



Dallimore Primary and Nursery School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

1 Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage extends from birth to the age of 5 years. In our school, the Foundation Stage extends from the age of two to the end of the Reception year.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and also in preparing children for later schooling. It is the Early Learning Goals that set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Children joining our Foundation Stage have already learnt a great deal. Many have been learning at other facilities in our community. The Early Years education we offer is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment.

2 Aims of the Foundation Stage at Dallimore Primary and Nursery School

The curriculum of the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by promoting and developing:

- Personal, Social and Emotional well-being;
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Art and Design

3 Teaching and Learning Style

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are reflected in our policy on learning and teaching. They apply to learning and teaching in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do the learning and teaching in Key Stage 1 or 2.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- A developing partnership between teachers and parents that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- The range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear expectations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- The support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- The identification, through observations as well as formative assessments, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents;
- The good relationships between our school and other Early Year's settings/professionals.
- The clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it.
- The regular identification of training needs for all adults working in the Foundation Stage.

4 Play at the Foundation Stage

Through play our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears, or re-live anxious experiences, in controlled and safe situations.

5 Inclusion at the Foundation Stage

We believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking into account our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the individual needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We help them do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a wide variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them learn effectively.

- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- 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 communication skills.
- Monitoring children's progress, and accessing support (e.g. speech therapy) as necessary

6 The Foundation Stage Curriculum

Our curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage reflects the seven areas of learning identified in the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We plan on a two year cycle with a book focused curriculum. Our medium-term planning is completed half-termly and this is then translated into more detailed weekly plans. Our planning takes careful account of the stages of development of the children. There is a one point entry to Reception classes. This means that we have very young children starting full time school. Our planning reflects their needs, by using the 30 – 50 month curriculum if appropriate.

7 Assessment and Record Keeping

When children enter our Nursery, either at two or three years of age, we observe them for a few weeks and get to know the children, understand their individual needs, likes and interests. During the first term in the reception class, the teacher also assesses each individual child using the Statutory Baseline Assessment, which then informs planning and next steps for the children.

These assessments also allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. We share the information on children's progress at our parental consultation meetings.

Throughout the year the teacher maintains a "Learning Journey" for each child. This contains photographs, post it notes and children's work, all of which contribute to the evidence of attainment towards the Early Learning Goals. We also use "Dojo" an online learning journal. This allows parents to contribute evidence towards their child's profile, and view what their child has been up to at school. Using this evidence, along with other observations made of the children, the teacher uses their own knowledge and summative assessments each term to assess the individual child. At the end of the final term in Reception, we send a summary of these assessments to the LEA for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead.

Parents receive an annual report that comments on each child's progress in each area of learning, stating whether they are on track or not on track. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress. It tells them if the progress and attainment is emerging into, expected or exceeding age-related expectations. We complete these in June and send them to parents in July each year.

We have a very rigorous tracking system which enables us to pick up on any children who are not making the expected progress. It also enables us to look at different areas of the curriculum and judge the effectiveness of provision.

8 The role of parents

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We therefore recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- opportunities given to the children to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- providing various activities that involve parents.

There is a formal consultation meeting for parents in the Autumn and Spring at which the parents discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year and an opportunity to discuss their child's progress in the Summer term with the class teacher.

9 Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer through child led learning, as we believe that this encourages independence.

10 Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the governing body, and will be reviewed in three years, or earlier if necessary.

Date: November 2023
Review date: Autumn 2026