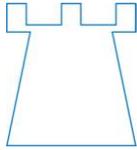
The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of Reception Year. The Foundation Stage Class at Sheriff Hutton can be accessed from the academic year that a child turns five.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development

The curriculum is organised into six areas of learning:

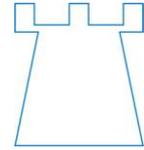
- 1) Personal, social and emotional development
- 2) Communication, language and literacy
- 3) Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy



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- 4) Knowledge and understanding of the world
- 5) Physical development
- 6) Creative development

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child- initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. By the end of this stage most children will have reached the goals, some children will have exceeded the goals whilst others may still be working towards achieving them. Each ELG is broadly equivalent to Level 1 of the National Curriculum. Within each of these areas there are elements that show the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that children need in order to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year. As the children move from one element to another they take with them what they have already learned and they continue to practice, refine and use their previous learning so that learning becomes consolidated.

The Importance of Play

Through play children explore and develop learning experiences that help them to make sense of the world. They practice and develop ideas and learn how to think creatively alongside others as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. There is time for free choice play and structured play throughout the foundation stage. This allows children the opportunity to express themselves, develop new skills and build up relationships with other children. It gives them an opportunity to address their individual learning needs and provides time for freely chosen play activities, which are appropriate, purposeful and meaningful. There is no distinction made between work and play in this environment.

Planning

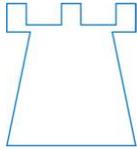
Long term

We follow the guidelines as set out in 'The Early Years Foundation Stage'. We plan topics based on the children's interests and needs. The topics are developed through discussions with the children, parent topic discussion sheets and observations.

Medium term / Short term

Activities are planned relating to the themed topic and to the children's interest.

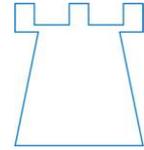
A weekly overview planning sheet and the enhanced provision-planning sheet is used to show details of the planned provision and activities offered over the course of a week. These focus on a central theme and are organised into provision areas and areas of learning. This planning is amended daily to accommodate the needs and interests of the children over the week. The medium term plans alongside ongoing assessment is used to create short-term weekly plans for CLL and PSRN for Reception children.



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Resources

We plan a learning environment that encourages a positive attitude towards learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community from which the children come and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of activities on offer as far as possible to encourage independent learning. We encourage the children to be responsible for the resources and for the tidying away at the end of a session.

Outdoor provision in the Foundation Stage.

Outdoor learning is an entitlement for all children in the Foundation Stage. The outdoor provision provides a rich sensory experience where children can investigate and work with different materials and undertake tasks on a much larger and messier scale. A free flow policy operates between the indoor and outdoor environment for a substantial period of the session allowing children to choose where to play. All six areas of the curriculum are provided for in the outside environment and thought is given to meeting the children's physical needs with regards to the weather. The children are able to make use of Wellingtons and splash suits in the setting to enable them to play outside in most weather.

Inclusion in the Foundation Stage

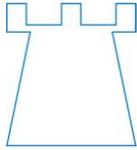
We believe that every child is of equal importance and should be given the opportunity to achieve their full potential. We set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children so that the majority achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. Some children progress beyond this point and some will not have progressed as far. We plan to meet the needs of all children, children with special needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children from different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. All children will be offered equal opportunities in line with the school's equal opportunities policy.

Assessment - Recording and Reporting

Children are carefully observed throughout each session and significant achievements and progress is recorded via notes and photographic evidence that is kept in each child's individual Learning Journey file. Likewise, these observations ensure that any 'gaps' in learning can be addressed. These observations form the basis of future planning. Within the first six weeks of starting at the setting and at the end of every subsequent term these observations are used as the basis for informing the summative assessment that takes place. This is done using the North Yorkshire LEA's 'On Track' assessment materials; it tracks the progress made by each child and provides valuable insights for planning future learning opportunities in the following term. At the end of the Reception year the Profile scores for each child are completed and sent to the LEA.

Monitoring

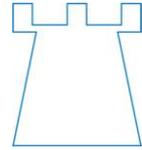
- Monitoring of Foundation Stage planning and teaching takes place by the Head teacher on a termly basis.
- Monitoring of the Foundation Stage planning and teaching in specific subjects takes place by



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the subject co-coordinator on a regular basis.

- Scrutiny of work in core subjects produced by Reception children takes place on a regular basis.

Evaluation

Written feedback on planning and teaching will be given to the Foundation Stage teacher by the Head Teacher after each observation.

The Head teacher will:

- Set high expectations and monitor the learning and progress of the children.
- Create an ethos and provide educational vision and direction that will secure effective teaching and successful learning by all the children.
- Give support and training to the support staff.
- Ensure a safe and secure environment for the Foundation Stage children to work in.

The Early Years Governor will:

- Be well informed through the leadership of the Head teacher and Early Years co-coordinator.
- Support the staff in implementing the school's Early Years policy.
- Visit the setting regularly to keep up to date on Early Years issues and feedback to colleagues.

Updated

January 2013

Review Date

January 2016