



Fleet Primary School

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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. Our EYFS consists of a full time Nursery class for up to 26 places and a Reception class of 30. The Early Years has its own curriculum and assessment procedures as outlined in the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage', meaning that processes and procedures may be unique to us from the rest of the school.

Our Aims

We strive to achieve the following:

- Create a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment that meets the individual needs and interests of all our children.
- Provide opportunities through play, which encourage children to develop emotionally, socially, intellectually and physically.
- Promote high standards of behaviour and interactions with peers and adults working in the settings, knowing that positive relationships are a key part in developing self-esteem and confidence.
- Develop and maintain good partnerships with parents and carers.
- Continue to build upon what has been learnt at home, broadening their range of learning experiences and stimulating their curiosity and imagination.
- Enable each child to develop as a happy, confident and independent learner.

The Curriculum

The EYFS curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning and development.

All of these areas are important and inter-connected. Three areas are seen as particularly important as they support children's learning in all other areas. These are known as the 'Prime Areas'.

The Prime Areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – *Making Relationships, Managing Feelings and Behaviour, Self-Confidence and Self Awareness*
- Physical Development – *Moving and Handling and Self Care*
- Communication and Language – *Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking*

There are then four specific areas of learning to develop essential skills and knowledge.

The Specific Areas:

- Literacy – *Reading and Writing*
- Mathematics – *Number and Space, Shape and Measures*
- Understanding the World – *People and Communities, The World and Technology*
- Expressive Arts and Design – *Exploring and Using Media and Materials and Being Imaginative.*

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Underpinning the learning and development of each child across these seven areas are the Characteristics of Learning. These are the ways in which the child engages with other people, their learning and their environment – *‘playing and exploring’, ‘active learning’, and ‘creating and thinking critically’*. Our narrative observations provide us with a picture as to how the children are succeeding in the Characteristics of Learning and we then plan activities that help develop, utilise and challenge these skills.

EYFS Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

A Unique Child

We celebrate each child as an individual by first getting to know their interests and then by offering personalised learning opportunities. We work with families and professionals from other settings who have knowledge of the child to help us build a picture of who they are.

Our creative topic based curriculum and the provision we offer is designed to help children develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture. We recognise that children learn in different ways and at different rates and we accommodate this in the provision we offer.

Positive Relationships

We pride ourselves in our dedication to building strong, secure relationships with parents and children in the early years as we know how important relationships are in developing confident and happy learners.

The following help us to establish positive relationships with our families.

- We take time and an interest in getting to know our families.
- All Nursery children are visited by the Nursery staff in their home setting prior to starting. Children starting in Reception are visited by the class teacher and a learning support assistant.
- We hold open afternoons before the start of the new school year. These give the children an opportunity to: meet their teachers; explore the environment; and give teachers a chance to talk to parents about their children before they start school.
- We attend the Camden ‘Transition for All’ meeting, discussing children’s needs with staff from their previous settings.
- We invite parents to an induction meeting in the summer term before their child starts.
- We hold one-to-one meetings early in the academic year to discuss transitions and anything else that is important for practitioners to be aware of.
- We offer parents regular, informal opportunities to talk about their child’s development through our soft starts each morning (classroom and teacher available every morning from 8.45am up to 9am when class starts).
- We have termly meetings with parents to discuss individual children’s progress.
- We provide parents with an annual written report detailing their child’s progress.

Enabling Environments

At Fleet we ensure our relationships, along with the physical environments enable positive development. We ensure the children feel safe and valued in our stimulating and engaging classrooms (including the outside spaces available to them).

We are incredibly proud of the high quality provision we provide. Our classrooms are well resourced and reflect the seven areas of learning in contextualised ways that are creative and constantly evolving. Throughout each day, the children have opportunities for free flow learning between the indoor and outdoor spaces. The activities are set up in such a way to ensure the children can access them confidently and independently. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on a different scale.

Both Nursery and Reception have large, covered areas outside to allow for outdoor learning whatever the weather. There are also large, interesting climbing structures which enhance opportunities for physical development and creative role-play.

Learning and Development

Our practitioners understand how children best develop and learn. We ensure there is a good balance between child initiated activities and adult led activities across the school day. When children are self-selecting activities, the interaction between the adult and child is essential. The practitioner's role is to respond, question, demonstrate and model to extend children's learning. In both Nursery and Reception, time is set aside each day for adult led activities in both groups and one to one, as well as whole class carpet sessions.

We teach through topics that we feel will motivate and inspire the children to learn, following their interests and providing stimulating, active learning.

Planning

Planning is based on ongoing formative assessment and observations. Practitioners constantly make decisions about the provision and learning opportunities provided based on what they have observed the children doing and what they believe the children will be stimulated and challenged by. Weekly plans are completed as well as medium term plans. Teachers track learning objectives that have been taught each term to ensure curriculum coverage by the end of the academic year.

Assessment

Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation by all adults working with the children. These observations are linked to the different areas of learning which in turn informs the progress that has been made each term and with the end of phase judgements.

On entry to Nursery we carry out baseline assessments for each child in the 7 areas of learning. This is completed when the child has been in the setting for as close to 6 weeks as possible. Further tracking against the age related expectations is carried out in February and July. Data is recorded, analysed and submitted to the head teacher for progress review. Provision and adult input is planned for according to trends noted in the data analysis.

At the end of Reception, the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals to create a profile of their learning. These are the goals outlined in the '*Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*', which we aim for the children to meet by the end of Reception. The teachers will record the level of development as either *working towards*, *expected* or *exceeding*. This information is submitted to Camden and onto the DfE.

We provide parents with a written summary of the judgements made at both the end of Nursery and at the end of Reception, along with a brief commentary of the child's skills in relation to the three key Characteristics of Learning (playing and exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically).

Parents are given an opportunity to discuss these reports during their end of year meeting. We believe it is best practise to have ongoing dialogue with parents if we feel a child will not achieve the end of year expectations and collaboratively come up with ways to support their learning and development both at home and at school.

Profile information is shared with the Year 1 teacher to support smooth transitions into Key Stage 1 and to help the Year 1 teacher plan an effective and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

Each child in the EYFS has a portfolio which contains samples of their work, alongside photos and observations. All of which are a real celebration of the child and create a detailed picture of their time in the Early Years. Parents have access to their child's portfolio and are encouraged to contribute through the use of 'At Home' slips. Parents are given their child's portfolio at the end of Reception.

Transitions from Nursery into Fleet Reception Class

In the summer term, we hold an open afternoon for the children and parents to visit their new class. If families are unable to make this session, an alternative time is given.

During the summer term, small groups from Nursery are regularly sent up to Reception for a play, so they have an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the environment and the adults.

Home visits give both parents and child the opportunity to meet school staff in a comfortable and secure setting as well as giving parents a chance to have questions answered. If a home visits is not possible or preferred, arrangements will be made to meet in school.

Start dates are decided based on the children's birth dates with youngest children starting first. In Reception, the children that are new to Fleet will have 1or 2 days to settle in before the children familiar to Fleet start.

In order for children to be supported during the transition period, a group of 4 or 5 children will start each day. This gives the practitioners valuable time to spend with individuals and to build a positive rapport.

Hours are built up during our transition period and may differ depending on the individual needs of the child and their experiences before starting with us. Children starting in Nursery will build up hours from 9.00-10.30, then until 12.00, 1.30 and then full time. Meetings will be held early on to plan what is best for individual children and there is flexibility in having shorter days for longer if required.

Children in Reception will have at least two half days before starting full time. Again, there is flexibility in having half days for a period of time if the child has had limited Nursery experience or would benefit from having longer to build up to full time.

Transitions from Nursery to other school's Reception classes

We attend the Camden 'Transition for All' meeting, discussing children's needs with staff from settings that children are moving on to. We also support destination schools by passing on portfolios and any other data and information they may need to support the child's smooth transition into their Reception class.

Safeguarding

Fleet will ensure that children taught in our Early Years are able to learn and develop and are kept safe and healthy by providing a safe, secure learning environment that safeguards and promotes their welfare, and takes appropriate action where there are child protection concerns.

We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the EYFS Statutory Guidance and whole school policies and procedures for safeguarding, administering medicines in schools and off-site visits.

Please see our School Safeguarding Policy

Staffing

The class teacher is the named key worker for each child in the class. The Nursery has a full time nursery nurse and both year groups always meet statutory requirements for staffing.

Admissions

Parents should register an interest in applying for a nursery place with the main school office. Applications for places in Reception should be made online or by post to Camden Local Authority. Please consult the LA website for details of the deadlines. The school office can be contacted if additional information or support is required.

Head Teacher: Don McGibbon

Chair of Governors: Kim Issroff

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